

# new world outlook

JUNE 1981



**PLURALISM**  
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a special issue

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New Series Vol. XLI No. 10

• Whole Series Vol. LXXI No. 6 •

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475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York 10115

Published Monthly (bimonthly, July-August) by the Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church, Education and Cultivation Division. (ISSN-0048-8812)

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Subscriptions in the United States and Possessions: One year \$7.00 (combination with *response*, \$13.00). Single copies 75 cents. All foreign countries: One year \$8.00 (combination \$15.00).

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# MISSION MEMO

News and Analysis of Developments in Christian Mission

June, 1981

Elected. The Rev. Randolph Nugent has been elected general secretary of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries. The election was announced May 21 by the General Council on Ministries, which has 114 voting members. (The actual vote breakdown was not available at press time.) The voting was done by mail ballot and concludes a lengthy process of finding a successor to the Rev. Tracey K. Jones, Jr., who retired last fall after 12 years as executive head of the board. Informed of his election, Dr. Nugent said: "I am confident that the hopes of the millions of United Methodists for the mission of the Church can be accomplished if as a people we are faithful in prayer and witness. I look forward to a very warm and cordial relationship with the directors of the board as we think through the responsibilities entrusted to us."

Red Bird. The Red Bird School, a frame building built in 1926 at the Red Bird Missionary Conference in Southeastern Kentucky, was destroyed by fire May 19. No one was injured. The school has 260 students in grades one through 12; commencement services were held two days before the fire. The building was insured for \$1 million but the contents, estimated at \$300,000, were not insured. The conference had been planning to build a new school to replace the one which burned.

Awards. New World Outlook won a first-place Award of Merit for Best Feature Article in a Denominational Magazine, at the Associated Church Press meeting in Philadelphia, May 6-9. The article was "Atlantic City After Casinos" by Elliott Wright (December issue). The Texas Methodist/United Methodist Reporter won an Award of Merit for in-depth coverage of a current issue in a newspaper for a series by Sharon Mielke on sexual harassment in UM seminaries. The Interpreter magazine received a special mention for editorials.

Posters. Artists who would like to try their hand at the theme "Jesus Christ - the Life of the World" are invited to submit posters in the "A2" format (17" x 24.5") to the Ecumenical Poster Contest of the World Council of Churches (150 route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland). The poster must carry the theme and in smaller type "The Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Vancouver, Canada, July 24 to August 10, 1983." The poster must speak visually across all divisions of language, culture and belief. Photography and collage can be used as well as any form of painting, drawing and design.

Reagan Policies. At its bi-annual meeting, May 13-15, in Philadelphia, the National Council of Churches' governing board expressed "fundamental disagreement" with the policies of President Ronald Reagan. The NCC statement was particularly critical of the Reagan program as "a massive transfer of public money from people assistance to military procurement" and "a substantial redistribution of wealth to those already wealthy." Opposing the new Administration's social spending cut-backs, energy policy, hikes in military spending, stance on the environment, and foreign policy, the NCC board warned that such moves "threaten the vision of America as the model and embodiment of a just and humane society." The message, which passed by a wide margin, marked the first time since its founding in 1950 that the council has issued such a broad evaluation of a new Administration's policies. After the message passed, Bishop James M. Ault of the Pittsburgh Area praised the statement as "prophetic and pastoral" and a call to American churches to find "responsible alternatives" to what is being projected by the new Administration.

South Pacific. According to a coalition of U.S.-based religious organizations, the United States has not fulfilled its obligations as trustee for the U.N. for approximately 2,100 Pacific Islands and a "distorted economy" has been created there which "impedes progress toward self-sufficiency." The coalition includes representatives from the National Council of Churches, the Maryknoll Sisters, Fathers and Brothers, the United Church of Christ, a unit of the Jesuits, and the United Methodist World Division, GBGM. The coalition told the U.N. Trusteeship Council that "the recent emergence of serious social problems such as suicide, alcohol abuse and violence can be attributed to the past 15 years of U.S.-induced rapid transformation of the traditional culture and value system." The Northern Marianas district of Micronesia has chosen commonwealth status with the U.S. The other three entities, Palua, Federated States of Micronesia, and the Marshall Islands, are negotiating a "free association" with the U.S. The coalition wants the inhabitants of these islands to have more time to consider their options.

Interpreters. There are now 98 former UM missionaries and BOGM directors across the country who have been fully trained to serve as interpreters of mission at "saturation events." The program was developed to answer a need for more interpreters, make use of untapped talent, and cut costs of travel to local churches.

Presbyterians. The re-union of the two major Presbyterian denominations - the United Presbyterian Church in the USA (UPCUSA) and the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) - is stalled and "suffering indifference at the hands of its friends." This is the assessment of the Rev. Robert Lamar, co-chairman of a committee trying to unite the two churches, whose division dates to the Civil War. On the positive side, Lamar cited 14 geographical areas in which members of both churches are already united in joint presbyteries (local governing units). This amounts to 344,851 Presbyterians, 1,388 congregations, and 2,060 pastors who are members of both churches. The UPCUSA membership now stands at 2,520,367 and the PCUS at 862,416. According to Mr. Lamar and his co-chairman, Dr. J. Randolph Taylor of the PCUS, the two denominations have been taking different positions in each of five areas: the control of congregation property, representation of women in positions of authority, confessions of faith, racial and ethnic participation, and administration. For instance, the UPCUSA prefers to mandate the representation of women to congregational positions, while the PCUS prefers only to suggest

it through flexible guidelines. Three separate votes will be required to achieve reunion, with the final vote being the approval of two assemblies in May, 1983.

Personalia. Cecile Beam will become Director of Elementary Children's Education for the General Board of Discipleship of the UMC on June 15. She has been a staff member of the North Mississippi Council on Ministries and is a member of the General Board of Global Ministries....Barbara Dunlap-Berg has been named Director of Editorial and Promotional Materials in the Program and Benevolence Interpretation Division of United Methodist Communications, effective May 1. She succeeds the late Don Moyers....Annette Hutchins-Felder, Executive Secretary for Development Education in the Section of Christian Social Relations of the Women's Division, GBGM, will leave that job on October 1 to become Director of the Center for Racial Justice of the national YWCA....Dame Cicely Saunders, who pioneered the modern concept of hospices for the dying and who is a specialist in pain control of cancer, has received the \$200,000 Templeton Prize. The prize, established by financial analyst John M. Templeton in 1972, "to act as a catalyst in the quest for deeper understanding and pioneering breakthroughs in religious knowledge" is the world's largest monetary prize.

Deaths. Martha J. Betts, 67, who had served as a missionary to India for ten years with her husband, Reeve H. Betts, a noted thoracic surgeon, died in Asheville, N.C., April 21....Ruth Hammer, retired deaconess who served for 32 years in Cincinnati, died last November....Naomi Orpurt, a Seminole, who (with her husband Fred) began mission work on the Seminole Reservation in Florida and continued it until her death, died April 28. Becoming a local pastor, Ms. Orpurt developed programs, built a library and was hoping to build a church. In recent years, her work has been carried on by her daughter, Helen Richardson....John C. Satterfield, 76, a prominent attorney and United Methodist layman, died May 5 in Jackson, Miss. He was president of the American Bar Association 1961-63; for many years he was a prominent delegate to Methodist general conferences....Edward Wallowitch, 48, a well-known photographer whose pictures appeared in this and other magazines, died March 25 in Lake Worth, Fla.

Position Available. Managing Editor, Response magazine. Applicant should have good knowledge of United Methodist Women as well as journalistic skills. An Equal Opportunity Employer. Contact Beverly J. Chain, General Board of Global Ministries, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115.

Koreans in America. The United Methodist Korean Church and Institute in New York celebrated its 60th anniversary this Spring with a series of events. The church is the oldest Korean congregation in the Eastern U.S. and dates back to the Korean independence movement of 1919. Over the years, its members have included former Korean president Shing Man Rhee, the president of Ewha University Helen Kim, several former prime ministers and a number of government ministers. The Korean national anthem was composed at the church's building near Columbia University. Among the events of the anniversary celebration were a celebration service with Randolph Nugent, general secretary of GBGM, preaching; a concert at Carnegie Hall, and a symposium on Christianity in Korea and Korean churches in the U.S. .... A Korean couple internationally known for their activities on behalf of human rights

were given honorary degrees by Drew University at its commencement on May 23. Chyung Yil-Hyung, former foreign minister, eight-term congressman and former leader of the New Democratic Party, and his wife, Lee Tai-Young, Korea's first woman lawyer and founder of the first legal aid center and one of four women currently elected to the International Commission of Jurists, were awarded honorary doctorates in law.

Joan Clark. The Committee on Deaconess and Home Missionary Service, GBGM, has voted 12-9 to recommend the appointment of Joan Clark to the position of program coordinator for the Ecumenical Women's Center in Chicago. Ms. Clark lost her position as a field worker for the Women's Division in 1979 after admitting that she was a lesbian, but has retained her status as a deaconess. She has been without appointment as a deaconess but has been working at the Chicago Center, which is not officially related to the United Methodist Church. The staff of the National Division, to which deaconesses are related, have been in consultation with Bishop Jesse R. DeWitt, who would be responsible for any appointment in the Chicago Area. The Committee's recommendation will be referred to the entire National Division at its next meeting, probably in October.

Union. The newsletter of the employees seeking to organize a union among general staff of the General Board of Global Ministries has claimed that a majority of the eligible employees have signed union cards. The group is affiliated with District 65 of the United Auto Workers. The last annual report of the Board gave the figure for New York-based non-management employees as 265.

Anti-Semitism Studies. Recent studies on anti-Semitism undertaken by the American Jewish Committee indicate that "on balance...the Jewish position in the U.S. remains secure." The number of anti-Semitic incidents in the U.S. has risen sharply in the past year and these have "stirred understandable fears" in the American Jewish community but these incidents should be considered "in the perspective of other events taking place in this country and abroad," according to the AJC analysis. Many of these incidents were mainly the work of "politically uninvolved teenagers" after the highly publicized bombing of a Paris synagogue. The report urges that the current outbreak of vandalism "be viewed against the alarming increase in all kinds of crime." Statistics gathered from opinion polls and other research indicates that "the vast majority of Americans are favorably disposed toward their Jewish fellow citizens" and more Jews than ever before were elected to Congress in 1980.

Wesley Home. The recently-restored Wesley Home, adjoining Wesley's Chapel in London, was reopened on May 24 by Margaret Thatcher, the prime minister of Great Britain. The reopening followed a worship service in the Chapel, attended by 800 people, including many Americans. George Thomas, speaker of the House of Commons and a Methodist lay preacher, read the lesson; Kenneth Greet, president of the Methodist Conference, spoke; and among those attending were Bishop H. Ellis Finger and Dr. Joe Hale of the World Methodist Council. Mrs. Thatcher, reared a Methodist, was married in Wesley's Chapel and her two children were baptized there.

# EDITORIALS

## PENTECOST AND PLURALISM

The Christian celebration of Pentecost is traditionally known as the "birthday of the Church" and marks the gift of the Holy Spirit to the apostles. According to Luke, the writer of the book of Acts, the gift was accompanied by a strange miracle of "speaking in tongues"—ecstatic utterances which were understood by a multitude of people from different nations gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Weeks. Each one, the record says, heard the apostles speaking in his own language. The multitude was bewildered not by the confusion of tongues but by the fact that there was understanding in the midst of the confusion.

A society as pluralistic as contemporary America could use, it would seem, a new Pentecost, a new birthday of the Church. This would not add to the babble of voices already around us but make sense of what we now hear.

Among the nations of the world the United States has few if any peers for the diversity of our religious and ethnic or racial pluralism. In general, this is a quality about which we are justifiably proud. We tend to view this as a gift of God, not something to deny. The heroes of early American conflicts over pluralism are men such as Roger Williams and William Penn who stood for a more open and accepting society.

However, there are voices and movements today which find the pluralism of our society a threat, persons who would like to make the world over in their mold. Some want to impose new standards of censorship in public schools, or take books out of libraries, or deny basic rights of housing or association to groups they find falling short of a certain moral standard. There are signs of renewed and blatant racism, such as the rise of the Ku Klux Klan, or crusades against homosexuals or other individuals of "doubtful personal morality." Some of this is based on ignorance and some on a reaction to what is viewed as syncretism and all of it is part of the stresses of a society with "gods many and lords many."

A new gift of the Spirit is therefore required to enable us to understand as well as to live in today's pluralistic environment. Different graces are needed for the different forms of plural-

ism—of belief, of race, of language, etc. That goes for all of us. Pluralism has to include a place not only for "saints" of other creeds and races but also a place for bigots as well. As a paper on interreligious concerns which was passed by the UM General Conference last year pointed out, we are almost all neighbors of people who think and believe differently than we do and we must learn new sensitivities to those situations. At the same time, genuine pluralism requires us not to sacrifice our deepest convictions of truth even while making room for those who deny those convictions. The fact that there are gods many and lords many does not mean there is not One God who has revealed himself in "mighty signs and works."

## IDEOLOGY AND BABIES

The strange positions that ideology divorced from reality can lead you into were never better illustrated than in the vote by the United States delegation against the Infant Formula Code of the World Health Organization. Alone among the nations of the world, the great champion of liberty stood to defend the beleaguered corporations against the onslaught of babies from the poorer nations of the world.

This is cheap humor, of course, but almost deserved by people who are willing to shout "baby killers" on the rights of the fetus but turn curiously abstract on the rights of threatened live children from the Third world. We are against escalating political rhetoric on these emotional subjects which is far too high already (see Martin E. Marty in this issue) but the equal danger is turning people (or babies or fetuses) into abstract terms in the debate.

The Infant Formula Code was overwhelmingly passed; the real loser here is the United States government. We can only hope they come to realize that.

## THE MARK OF CAIN

*"And the Lord said, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground.' "* Genesis 4:10 (RSV).

Once again the world is confronted with an outbreak of murders and attempted murders, both of the famous (such as President Reagan and Pope

John Paul II) and of the obscure (Northern Ireland, Lebanon). Once again we seek confusedly for some sort of explanation, debating whether we live in a "sick society," whether stricter gun control laws would be of any help, etc. All such questions are interesting, but they are not fundamental.

For basics, we might all do well to go back to Genesis and the story of Cain and Abel. This is a story sacred not only to Jews and Christians, but to Muslims as well (it appears in the Qur'an, Surah V, in slightly different form), but by its very familiarity it tends to get slightly blurred. Looked at anew, it has a very contemporary ring to it.

Cain, after all, had a lot of troubles. His parents were refugees, who had certainly come down in the world. He and his brother were the first in the class warfare between farmers and keepers of livestock (so bitter a controversy in the American West). He was the elder and should have had pride of place but instead "got no respect." No wonder he felt he had a right to struggle for justice (and even liberation). Psychologically, he felt driven to "make a statement," in the phrase of President Reagan's would-be killer.

The human heart was ever thus, with uniformly sickening results. It is probably no accident that the killing of a brother is the first story recounted after the expulsion from Eden, the first fruits of sin. No wonder the Qur'an says that "Whosoever killeth a human being . . . it shall be as if he killed all mankind."

Well, men and women are sinners, we all know that, but where does that leave us? Well, it should leave us with a sense of the profundity of the problem and free of a certain amount of self-justifying cant about "the times" and "the cause," whatever one that may be. Not that we should not make rules for society's safety or not punish the guilty here on earth or seek for revenge. The sad story of Cain is no argument for the National Rifle Association or political terrorism or the death penalty.

Nonetheless, we should remember that those we seek to kill are a substitute for God. It is Him we defy when we kill our brothers and sisters. In an odd way, the man who shot at the Pope got the emotional logic right. The person who claims to be the vicar of Christ on earth is a terrible threat to us, whether we accept that claim or not. For it is God who both judges and forgives all of us and it is God that any murderer or assassin really aims to kill.



## If Only We Could Disagree

### Martin E. Marty

If only Americans, and the Christians in America, could disagree! That wish sounds bizarre, uttered as it is in a new decade when more of them seem to be at each other's throats than at any time since the Civil War or the late sixties. Whoever opens a pair of ears cannot help but have them filled with disagreeable sounds. Megaphones on left and right carry messages of righteous individuals and groups who denounce all who do not agree with them. Let's take two samples of what sounds like disagreement.

Abortion. The nation and its churches will be tied up and torn apart over the abortion issue in the eighties. Most bystanders foresee new legislation and hence new lawbreaking, however the congresses and courts address the problem. Certainly, I hear you saying, we have plenty of disagreement about abortion.

We have more confusion than disagreement. When both sides make their main arguments on bumper stickers, it is not likely that they are setting out to understand each other enough to disagree. Significantly, these stickers are on the rear of autos. This means that their owners are always speeding away from us, never engaging or hearing us. And, speeding away, they leave a trail of poison in the air to do us in.

Two bumper stickers illustrate the main confusions on the abortion front. One side says, ABORTION IS MURDER. Is it? That is a conclusion, not a proposal for debate. Call me a murderer and you are not asking for conversation or debate; you want me locked up. Had you persuaded me that abortion is murder, and you have had plenty of time, I would not be for it. You know, you *really* know, from my every other commitment in life, that I

am not a murderer. You know that you can make the whole Christian, including Catholic, case about abortion, as Christians have done for centuries, without ever once needing the word murder. Until now, in the era of bumper stickers.

The other side has A WOMAN'S BODY IS HER OWN TO DO WITH WHAT SHE WANTS. That is equally disagreeable as a proposition, however satisfying it may be to some as a conclusion. We don't act as if it is true in bringing up a woman, in seeing her marry or belong to the body of Christ or civil society or a circle of friends. The slogan begs the question of how many "bodies" are involved in pregnancy, and when, in the matter of abortion. This slogan, like the other, is designed to rally troops, not to begin a creative disagreement.

Public School Prayer. Unlike the other issue, this one is not "life-threat-

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ening," to fetus or mother or society. But it is a nagging problem that distracts and divides local communities just as it will the national society in the eighties. You can hear the slogans and see the bumper stickers, but they only generate confusion. To be opposed to school prayer is to be called a Communist or a humanist. But that charge runs against the fact that often very conservative and very saintly Christians oppose turning their children over to the state for devotion and spiritual formation. To be for school prayer is, in the eyes of some, to be a Fascist or a dogmatist. But that vision is perplexing because some people who favor prayer in public institutions are eager otherwise to depend upon free and voluntary nurture in other sectors of life. The proponents of school devotions show signs of resentment against "pluralists" who took away something they cherished: God in the schools. Honestly, no one took away much. It is hard to discern God in the 22-word packaged prayer that the New York Board of Regents had invented. Or to find God in schools of states like California, only 2% of whose classmates practiced school prayer before the court decisions of 1962 and 1963.

### The Rules of the Game

I thought of the need for disagreement last winter while reading a book review by Northwestern English Professor Gerald Graff in *The New Republic* (February 14, 1981). Graff was arguing with the author of a book who claimed that literary texts carried no meanings that we did not bring to them. And the meanings we bring to them, the author said, come mainly from the communities to which we belong or the institutions that dominate us. Blacks and whites, Republicans and Democrats, believers of various sorts, academicians and steamfitters, get different truths and meanings from texts because of the "rules of the game" and the habits of mind that their allies and chosen authorities impose on them or help them develop.

That there is *something* to this theory is clear to anyone who gives the same Book of Acts to Baptists and Catholics. They both sincerely read the same passages about baptism. The Baptist reads into or out of them that baptism follows confession of faith and must therefore be reserved for adults. The Catholic reads out of or into them that



Two of the issues dividing the religious community are abortion and evolution. (Above) Members of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights march in a demonstration in New York City. (Left) Creationist leader Kelly Segraves and his 13-year-old son talk with reporters after losing a court case in California.

households were baptized, and households must have included infants who, if we were supposed to exclude them, should have been mentioned. We can all cite hundreds of such instances. What we do with this insight is the issue and the problem.

In the church, thanks to the ecumenical movement, what we have begun to learn is to disagree and then to do research, pray, act in common, and think in common. Thanks to this process, both "sides" in many disputes have taken a fresh look at texts and traditions. They have come to some new agreements and, in other cases, have found ways to affirm each other, thanks to discoveries of creative disagreements. This ecumenical impulse has moved far beyond mainline and liberal churches, into evangelical circles. At Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1974 they learned what pioneer ecumenists had experienced: that diversity need not mean either warfare or the mutual ignoring of factions by each other. Nor does it allow for instant agreement.

### Creative Disagreement

In the larger society, however, thanks to the discontents of the recent decades and the atrophy of citizens' ability to disagree intelligently, the process of persuading has given away to brute force, much of it in the hands of religious people. Reading Graff reminded me to reread the late Father

John Courtney Murray, who in *We Hold These Truths* (1960), urged creative disagreement on a pluralist society a full generation ago. By page six Murray was defining terms, quoting from Father Thomas Gilby's *Between Community and Society*: "Civilization is formed by [people] locked together in argument. From this dialogue the community becomes a political community."

Such a community is made up of people and groups who argue about public affairs, the good of the commonwealth, and the consensus on the basis of which some civil agreements might develop. Threats to such communities, said Murray, come from barbarians, who may not always wear bearskins and carry clubs. They may wear Brooks Brothers suits or, today, polyester; they may, said Murray, carry ball-point pens or—today may we revise it?—have in hand a television microphone. But barbarians they remain, since they stir confusion and resist disagreement. George Bernard Shaw did the defining: "He is a barbarian, and thinks that the customs of his tribe and island are the laws of nature."

Such barbarianism is one of the fastest growing forces in the world today. People in tribes and on islands named Iran, or Jewish and Muslim in the middle East, or Muslim and Hindu on the Asian sub-continent, or Protestant and Catholic in Northern Ireland, cannot picture how any one could disagree with their "laws of nature,"

their "absolutes." Worse, they cannot picture why those who disagree should have the right to do so.

### What Is Pluralism?

What we have is a new confusion about the meaning of pluralism. Let me define that word very simply, even colloquially. Thanks to pluralism, the American commonwealth says, "any number can play." Thanks to it, the American experience has seen that "everyone does." "Any number can play" means that so long as groups agree to keep to very, very broad efforts not to violate civil peace, they can co-exist in America, and can contribute to its life. Jehovah's Witnesses, Hutterites, Hare Krishna devotees, Black Muslims, the Native American Church—all these test the boundaries, but they also learn how wide those boundaries are. So our yearbooks list 250 denominations, the guidebooks notice 500, the encyclopedias 1200. And we all know each of these are split down the middle by doctrinal disputes, and further fragmented by race, sex, age, class, and the like. "Everyone does play."

Americans have gotten along fairly well with the ground rules and experience of pluralism. Of course, there have been constant tensions, as one would expect in the most pluralistic society in earth. Here people never get settled before there is a new immigration—this time it is of boat people and Hispanics—or a new eruption of sects and interest groups. Yet there have been very few dead bodies resulting from the conflicts. And at moments of greatness, Americans have overcome barbarianism and tribalism and come to both disagreements and agreements about the good society and how to pursue it.

### Facing Two Threats

Pluralism faces two threats. On one side, today embodied in the New Christian Right that is often code-named the Moral Majority, there is a power move based on the "politics of resentment." Leaders exploit the genuine and sincere fears and resentments of people who have seen rapid and not easily understandable moral and social change. To gain power, they have had to invent a bogey called "the secular humanist," and to point their bumper stickers and voter registration drives against "religious liberals." That they are creating confusion in the

Rev. Jerry Falwell, leader of Moral Majority, Inc. The rise of the New Right has challenged the understanding of pluralism in the U.S.A.



name of disagreement is obvious. That they seek to hear other points of view, or to adhere to American traditions of pluralism, is not obvious, not visible at all. They seek to outmaneuver, overpower, and, they make clear, abolish from their society those "secular humanists," in some cases, "Jews," and religious "liberals." Pluralism ends by a kind of coercion in a legislated "Christian America."

Mainline defenders of pluralism have been caught off guard and have done little successfully to face the challenge of the barbarian. The "liberals" shouted resolutions at the Democratic National Convention of 1980 were not more reasoned disagreements than are those of the Moral Majority. Their bumper stickers are as full of conclusions as they are devoid of propositions for civil discourse. Seldom do we defenders of pluralism ask seriously what we did to help create a void that the New Christian Right filled, or to explain why there has to be some void in our kind of society. Even more seldom do we hear and sort out some legitimate complaints and hopes from the resentful Rightists.

Few people have entered the eighties with optimism about improving the situation. But more are coming to learn the necessity of doing so, and are taking some responsibility for it. Perhaps it is too late to restore town meetings or improve the debate at church meetings. They may all soon be disrupted over school prayer and abortion, evolution and creationism, and other issues greater and less than those. But the pluralists, who have often looked as uncommitted as they were civil, while the anti-pluralists looked committed but uncivil, can help move beyond confusion toward disagreement.

### Using Consensus

Could it be that we have not used the measures of consensus our society has preserved? Gerald Graff wrote: "The dilemma of a culture so pluralized that it sees all reality as determined by the ideology of the observer is that it can't argue with itself, since it won't grant itself that measure of trans-ideological agreement necessary to make argument possible." There are aspects of trans-ideological agreement surviving in the fractured Jewish-and-Christian communities. Biblical witness issues in some general themes to which most of these communities give lip-service and, often, real service. They have to



reexplore these. And most of the pluralists and anti-pluralists claim to agree with some basic "Declaration of Independence" propositions, even if they disagree over how to see them realized. Reason itself, scorned by the new barbarians who see it as the property of "secular humanism," would make its way in believing and unbelieving communities alike. There are rational ways, as John Stuart Mill, Immanuel Kant, and Thomas Jefferson showed, to work for moral good and public virtue.

Scripture, the language of the American republic, and the thrust of reason, taken together, will not produce a society of agreement and will not save souls. But they can point us at least to envision a better situation than we now have, and can suggest some tentative steps to take toward that betterment. Some of the first moves can come from believing communities whose members, so eager to celebrate pluralism, have temporarily lost a sense of commitment, of profound faith, and of a passion that seeks not confusion but civil disagreement. ■



The use of Transcendental Meditation in schools (top) and groups such as Hare Krishna (above) have raised questions about religion.

Martin E. Marty is Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor at The University of Chicago and associate editor of *The Christian Century*. His two newest books address themes suggested in this article. *By Way of Response* (Abingdon) depicts personal styles, and *The Public Church: Mainline, Evangelical, Catholic* (Crossroads) outlines churchly approaches.



# UNITY & PLURALISM

## —NOT EITHER BUT BOTH

J. ROBERT NELSON

It was usually just after the dawn of a day that the milkman came. If you were awake, you would see him: white uniform, white cap, white truck, and usually white man. The white liquid in the heavy quart bottles was of two shades, the darker on top. The top was cream. This you poured into a glass jar to keep for coffee and desserts, while the thinner milk went on the corn flakes. Milk in those past years was not homogenized. Now it is, and real cream costs a small fortune.

American society was not homogenized either; nor were the Christian churches of the country. They just seemed to be homogenous, because people of differing races, nationalities, economic and social classes, and denominations kept—or were kept—to themselves. They were really and literally ignorant of one another. The media (then known simply as newspapers and radio) presupposed a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant perspective on all diverse people of the land. For such Protestants who knew a smattering of school Latin, the Roman Catholic Church was *terra incognita* rather

than *Corpus Christi*. Of the various Orthodox Churches, mainly in the big cities, they knew nothing. Occasionally, choirs from the ghettoized Black churches would be invited to the white ones to sing Spirituals; after which, white youth groups would express sentiments of Christian tolerance by singing soulfully of the low-swinging chariot and climbing Jacob's ladder. Hispanics were known to the extent that rhumbas and tangoes were popular on the radio on in big dance halls. Indians (you shouldn't ever call them natives!) were on reservations, to which the churches sent missionaries, as to foreign parts. And foreign parts were where Asians lived, if they were not to be found in Chinatown.

Such was the prevailing WASPish view of fellow Americans and Christians. Of course, if you were Black, Hispanic, Indian or Asian in that allegedly homogenous American society, there was a different way of seeing people.

To Methodist eyes, it seemed, Episcopalians were a vestigial British colony, living aloof from others with

their Prayer Book and 'fenced' Communion altar. Lutherans were dogmatic Teutons or Scandinavians, unduly given to the consumption of beer. Congregationalists flaunted their Puritan roots by naming everything in church 'Plymouth.' Presbyterians exuded pride in their theological learning and good order. And Baptists really did wear fisherman's hip boots in church!

It was not only church traditions, but more especially their music and dances, language, menus and memories which kept the Greeks, Armenians, Poles, Italians and Irish, as well as immigrants from Baltic and Balkan nations, from dissolving into America's 'melting pot.' That pot was, and remains, a fiction.

### Why Talk of Pluralism?

Why is there today so much talk of pluralism in American society and in Christianity? It is nothing new, really. Except that today the WASPs have recognized its presence and legitimacy; and they have realized at last that

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they, too, are just a segment of the pluralistic whole. Recognition means that WASPs, who heretofore have controlled politics, press, business and national ethos, have been driven by a long-suppressed political creed called Democracy to let 'the others' become equally visible under the rockets' red glare and in the light of Christ.

In a spinning centrifuge, used in separating milk, everything flees towards the circumference. But centripetal forces, by contrast, are those which drive matter to the center.

In America today, as elsewhere, we are experiencing exceedingly strong cross-currents of opposing cultural and religious energies. The centripetal forces impel us towards a common center. Here the words for both society and religion are the same: understanding, agreement, mutual concern, solidarity, community, unity. Whether in secular or theological usage, these are good words. They imply desirable ends, such as a good and just society or a united Christian community. But they also raise fears. Do they not imply the loss of particularity, identity and worth of differing people? Is there perhaps, after all, an American molten mass in that great pot, in which cultural, ethnic and religious differences soon disappear? If Bob Hope and the late Elvis Presley and the Superbowl can do to the minds of Americans what McDonald's and Burger King and diet cola have done to their palates, what chance is there for diversity? Will everything in church and culture become as uniform as shopping malls and Holiday Inns? Against such a dreadful prospect the advocates of pluralism have, in effect, declared war. It is a just war.

### Allies of Pluralism

Centrifugal forces are the allies of pluralism. They satisfy the felt need to be 'someone'—to be individual, diverse, different. Ancient and distinct roots of continuity are now rediscovered, valued and nurtured. These roots yield diversities of food, literature, customs, speech, and a common claim on particular land or soil. As to the churches, the centrifuge in our pluralistic society preserves the iden-

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tity and continuity of a wide variety of traditional beliefs and practices. These convey significant meaning to some people, but not necessarily to all. Various forms of liturgy, prayer and sacramental celebration are obvious examples; so are favorite hymns, styles of preaching and responding to preaching, and appeals to the charismatic personalities, leadership or theology of certain great Christians. The familiar triumvirate of Luther-Calvin-Wesley is often extolled in sermons, whether or not the preacher knows much about them.

In United Methodism today, the same breath which mentions Francis Asbury must say Philip Otterbein; or Richard Allen is spoken with Jacob Albright. These symbolic names testify

to the new recognition of pluralism in unity. The centripetal power of church unity and ethnic accord has contributed to the diversifying effect of the centrifuge. To illustrate, the 1968 union of The United Methodist Church and The Evangelical United Brethren Church did not blot out the memory of American Methodism's early pillars, Bishops Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke. Instead, the union kept these and extended the revered knowledge of Otterbein and Albright, as well as Bishop Allen and other pioneers of the mainly Black Methodist denominations. Diverse traditions and histories surrounding these names have been maintained within a widening unity.

What can be learned from this example? Just this: *unity is not uniformity, and pluralism without unity breeds division.*

Or this: *Unity without diversity is as detrimental to church and society as is pluralism without unity.*

### The Body of Christ

The analogy of the functioning of the human body is as valid with respect to the Body of Christ, the church, in our time as it was in the first century when St. Paul wrote of it to the Christians at Corinth. "God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single organ, where would the body be?" (I Corinthians 12:20). The apostle was addressing the new Christians of Corinth on the problems of incipient divisions. Already they were breaking into parties, which were embryonic denominations. This fragmentation had to be stopped at the source. Paul appealed to them in the name of Jesus Christ "that all of you agree and that there be

Protestant, Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox leaders worship in an ecumenical service in Atlanta at the Congress of the Greek Orthodox Church.



“Paul never says that variety, pluralism, is good in itself. It is good insofar as it serves the unity of the whole community.”

no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment” (1:10-11).

That appeal to unity may have seemed to some early Christians of independent mind like a mandate of uniformity. It could be read as giving approval in the Lord's name to a think-alike, believe-alike, act-alike church. Similarly, some people today reject and even attack the movement toward church unity because, they claim, it will bring about a uniform, lock-step kind of church. Such people have wrongly construed the meaning of unity, whether in the first or the present generation of Christians.

This is why the apostle had to write the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians. He refuted the false notion of uniformity by testifying to the manifest work of God's Spirit in providing for much variety in the church. Present day advocates of pluralism like to cite this passage of the New Testament, but even in doing so they can miss the intent and the meaning. Paul never says that variety, pluralism, is a good in itself. It is good insofar as it serves the unity of the whole community.

The thought and spirit of this biblical insight have been expressed concisely in the agreed statements of the Consultation on Church Union:

The Church is comprehensive in its capacity to embrace and sustain diversity in the expression of faith, life, witness and service. The Church

catholic refuses deadening conformity and sterile uniformity. It welcomes the full range and variety of the gifts which the Holy Spirit distributes among its members, and by which the unity of the body is built up. Moreover, it values the varieties of natural endowment: sex, race, age, culture, linguistic and ethnic identity. All of these find a place within the comprehensive unity of the Church.

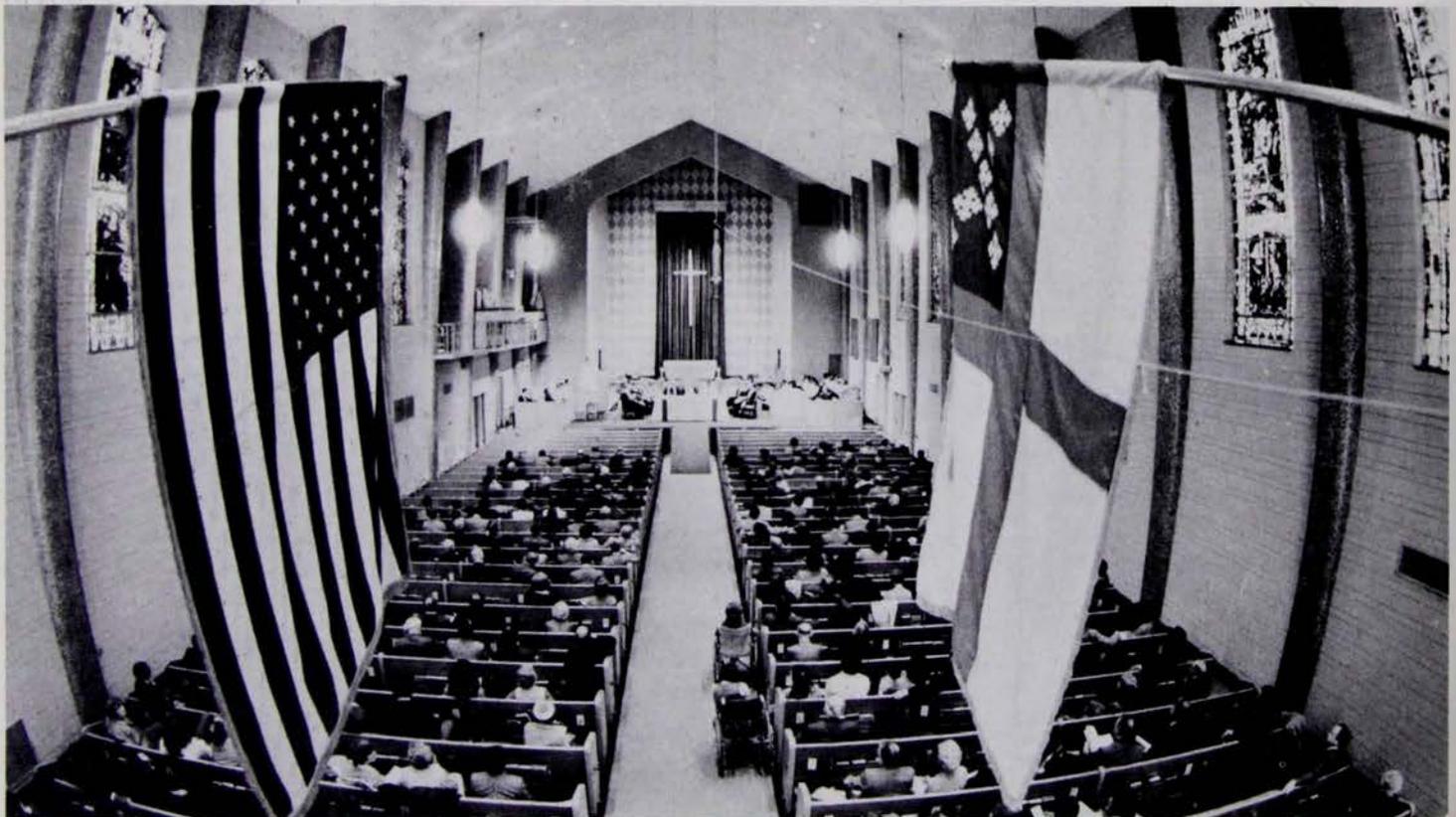
(*In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting*, Chapter III, 5 (c.), Princeton, New Jersey, 1980.)

For more than half a century, the reports and messages of the conferences and dialogues of the ecumenical movement have been proclaiming and insisting upon this same theme: the unity God wills and which we seek is neither 'uniform' nor 'monolithic.' But who hath believed our report?

### Pluralism the Highest Good?

In point of fact, however, there is today in many churches a more suspect and dangerous misunderstanding than the notion that unity equals uniformity. It is the unexamined idea that pluralism is itself the highest good for the church or secular society. Thus pluralism is being elevated to an absolute good at the expense of any serious thought of unity. This adulation of differences is an affirmation of only the centrifugal forces; it implicitly denies the centripetal.

(Below) A worship service of the Consultation on Church Union.





(Above) The author speaks during a discussion at a COCU meeting.

tal. It touches the life of the church at several tender points.

In matters of faith and doctrine it relativizes any claim to truth. In a fully pluralistic church, anyone can believe anything and lay claim to authenticity. The only criterion, then, is sincerity. The irreconcilable beliefs of two or more persons can be equally justified so long as they are sincerely held.

In matters of morality and ethics, a fully pluralistic church allows almost any kind of behavior, in any situation, so long as the acting person asserts a just and loving motive.

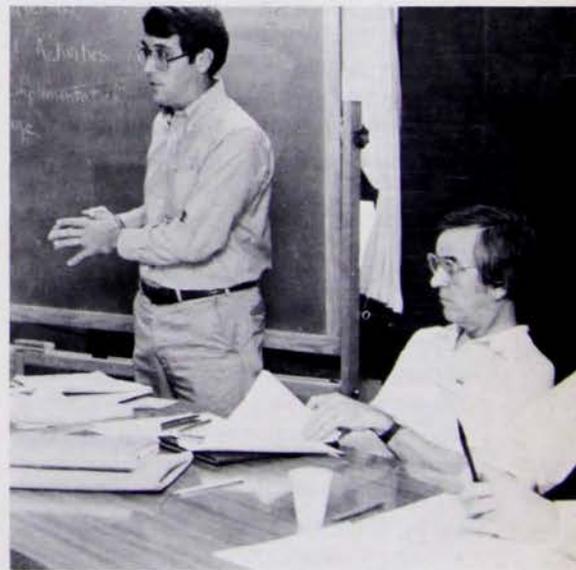
In a fully pluralistic church, though, there is one thing which is absolutely forbidden. That is the presumption of saying that pluralism is not the highest good. Anything can be tolerated except intolerance.

No church, of course, is fully characterized by pluralism. The examples given above are exaggerated caricatures. Yet, they suggest the excessive libertarianism which results from the uninhibited swing of the

pendulum away from authoritarian suppression of diversity and dissent or from oppression of weaker minorities. In a church which is at last turning away from its systemic racism and sexism, the highest value is said by pluralists to be the celebration of one's race or gender—so long as neither whiteness nor maleness is included in the celebration.

Action, reaction, counteraction. The pendulum keeps oscillating between the extreme of conformity and permissiveness, uniformity and pluralism. Will it never be content to stay within the arc where freedom and responsibility, diversity and unity are maintained together? ■

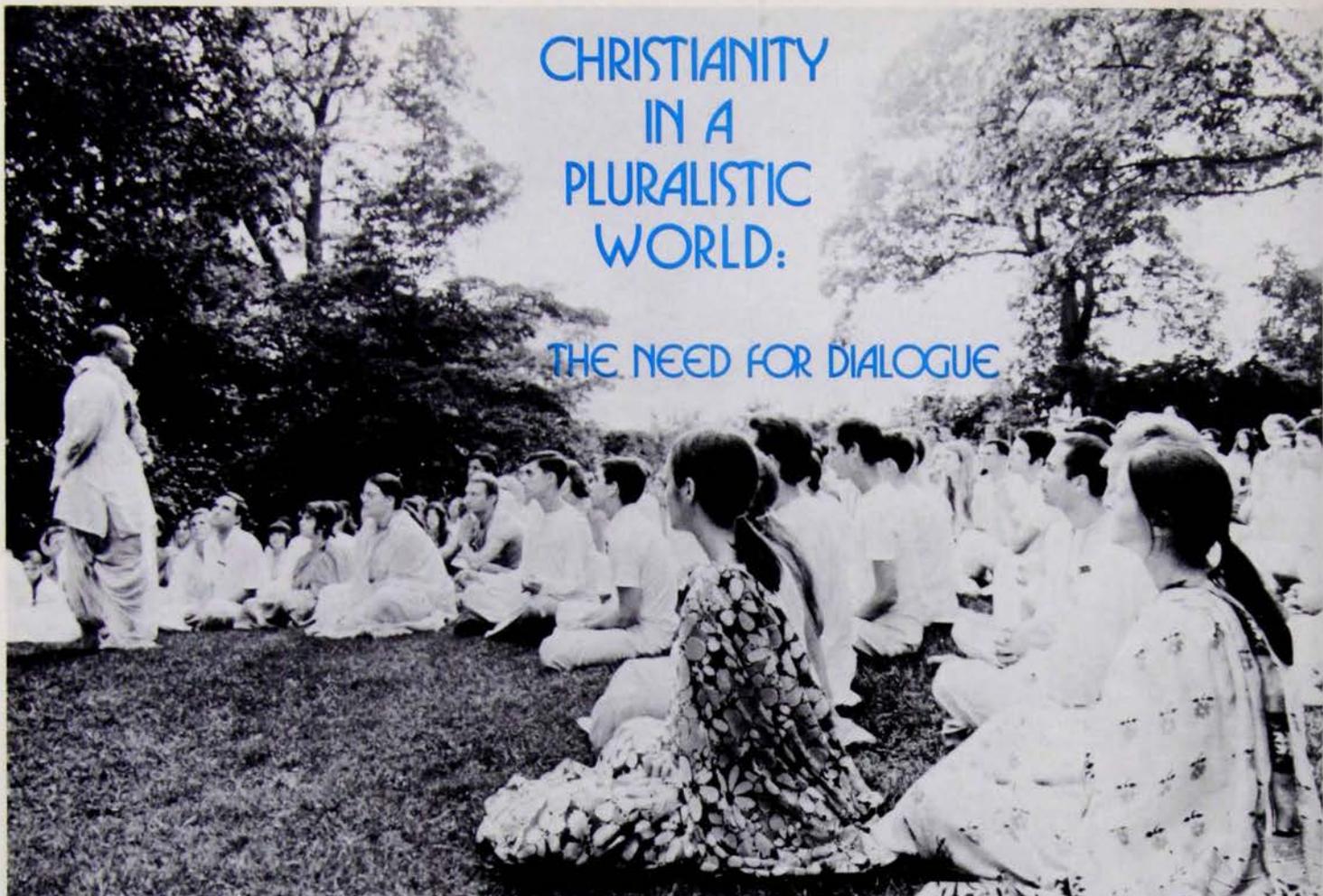
*Dr. J. Robert Nelson, professor of systematic theology at Boston University School of Theology, is widely known in the United Methodist Church as a forceful exponent of ecumenism. His latest book is *Science and Our Troubled Conscience*, published by Fortress Press.*



Leaders of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) discuss a possible merger of the two denominations.

# CHRISTIANITY IN A PLURALISTIC WORLD:

## THE NEED FOR DIALOGUE



WESLEY ARIARAJAH

Colombo is the capital city of Sri Lanka. Jaffna is an important town in the northern part of the country. An express train runs between the two cities. 'Express' is perhaps a misleading word; the train takes eight hours to cover the distance of some 200 miles. In many parts of the world trains are much faster and train services are much more efficient. But here in Sri Lanka express trains take their time.

There are, of course, people who complain about this. They think it is a criminal waste of time. But most of us are used to it, and resigned to it. Some of us even feel that the Colombo-Jaffna train has through the decades played an important sociological role.

Before the inhibitions of modern life crept into the Jaffna train, perfect strangers who started on the journey in the same compartment often ended the journey as good friends. They talked. They exchanged information regarding their jobs and their families. They discovered mutual friends and shared interests. In a country where "arranged" marriages are still the order, many marriage proposals ori-

ginated during these long journeys.

Things have changed. Today people are less open. They do not make friends so easily or so fast. But even today eight hours of enforced togetherness will rarely be eight hours of silence. We are bound to make enquiries, ask questions and offer comments. In human company we are rarely silent in the East.

It is here in the Jaffna train, more than in any other place, that I have learned the meaning of the word "dialogue."

In Sri Lanka 65 percent of our people are Buddhists, 18 percent are Hindus, and eight percent are Muslims. Christians are a small minority, spread throughout the island.

"When will we reach Jaffna?" That's usually how we begin the conversation. In the West they discuss the weather. Not in Sri Lanka. Here when the train will arrive in Jaffna is far more uncertain than the weather.

We move quickly on to personal introductions. Then, in all likelihood, we pass on to politics and education—two common topics of conversation in this part of the world.

Then, more often than one imagines, we pass on to subjects like family life, the problems of youth, unemployment—even to topics like suffering, death and rebirth.

I am a Christian. In fact I am a clergyman, though in short sleeves. Fairly early in the proceedings, I admit my Christian and clerical status. In my experience so far, such admission has never put a brake on the gathering process of exchanging news and views.

But within myself I must face an important issue. Here I am, discussing with a Hindu or a Buddhist questions of politics and suffering and the problem of death. Am I, or am I not, engaged in this discussion as a Christian—that is, as one who has committed his life to Jesus Christ? Can I engage in a conversation on any of these issues from a neutral or "natural man's" standpoint?

To me the answer seems obvious. If I am a Christian I am always a Christian. I am no less a Christian in this train, talking to a Hindu, than I am in the church participating in a service of worship with fellow Christians.

## Dialogue under attack in Nairobi

Nairobi is a long way off. It is in Kenya, Africa. The Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches met there in 1975.

One of the programs of the World Council is "Dialogue with peoples of other faiths and ideologies." When this program was discussed at the Assembly there was heated controversy. There were those who expressed the fear that dialogue would dilute our faith. There were those who argued that dialogue would lead to syncretism. Still others were afraid that the dialogue program might divert us from our commitment to mission. "Why are Asian Christians so keen on dialogue?", people asked. "Have they lost their sense of mission? Do they not want to proclaim the Gospel to the millions of people in Asia?"

In Nairobi many of our friends from the West questioned the need for dialogue.

## Dialogue is a way of life

But dialogues go on in the Jaffna train. Here we are unaware of the debate that took place in Nairobi.

And dialogues go on in all Asian countries, in trains and buses and schools and markets and fields and factories. Millions of Asians are in daily dialogue with their brothers and sisters who profess faiths different from their own, or profess no faith at all. Sometimes they are conscious of their religious differences; at other times they are not. Sometimes the dialogue is superficial; at other times it deals with issues at depth and matters of significance.

At that level, the level of ordinary, everyday life, we have to be in dialogue. Nobody can ask us to adopt a different way of life, because for us in Asia there is no other way to live.

But the word "dialogue" has acquired in recent years a more specialized meaning. It means a new style of relating to other faiths. It points to a new style of interfaith relationships.

## Dialogue and Theology

At the level of theology, dialogue affirms that this world is God's world. He made it. He remakes it. He is involved in its total history—not just in the history of Christian people, but in the history of all people. God does not leave himself without witnesses at any time anywhere.

Christians are the community of people who witness to the coming of God's kingly rule in Jesus Christ, but even they cannot ignore the fact of God's abiding concern for and continuing activity in the whole of his creation. Nor can they ignore the attempts of his creatures everywhere to know him, to love him, and to reach him—however different from theirs, or however feeble and ineffectual such attempts may seem to them.

All religious communities are on a pilgrimage. Are they partners in that pilgrimage or rivals and competitors? Should they make it as friends comparing notes or as strangers unconcerned one with another?

Dialogue calls for a new assessment of the theological significance of people of other faiths. Its emphasis is not on religions or systems or ideas; its emphasis falls on people. It says that people are not simply objects for conversion. The histories of peoples in Asia or Africa, it says, are not outside the scope of God's activity.

What has God been doing, it asks, in the lives and with the history of hundreds of millions of men and women whose beliefs are different from ours? How do we evaluate their rich spiritual heritage? How do we understand their life and history in relation to our own mission of communicating the message of Christ to all people everywhere?

## Then and now

It is true that we did not always ask such questions. There was a time when Christians considered other religions to be "untrue" and those who believed in them to be "superstitious." They were convinced that all other religions had to be replaced by Christianity. They considered other religious communities as rival communities which had to be relentlessly fought and conquered.

Much of this is past history. In our attitude to other religions we are more charitable today, and more realistic. We are more willing to listen and to learn.

Dialogue, thus, is a positive approach to the problem of religious pluralism. It is positive theologically. It is also positive in our relations and transactions at the practical level.

## What is the goal of dialogue?

But what will dialogue achieve? What is it for? That was the question most persistently asked in Nairobi. It is

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a legitimate question. Are Christians planning to join people of other faiths? Are they trying to come to a common mind and establish a common religion? Or is dialogue just another ruse to convert others to Christianity?

## Listening and Learning

Before we discuss the goal and purpose of dialogue, let me share with you an experience I had a few years ago.

The Ramakrishna Mission, named after a great Hindu saint, is a Hindu mission organization. It has centers in many parts of the world. It runs schools and hostels and hospitals—much in the same way as Christian missions did in the past and still do in many places.

In Colombo we have a Ramakrishna Mission. It has been their custom for some years now to invite a Christian minister on Christmas eve to give a message.

The lot had fallen to me that year. Hundreds of Hindu devotees had gathered together in the *pooja* (prayer) hall to listen to the Christian preacher.

After I had preached the sermon, a Hindu friend took me to the swami's (priest) residence. "We were much blessed by your message," my friend said to me. I smiled, feeling a little embarrassed. "You have a large gathering," I said, "and people listen so attentively."

"Yes," he said. But he obviously wanted to talk about something else.

"You see," he said, "we can get Christians to come and speak to us more often, but. . . ." He paused, and then continued, "Most of them do not preach the way you did tonight. They are so closed. They seem to think they

have nothing to learn."

I was looking into the hall where the swami was leading the people in the final acts of the *pooja*. The people were now joining him in a devotional song.

My friend was awaiting my response to what he had said.

"Those Christians are convinced," I said, "that they have a message to preach. They are convinced that the message would bring release to all people . . ."

"Certainly," he interrupted me. "But you see, we too are a mission. We too have our beliefs. We must all preach what we believe. But how can it be that Christians have nothing whatever to learn from Hinduism? How can you reject Hinduism as a whole? When you reject the religion, you reject the people."

On my way home I kept thinking of my friend's questions and his final comment. Have we nothing to learn from Hinduism? In rejecting the religion are we rejecting the people?

### Dialogue is for community

By listening and learning we grow in community with others. Dialogue indeed is for community.

Let us try to understand clearly what the statement means.

There is a very simple fact that none of us can deny. We live with people of other faiths. In Asia we are surrounded by them, we share our life with them, they are our neighbors, they are our colleagues. Our lives, at many, many levels, are intertwined with theirs. When a person accepts Christ, very often his or her immediate relations—parents, brothers and sisters—continue in their old faiths.

We share our racial, national and linguistic identities with people of other faiths. We join hands with them in our struggles to make human life more truly human. In the search for peace and in the task of building up our nations we work with them.

We do so as Christians. Our faith permeates all our life. All our decisions, whether they have to do with the so-called secular areas of life or with the so-called religious areas, are dictated by our faith.

Also, as the Christian community we believe that we transcend the barriers of race, class and nation. We cannot live as an isolated community; the Christ whom we confess is our Lord and the Lord of all people.

At least these are true as far as our beliefs go. They are the demands of

our faith. As Christians we cannot seek a life apart; we can only seek life together.

In actual practice, however, we do not live up to these demands of our faith. Both as churches and as individual Christians we live a kind of double life. We seek community with people of other faiths in many spheres of life, but we won't have anything to do with the faith by which they live. We eat with them and work with them but we won't pray with them. In the sphere of religion we hold ourselves apart. We consider them 'lost' till they believe exactly the way we believe. We are ready to teach them; we are unwilling to learn from them. In other words, we go on seeking community and at the same time denying community.

### Dialogue is the way of humility

We cannot have community without communication. True communication is a two-way process. It cannot take place if one of the partners involved in it says, "I won't listen; I'll only talk."

Dialogue stresses the need to listen and learn. It creates community. Those who commit themselves to dialogue can no longer behave as if all truth belongs to them.

Of course we have our identity as Christians. But only as others have their identity, as Buddhists or Hindus or Muslims. These distinct identities need not insulate us from one another. Ours is not an identity which separates us or sets us apart. Rather, it is a basis of relationship—a relationship of caring and sharing. Dialogue will help us to grow in that relationship.

Dialogue urges us to hold fast to these links. It urges us to affirm the fundamental unity of human beings as members of the same human family.

For us who are Christians this affirmation is not at the expense of our faith in Jesus Christ. On the other hand it is an expression of our faith in Jesus Christ. Because it is our vision and experience of his humanity that drives us to seek and live in community.

### Dialogue and witness

Among people who are opposed to dialogue are sincere Christians who fear that the stress on dialogue will blunt the cutting edge of mission. "People are already indifferent in matters of evangelism," they say; "the emphasis on dialogue will make them even more indifferent."

This is a serious criticism, and we must take it seriously. Will dialogue

make us less committed to evangelism? Will it prevent us from proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to people around us?

There are many words we use as Christians—like witnessing, preaching, proclaiming and confessing. Sometimes we talk of "taking Christ" to a place or a people; sometimes we talk of "presenting Christ."

When we preach Christ, we do not preach in a complete vacuum. We preach to people with whom God is already present. Long before the preacher came along, God was with them. An African theologian once said, "God was not a stranger in Africa before the coming of the missionary." God is not a stranger in Asia either. After all, he created Africa and Africans, and Asia and Asians—even as he created the missionary. That's why none of us can 'take' God to a new place. For God no place can be 'new.'

If God has been with the people to whom we proclaim the Gospel, then should we not find out how he is active in their life and what he has been telling them down the years?

The good news of Jesus Christ needs to be preached in the context of God's ongoing activity among a people. Dialogue is what makes us listen to their account of that activity—which is their experience of God.

We cannot of course stop with listening. None of us will claim that we have nothing more to know about God and God's work in the world. As we listen, therefore, we also learn—of the manifold ways in which God deals with people and the many ways in which people respond to God. By dialogue we also mean this process of learning. It is not a process which is opposed to preaching or proclaiming. It is a process which, on the other hand, will make our preaching all the more relevant and, therefore, all the more effective.

### What is the Purpose of Witness?

Perhaps at this point we should ask the question: "What is the purpose of witness?" Is it to make the listener come to the same theological understanding as the person who witnesses?

What passed for witness was often not witness to the living Christ. Rather, it was witness to a theological position about Christ; it was witness to a dogma and not to a person. But what right have we to insist that everyone must understand and experience Christ exactly as we do?

Incarnation is the Word becoming



“... Much of authentic witness in the future will be possible only within dialogue situations.”

Dialogue situations can include informal conversations (above, left), formal conferences (below) and meetings at a high level, such as this visit of the Dalai Lama with Philip Potter, general secretary of the World Council of Churches (bottom).

flesh. It is God becoming man in Jesus. It is God's dialogue with the world. What we proclaim is Jesus Christ; when we proclaim him, we are in fact proclaiming the fact of God's dialogue with people—and continuing that dialogue.

Dialogue and witness do not present to us alternative courses of action. We do not have recourse to dialogue because we have decided not to witness. Dialogue points to a way of life with others; witness is what happens within that way of life. Dialogue calls us out of our closed and intolerant ways to mutuality and genuine relationship. Within that relationship witness does not “shout at” others or try to “win over” people; it becomes sharing, sharing what is most precious in our lives, what in fact controls our lives.

It is important to know that our neighbors of other faiths no longer welcome the “Christian mission” as understood in the past. There are sufficient signals and indications of this in different parts of the world. Sadly so many in our time still hold on to this idea of mission which, despite all the modern clothing, is still basically arrogant and intolerant in its attitude to other faiths. Unfortunately most of mission theology developed during the period of Western cultural

triumphalism and colonial expansion which left their mark on mission theology. Today politics has changed but not theology.

It should be of interest to those concerned with mission that our neighbors of other faiths do not question the right and joyful privilege of all believers to confess their faith and bear witness to it in life and in word. What they insist, however, is that such witness has to be mutual and in a genuine spirit of dialogue. It is certainly not too much to ask of the followers of the crucified Christ.

Dialogue is certainly not a new tool for mission, and should never be allowed to become an instrument of manipulation. At the same time it is becoming increasingly clear that much of authentic witness in the future would be possible only within dialogue situations. To ignore this would be to ignore the facts and signs of our time. ■

*The Rev. Wesley Ariarajah, former chairman of the Northern Synod of the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka, now is on the staff for Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies of the World Council of Churches. The article is excerpted from a booklet first written for the Christian Conference of Asia and to be published by the WCC.*



# IS AMERICA A CHRISTIAN COUNTRY? ONE JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

INGE LEDERER GIBEL

**M**y friend, Judith Hershcof Banki, assistant director of Interreligious Affairs for the American Jewish Committee is, unlike me, a native born American. Her optimism about this society is to some extent shaped by an environment and experiences that were somewhat different than mine. She likes to quote Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum's assessment that religious pluralism is America's "most valuable export." She further argues:

"Perhaps the greatest contribution that the United States has made to the understanding of religious liberty is that it separated the concept of good citizenship from allegiance to any particular faith. This separation was not easy to achieve, but it has proved our greatest blessing. It has left religious groups free to exercise their prophetic function, to stand apart from and criticize the shortcomings of society and policies of the government, and it has allowed for the flowering of religious diversity unmatched in any country in the world. There have been periodic attempts to fudge that distinction: throughout our history, there are people who have said, in effect, 'Believe as I do, worship as I do, or you are not a good American.' Fortunately, the great majority of the American people—perhaps remembering the religious persecution their forebears endured in the other places—have rebuffed them, and reaffirmed the enduring value of the Constitution. Religious pluralism in the United States is the fruit of religious liberty."

The sixties may have been the modern period that moved us closer to Ms. Banki's and Rabbi Tanenbaum's perception of American reality than any time since the American Revolutionary period itself. But the same period may also have sown the seeds of reaction, as seen in such contemporary phenomena as the Moral Majority.

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“ Perhaps the greatest contribution that the United States has made to the understanding of religious liberty is that it separated the concept of good citizenship from allegiance to any particular faith. ”

the most humanist people of faith today are struggling to find answers to such questions as women's rights, family stability, relations with the third world, human rights, and whether this society can really afford the kind of social welfare programs that Presidents Kennedy and Johnson began and President Carter tried to continue. To some extent we may have hurt the causes we believed in when we let a small group of self-styled revolutionaries and moral anarchists confuse the public about our goals and their methods.

#### Humane Changes or Destructive Distortions

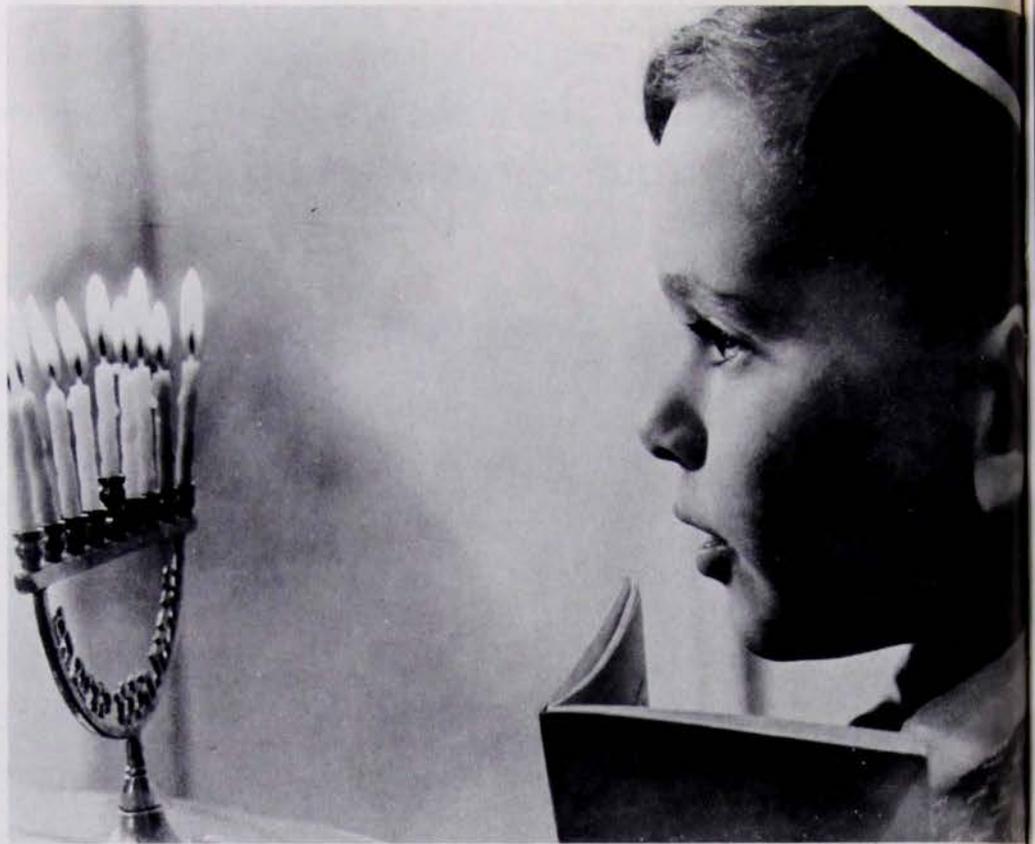
If middle America has in the last few years begun to believe that our concern for these issues leads to a variety of new and threatening problems they face in their communities, the nation at large, and in the weakening of America's international image, then perhaps it is our fault for not making it clear sooner that there is a difference between the humane and progressive changes we are about and the destructive and nihilistic distortion for which the clever manipulators of the right blame us. Thus, for example, although the pornographic explosion in this country is profoundly anti-feminist and anti-human, it is only recently that some of us have begun to raise our voices about this last bastion of good old free enterprise capitalism. We should not have left it to the Rev. Jerry Falwell to reject *Penthouse* and *Hustler*. As people of faith, Christian and Jewish, we should have long ago recognized that liberation theology is as much about one kind of oppression as another.

My concern, my fear, for what will happen here in the next several years is not just for the Jewish people. Right wing extremism, which I think is once again being promoted by an alliance of right wing Christian theology and right wing politicians less interested in



Two contrasting approaches to Jewish-Christian relations are this interfaith seder in Long Island, New York, (top) and this Dallas center of the American Mission to the Jews (above).

(Right) A child sings during a Hanukkah service. (Below) Rev. Bailey Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, caused a furor by saying that "God Almighty does not hear the prayers of a Jew." (Below) American Jews rally in Washington in support of the state of Israel.



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theology than in power and profit for the wealthiest, is not healthy for any of us, no matter how seductive their approach may be on one's pet issue. That is why right wing support for Israel does not charm me or lull me into silence on other issues.

### Who Are Our Friends?

As a progressive Zionist, who believes that Israel's best security and long-term survival as a prophetic Jewish state lies in finding solutions that are just to all the partners in the Middle East conflict, I believe that our best Christian friends are those who make their commitment to us clear while not being afraid to voice their criticisms, when the Government of Israel, like all governments, makes mistakes. I don't want to be loved because I fulfill someone else's theology. Right wing evangelicals and Christian fundamentalists are not allies I can count on. They love Israel today because its reestablishment confirms their understanding of Scripture. They see Israel as a first step toward the conversion of the Jewish people to accepting Jesus as Messiah. The remnant of world Jewry, left us by two millenia of forced baptism, auto-da-fe, pogroms and, finally, Holocaust did not survive so that our grandchildren might disappear into the ranks of a faith in whose name we were oppressed.

But there are American Jews who are willing to gamble with this kind of support for Israel, because they see our liberal Christian friends deserting us, as most of the world has, for hypocritical and oil hungry reasons in some cases, and for blind and inflexible ideological reasons in others. When you're desperate, and feel your back is up against the wall, you sometimes take support wherever you can get it. When four hundred prominent, mostly liberal, Christian theologians and clergy sign a statement (see February NWO, p. 43) against Israel in terms that are filled with half truths, simplistic slogans and outright lies, is it any wonder that there are many Jews, to whom the Evangelical desire for our conversion seems less threatening or real than "liberal" work on behalf of Israel's destruction? And, I might add, is it any wonder that many, many Americans, mostly Christians, lose patience with liberal/radical theologians whose hatred for the excesses and exploitation of right wing regimes seems to blind them to the same

atrocities that often follow when a more 'militant revolutionary' regime takes over? I am second to no one in my contempt for the Shah of Iran as well as those forces in our government that have in the past supported regimes like his, but was it really wise for some 'liberal' clergy to tell the American people how saintly Khomeini was at the very time Americans were being held hostage in Iran with his support?

### What Kind of Christian Nation?

America is a Christian nation, in the popular consciousness, but what kind of Christian nation will it be? Will it be a nation where, as has happened before, the poor will be considered cursed by God and the wealthy blessed by the Deity, for reasons best known to Heaven? Will we have a government supporting "Western Christian civilization" in South America? Will it be a nation where sex will be considered for procreation only, and dirty to boot, and where women who indulge in it less selectively will be forced to continue unwanted pregnancies while community support services, from health care to inexpensive day care centers, are cut to the bone? Will it be a nation, discarding the best of what has been called Judeo-Christian ethics, where the criminal justice system will go back to an approach that will combine the worst of the much misinterpreted "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth" stricture, with no funding for remedial correctional services?

### Second-class Status

Finally, coming back to one Jewish woman's perspective—and please remember it is just one, Jews do have a tendency to resist central authority; none of us speak for all of us—will this once again become a society where non-Christians will be made to feel like second-class citizens, where political campaigns will suggest "vote Christian," where our children will be forced to sing hymns in praise of a Messiah we do not accept, in public schools supported by taxes of all citizens, regardless of religious affiliation? Will it become a society where the shocking anti-Zionist rhetoric of some black power and other self-styled revolutionary leaders in the sixties and seventies is overshadowed and outstripped by the increasing legitimization of pseudo-historical associations claiming the Holocaust is a

"I pray that the majority of Christians will resist the 'Christianization' of this nation."

hoax? Or where ministers feel comfortable in stating that God does not hear the prayer of a Jew? Will it become a society where we are asked to live not by the voice of God—or conscience—as we hear it, but to the voice of God as it is interpreted by fundamentalist Christian ministers and politicians? Their voice tell them little about feeding the hungry and clothing the poor and protecting the defenseless, but reveals what our attitudes must be on sex, the draft, and building nuclear and other deadly stockpiles if this is to be a truly Christian nation.

For all our sakes and for the sake of America and its power in the world to do good, for the sake of what Christians and Jews might yet become to each other, I pray that the majority of Christians will resist the "Christianization" of this nation. Then, we can work together to do the work God wishes us to complete here on earth, an earth where, however we see the path to heaven, it surely must be one of peace, and love, and justice. For, as Dr. David Flusser, the great scholar teaching New Testament at Hebrew University of Jerusalem, once told a group of visiting Christian scholars, "Gentlemen, let us not argue about who the Messiah is. Let us work to make a world where he will want to come, and when he arrives in Jerusalem we will ask him, 'I beg your pardon, is this your first visit to Israel?'" ■

*Ms. Gibel is on the staff of a major American Jewish organization. Her essays on Israel and intergroup relations have been published in Christianity and Crisis, Response, Worldview, The Christian Century, Israel Horizons and many other publications.*



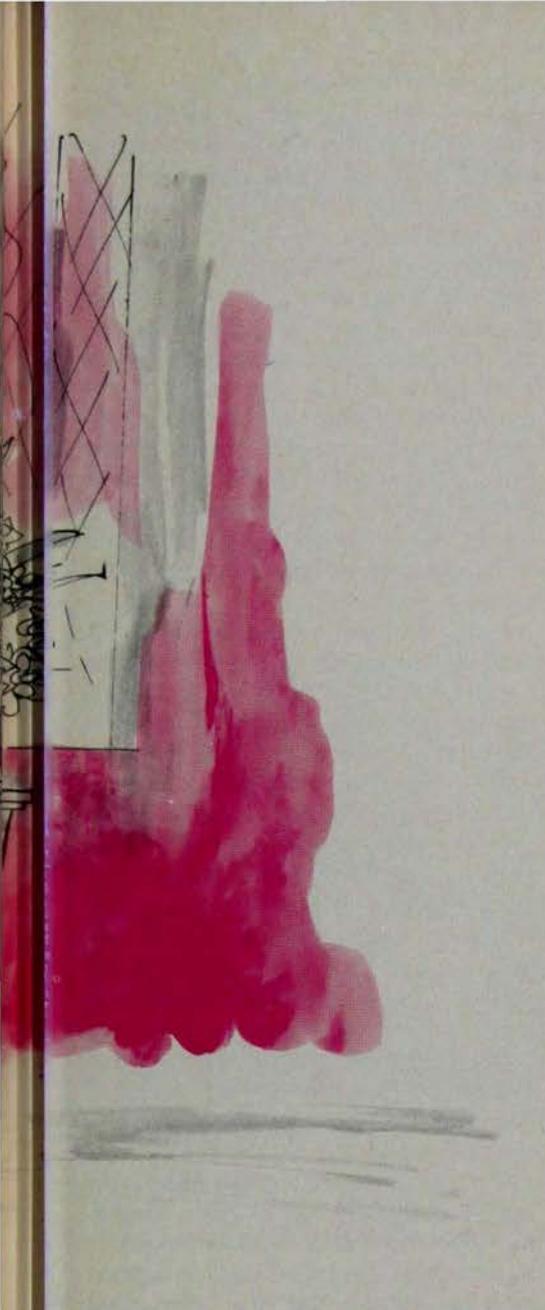
## CAN THE GOVERNMENT REGULATE RELIGION?

**H**ow broad is the principle of religious freedom when it comes to putting beliefs into practice in the United States? Just how free is the free exercise of religion guaranteed in the Constitution? Can government ever legitimately define acceptable religious conduct or dictate policy to religious organizations for the sake of the common good?

These questions periodically trouble the experience of democracy and religious pluralism in a land where the civil authorities are supposed to keep hands off religion. They are troublesome today, and are nowhere better illustrated than in cases and controversies involving the taxing power of the federal government.

American churches and other religious organizations, liberal and conservative, have argued for years that federal tax law has a chilling effect on both their free speech and their free exercise of religion. They have especially objected to an Internal Revenue Code stipulation that "no substantial part" of a tax exempt organization's activity can be aimed at influencing legislation. This restriction—the so-called "lobbying clause"—also applies to eligibility to receive deductible contributions from taxpayers. It is politically defended on the grounds that the public must be protected from nonprofit corporations, including religious ones, that might use tax-free dollars to pursue self-serving ends.

While only one church entity (Christian Echoes National Ministry, headed by evangelist Billy James Hargis) has lost its exempt status under the lobbying clause, champions of religious liberty consider the limitation a threat to the right of religion to define its own missions and ministries. Much of organized religion is careful not to even inadvertently embrace the provision, inserted into Tax Code Section 501(c)(3) in 1954 and never directly tested before the U. S. Supreme Court. Constitutionally-based opposition prompted the National Council of Churches and the U. S. Catholic Conference to join forces in a successful 1975 petition asking Congress to exclude churches from a voluntary,



organizations of a "public policy" test in qualifying for or maintaining tax exemption. Under the test, groups found in "violation of public policy" are in jeopardy of losing (or not obtaining) exemption and the right to receive tax deductible gifts.

To date the focus of legal action, and of legal and theological debate, has been on newer religious movements still struggling for social acceptance and on religious schools resistant on religious tenets to the mixing of the races. Of several current court cases, one of the most important is that of Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina. IRS revocation of the fundamentalist institution's tax exemption was upheld last December by the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. At this writing, that ruling, which overturned a district court decision favorable to the school, was up for possible rehearing at the appellate level and was likely bound for the Supreme Court.

The name "Bob Jones University" is enough to send many American Protestants, Catholics and Jews, along with their organizations, on a fast trip in the opposite direction. Founded in Florida 54 years ago and moved to Greenville in 1940, the 5,000-student university teaches and practices a brand of Protestant fundamentalism insistent on racial purity. It prohibits interracial dating and marriage within its community which ranges from kindergarten through graduate school; consequently, its name is a synonym for racism in various religious quarters, including some in which the idea of defending Bob Jones University from any punitive government action is tantamount to disloyalty to the religious quest for a just society. At a mid-March interfaith conference on "Government Intervention in Religious Affairs," more than a few white liberal and black heads shook, if not in disagreement then in regret, when a speaker suggested that all American religion should hope that the university regains tax exemption on its own religious terms.

The Rev. Dean M. Kelley, director for religious and civil liberties of the National Council of Churches, believes churches committed to racial equality will be short sighted if they stand apart from the Bob Jones case because they disagree, as he does, with the university's racial attitudes and practices. "The principle at stake," he says, "is larger than the race issue, as important as that is. The principle is the free exercise of reli-

gion, whether government can use its taxing power to penalize an institution it acknowledges to be religious because the IRS decides that a practice based on religious belief violates federal public policy."

Kelley does not contend that government may never regulate religious activities. A paper he recently wrote with Dr. Marvin Braiterman, a professor of law at New England College, Henniker, N. H., asserts that government "can and should" in limited circumstances intervene in religious affairs to protect public health and safety, maintain public order or pursue some genuinely "compelling state interest." Kelley and Braiterman, a Jewish specialist in church-state relations, do not, however, give a list of permissible circumstances and they stress minimal not maximal intervention. When uncertainty arises, they say, "the doubt should be resolved in favor of religion," and both doubt that health, safety, public order or a compelling state interest are served by revoking the tax exemption of Bob Jones University. If government is once allowed to use a public policy test in giving its stamp of approval to a religious organization, they wonder whether state regulation of religion can ever be checked.

#### Agreeing With Bob Jones U.

Such persons as Kelley and Braiterman are also bothered that the IRS moved against Bob Jones University not on the strength of statute law but on the basis of tax agency rules written in response to a court decision not initially applicable to religious institutions. A brief summary of the Bob Jones litigation will both trace the history of how "public policy" rules affecting religious schools developed and set forth the IRS side in the case.

In 1970 the IRS announced that it could find no legal justification for the tax exemption of private educational facilities with racially discriminatory admissions policies. Before that, all private schools, regardless of racial composition, were rather automatically exempt under Tax Code Section 501(c)(3), and until then Bob Jones University had excluded blacks. The year following the IRS announcement, a federal court in Mississippi ruled that private schools discriminating on the basis of race were not entitled to tax exemption. This decision in *Green v. Connally* specifically concerned non-sectarian schools but the court sug-

## ELLIOTT WRIGHT

expenditure-based formula drafted to give clearer meaning to the vague term "substantial."

### A New IRS Test

Recently, another and somewhat related tax controversy has been added to the catalogue of troublesome church-state issues; one not now either as well known or as volatile within the major churches as the lobbying limitation but, according to the watchdogs of religious liberty, no less threatening to the whole of organized religion though it has emerged on the fringes.

The new issue is Internal Revenue Service application to some religious



Leaders of many religious groups met in Washington this year to discuss government regulatory intrusions into religion. William P. Thompson, stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, (right) speaks while Marvin Braiterman of the Synagogue Council of America listens.

gested that it might also apply to religious institutions. The IRS rule reflecting the decision was confined to the secular sphere.

Meanwhile in 1971, Bob Jones University was trying to defend its exemption. It claimed it was a religious institution being treated as only an educational center by the IRS, but it opened its doors to married black students. The university also sued to enjoin the IRS from revoking its tax exemption. In 1974 the Supreme Court rejected the suit on a technical point, and the next year Bob Jones began to admit unmarried blacks but adopted a rule prohibiting interracial marriage or dating. Such action failed to satisfy the IRS. Racial integration was by then considered a matter of well defined public policy and in 1975 the IRS had adopted a ruling forbidding a religious school practicing discrimination to retain a nonprofit, tax exempt status.

### Bureaucratic Tyranny

The IRS in 1976 revoked Bob Jones' exemption retroactive to late 1970. The university paid federal unemployment taxes for the five previous years then filed for a refund. Rejection of its claim opened the way for a court hearing on the merits of its case. The federal district court in South Carolina ruled in favor of the school. Bob Jones University, said the 1978 decision, is a religious organization entitled to exemption. The court furthermore declared that the "public policy" test for exemption does not apply to religious organizations and is probably a questionable test anyway since it raises the troublesome issues of what is public

policy and who decides. Letting the IRS decide, said the trial court, could result in "bureaucratic tyranny."

Almost two years later the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the federal district ruling. Two of the three appellate judges concluded that Bob Jones University is both a religious and an educational organization and, being in the form of a school, is subject to loss of tax exemption for violation of public policy. The majority also intimated that religious organizations may be subject to the "public policy" test in qualifying for exemption.

The third judge in a dissenting opinion totally disagreed with his colleagues. Judge Emory Widener agreed in essence with the district court but he went on to explore the implications of the fight between the IRS and Bob Jones University. Judge Widener suggested that what is involved is a clash pitting the constitutionally-guaranteed right of free religious expression against the noble goal of racial integration, a goal also involving basic rights.

### When Civil Rights Conflict

Which is compromised when two civil rights conflict? Does an appeal to religious freedom override well defined public policy supporting racial integration, or vice-versa? Judge Widener observes that in the national order of things the First Amendment, which contains the religious clauses, "is somewhere between transcendent and high." He notes that churches were exempted from the Civil Rights Act of 1964; therefore, constructing a legal possibility to practice racial discrimination in the name of religion.

And he points out that the public policy supporting even-handed racial treatment has been legally abridged by educational and employment programs intended to benefit minorities.

Given such considerations, Judge Widener would allow Bob Jones University's religious right to outweigh arguments against its tax exemption, even should that contravene general civil rights policy on race. To do otherwise, he says, would violate both the free exercise and the no-establishment clauses of the First Amendment: the no establishment provision violated in effect by defining interracial marriage and dating as part of the content of all religion.

Judge Widener's minority opinion is preferred to that of the majority on the Fourth Circuit by many advocates of religious liberty; it is not acceptable to the IRS, or to individuals and religious groups that hold the vision of a fully interracial society as a virtual article of faith and hope. Some supporters of the Fourth Circuit majority believe that all racial discrimination, including that which may be religiously based, represents a grave threat to the social health and should be eradicated by government force if necessary.

While the ideological struggle continues, the Bob Jones University case has a curious political footnote. The IRS rule applying a "public policy" test on race to private and religious schools stirred a backlash in Congress. Twice, in 1979 and 1980, the lawmakers in Washington amended appropriations acts to prohibit the IRS from using federal funds to "formulate or carry out any rule, policy, procedure . . . which would cause the loss of tax exempt status to private, religious or church operated schools under 501(c)(3) . . . unless in effect prior to August 22, 1978."

Thus, Bob Jones University lost its exemption under a rule in effect for only three years. This legal curiosity at least temporarily undercut the IRS as an agent of public policy in religious schools; it puts a burden on Congress to consider what, if any, public policy the government has on racial discrimination in religious organizations. And religion has the right and the responsibility to complain if government policy threatens its freedom. ■

*Elliott Wright, a frequent contributor, is a United Methodist minister, Journalist and author, whose most recent book is Holy Company.*



This boatload of "displaced persons" shows past U.S. policy towards European refugees.

## IMMIGRATION ANXIETY: America at the Crossroads

Patrick A. Taran

**T**oday, the United States is at the crossroads of its future as it faces a major crisis with its entire immigration policy.

Refugees, migration and immigration are concerns which are increasingly taking center stage in the national public debate, not only here in the United States but around the world. At issue inevitably in the discussion of immigration and refugee concerns is the future of the community, of the country, of relations with neighboring nations, and of the world itself.

Following nearly three years of exhaustive study, the United States Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy released on March 1st its findings and recommendations

for revamping U.S. laws and policies in those areas.

Among the major recommendations formulated by the Select Commission are proposals to legalize the status of undocumented persons already established in this country, to impose sanctions on employers who hire undocumented or "illegal aliens" and to increase border enforcement as central measures to stem the flow of illegal migration into this country, and to continue the admissions levels for normal, legal immigration at levels similar to current admissions quotas. However, loud and influential voices are advocating different measures to deal with this country's immigration dilemma. Some dispute the legaliza-

tion of the undocumented. Others object to the discriminatory consequences of employer sanctions. And numerous interest groups are demanding that the United States vastly reduce its annual immigration quotas.

### Our History of Diversity

Our history as a nation and as a community of faiths has been created through the coming together of diverse peoples and traditions from around the world. This country from its very founding has been a nation of immigrants. Indeed, few among us can go far back in our family histories without encountering immigrant forebears.

U.S. immigration laws and poli-

cies have gone through four major changes. The first, from 1790 to 1874, was one of unrestricted immigration. The second, from 1874 to 1920, has been called the period of Qualitative Immigration. A series of laws were enacted to protect the U.S. through qualitative restrictions prohibiting the admission of certain types of individuals, such as convicts, prostitutes, persons with dangerous diseases, lunatics, anarchists, illiterates and "subversives", among others. Certain ethnic groups were also deemed excludable.

The period of Quantitative Immigration began in 1921 with the enactment of a law which set for the first time in U.S. immigration history a numerical quota limitation on the number of immigrants entering the country. The actual country by country quotas subsequently set tended to favor the admission of Northern Europeans and to restrict immigration of Southern Europeans and others wanting to come to this country.

Since 1965, we have been in what has been termed the period of Family Reunion and Provision for Labor Needs. The inherent racial discrimination in prior immigration law was recognized and the Immigration Act of 1965 abandoned prescribed country quotas. Instead, annual ceilings were set allowing immigration of 120,000 persons from the Western Hemisphere and 170,000 from the Eastern Hemisphere each year. A preference system was established for allocating visas placing great emphasis on family reunification. Early last year, passage of the Refugee Act of 1980 finally established a rational, comprehensive policy for admitting refugees and insuring their resettlement in this country.

### Growing Recognition of Serious Problems

Over the last several years, serious questions have been raised about the effectiveness of the present immigration policies. There is a growing recognition that the laws and politics now in effect are neither adequate to the contemporary world nor to the needs of American society today.

The "new mood" in the country has heightened the debate. Immigration has emerged as a hot political issue which touches many of the other problems currently faced by our nation. At times, however, it seems to be used by some politicians to focus

attention away from those other problems.

Immigration issues, because they deal with many diverse groups of people and interests, can only be described as complex. So complex they are that some of the steps being proposed as "the answers" could very well turn out to have exactly the opposite effect from the intended one if they are implemented.

In its final report to the President, the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy divided the issues and its recommendations into ten sections. As a means of focusing the discussion, some of the Commission's recommendations will be shared as will be differing viewpoints.

### The Real Issues

The Select Commission presented its recommendations in ten categories: (1) International Issues, (2) Undocumented/Illegal Aliens, (3) The Admissions of Immigrants, (4) Phasing in New Programs Recommended by the Select Commission, (5) Refugees and First Asylum Issues, (6) Nonimmigrant Aliens, (7) Administrative Issues, (8) Legal Issues, (9) Language Requirements for Naturalization, and (10) Treatment of U.S. Territories under U.S., Immigration and Nationality Laws.

The question of how to deal with the

undocumented persons or "illegal aliens" in the country looms as the greatest concern for many people. There is no way of actually counting the number of people in the United States illegally and estimates of how many there are vary. When asked by the Select Commission for its estimate, the United States Census Bureau came up with a figure of from three and one-half to six million such persons currently in the U.S.

Whatever the exact numbers, the situation faced by the undocumented in this country is extremely serious. In its final position statement, the United Methodist Southwestern Border Consultation held last year declared, "... we know that millions reside in all parts of this United States and make their contributions to the support of it, as do its own citizens—yet, only because of their status as non-citizens, many are deprived of basic human rights essential to their welfare and also essential to the growth and health of the nation."

Worse still, the undocumented live in fear of being detected, uprooted and deported even after living and working many years here; in short they live in fear of persecution in this country, a nation that describes itself as being a land of freedom from persecution.

The economic consequences of the status of the undocumented are also very serious. As the North American



Congress on Latin America stated in a recent report, "Declaring some workers 'illegal' creates an atmosphere of intimidation and fear that allows employers to keep wages low, divide workers and inhibit unionization."

The Select Commission, reflecting the consensus among many groups and echoing the United Methodist Border Consultation recommendation, stated that it "recommends that a program to legalize illegal/undocumented aliens now in the United States be adopted".

There are, nonetheless, numerous voices opposing such a blanket measure. A common rationale is that granting legalization to the "illegals" would encourage further illegal entry in the future; it would simply be an incentive for more to try to come in the hope of another such amnesty in the future.

Some opponents state that such a legalization or "amnesty" measure would in effect penalize unfairly those immigrants who opted to wait, sometimes years, to gain legal visas through the established procedures. Others, such as politically conservative legislators, raise questions about the fiscal impact of such a measure, stating their concerns that more people may be added to the public assistance rolls.

It should be noted that income and social security taxes are deducted from the pay of most undocumented work-



ers. However, studies have consistently shown that very few undocumented workers apply for social benefits to which citizens are entitled or even for income tax refunds. Their economic contributions are calculated to be far greater than their costs to the U.S. economy. There is little data to suggest that this situation would be reversed if the undocumented were legalized, even if they applied for all the services to which they would be entitled.

Whatever the economic considerations, they are secondary to the serious social, ethical and political issues raised by the continued illegal status of literally millions of people working, living and making contributions in the United States. The continued non-recognition of these people and of their rights as human beings in this country is a serious injustice, one clearly incompatible with the concept of a just, free, and pluralist society.

**Fleeing refugees in Southeast Asia symbolize the new reality (opposite page). Will they be received and integrated into American society?**





These Cuban refugees behind barbed wire show the difficulties some new boat people have in being resettled in the U.S.

### "Stemming the Flow"

The question of how to stem the flow of new illegal arrivals is generating perhaps even more controversy than the issue of the status of those already here. As is obvious, these two issues are inseparable. Even those who most vocally support an amnesty for the undocumented here recognize that measures must be instituted to diminish future illegal arrivals of foreigners. Even the more conservative estimates indicate that 250,000 to 300,000 more people are illegally arriving than leaving this country each year now.

A real difference of approach to "stemming the flow" has emerged. Is the thrust of U.S. law and policy to be on measures restricting or preventing the movement of individuals? Or are the underlying questions of causes and motivations for migration going to be addressed?

The emphasis of the Select Commission's recommendations is on the first approach, with two basic thrusts. In the first, the Commission "recommends that Border Patrol funding levels be raised to provide for a substantial increase in the numbers and training of personnel, replacement sensor systems, additional light planes and helicopters and other needed equipment."

The second major recommendation of the Commission in this area is "that legislation be passed making it illegal for employers to hire undocumented workers". This is the so-called "employer sanctions" proposal.

These two recommendations, however, merely address the symptoms, rather than the real causes, of the problems of illegal migration in the opinions of numerous groups involved with the issues. "We should be putting our efforts into making migration unnecessary" said Aurora Camacho Schmidt of the American Friends Service Committee in response to the Select Commission recommendations. "As long as the pressure of poverty continues to weigh so heavily on the people of Mexico and other countries, they will continue to migrate to the United States."

A major controversy has been stirred by the employer sanctions recommendation itself. Such a measure carries with it the necessity of imposing a relatively fool-proof national identification system to distinguish legal from undocumented workers applying for jobs. The Select Commission itself could not reach agreement, however, on recommending such a system as a national identity card.

This employer sanctions recommendation has raised two major concerns. One, echoed unanimously by civil rights, Hispanic and other organizations, is that any such measure would tend to further racial discrimination. Employers would tend to avoid hiring people who simply looked or sounded foreign to avoid the risk of hiring undocumented workers and then facing prosecution. Hispanics in particular fear that the many people of Latin origin legally in this country

would face increased difficulty in seeking employment.

A second major concern is raised most often by civil liberties groups who argue that any kind of national identification system could and would be subject to abuse by authorities. Such systems, they note, are the basis of control over individual citizens by

It is worth noting that a number generally estimated at 30% of current immigration emigrate from or leave the United States each year.

A number of interest groups feel that the current immigration quota levels should be reduced. Senator Alan K. Simpson (R. Wyoming), a member of the Select Commission, suggested

country is today very low. It is generally accepted that the current economic system of this country depends on some rate of population growth to prosper, if not to survive. Immigration has been and continues to be the way of meeting the need for some overall population growth, as well as meeting certain specific needs for qualified labor.

No other country in the world has achieved what this country has in openly accepting immigrants and refugees. There are few if any other cities like New York or San Francisco or even others of this country with the diversity and the variety for which these are famous.

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**“Today we are confronted by a major theological, philosophical, political and human decision.”**

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authoritarian governments.

One point, in any case, must be kept in mind as these proposals for new laws are being considered. Any measure which might even tend to promote discrimination needs to be carefully questioned in light of the continued need to ensure tolerance and acceptance of all groups as essential bases for a pluralist society.

### **Regular Immigration**

The area of legal immigration policy is the one at the heart of the concern for pluralism. The Select Commission recommends “continuing a system where some immigrants are numerically limited but certain others—such as immediate relatives of U.S., citizens and refugees—are exempt from any numerical ceilings.”

The Commission also recommends “an annual ceiling of 350,000 numerically limited immigrant visas” which would be relatively little change from the current quotas totalling 290,000 annually. It has also recommended adding an additional 100,000 extra visas for the first five years to provide a higher ceiling to clear the tremendous current backlog of eligible applicants awaiting slots in the quotas.

The United Methodist Border Consultation recommended increasing the worldwide quota limit of immigrants “to not less than 500,000 persons each year, with no numerical limitations for contiguous countries (Canada and Mexico)”.

such a measure in his own comments included in the final report of the Commission. “If immigration is continued at a high level and yet a substantial portion of the newcomers and their descendants do not assimilate, they may create in America some of the same social, political and economic problems which existed in the country which they have chosen to depart”, wrote Senator Simpson. The Senator went on to note, “Adverse economic impacts do occur—not only because of illegal immigrants, but also due to refugees and legal immigrants who are admitted under family reunification preferences, which do not require a screening for labor market impact. Adverse impacts include unemployment and less favorable working conditions for U.S. workers, together with related costs such as welfare or other transfer payments to adversely affected U.S. workers or their families.”

Some groups are proposing changes in immigration policy which can only be described as extreme. One such proposal calls for a five year moratorium on all immigration. Another, more understandable measure proposed is to severely curtail or stop immigration until the unemployment rate falls below 5%.

More data would have to be presented than has been to justify any major reduction in the current or recommended levels of net legal immigration. The overall rate of growth of the native population of this

### **Refugees and Asylum**

In terms of refugees, the Select Commission recommended upholding the basic provisions of the Refugee Act of 1980, while suggesting a few changes in resettlement measures.

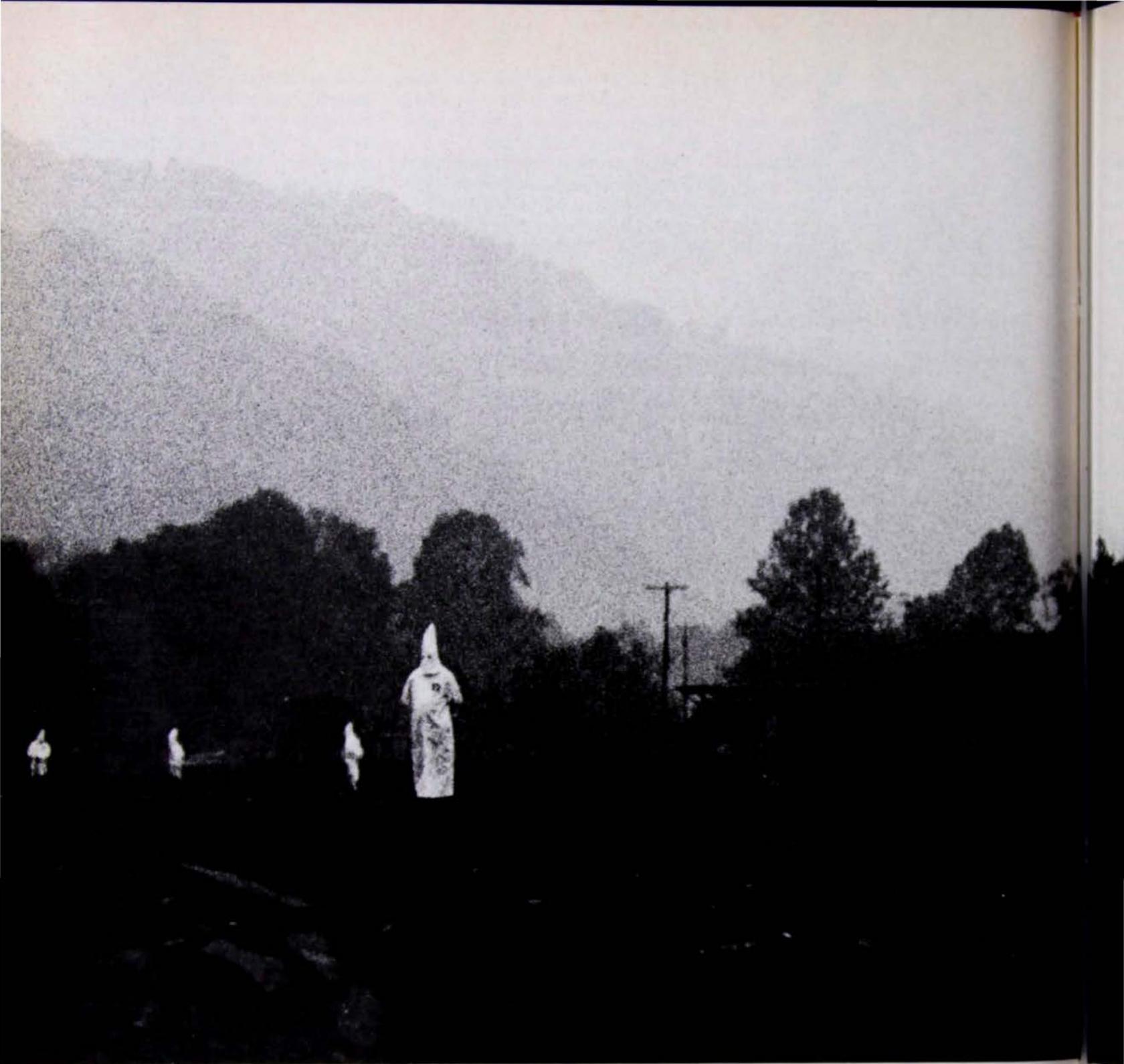
The major question left unanswered, however, was that of how to respond to the growing numbers of peoples who arrive in large groups seeking haven from oppression in neighboring lands. This question was raised most dramatically last year with the mass arrivals of 130,000 Cubans and 40,000 Haitians and with the continuing arrivals of tens of thousands of El Salvadorans seeking asylum from persecution in their homelands.

Again, this concern returns to the realm of the international issues affecting migration. And here, too, it clearly brings into focus the international, or foreign, policies of the United States. While the Select Commission recommended little more than further study to better understand migration issues, it is apparent that much attention must be given to considering the effects of United States support for governments whose policies result in exoduses of refugees.

The choices to be made are dramatic. As the United Methodist Border Consultation expressed it, “Today we are confronted by a major theological, philosophical, political and human decision: whether we will be a people of diversity open to newcomers or whether we will intentionally decide to begin closing the doors to others and become a people unto ourselves. ■

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*Patrick A. Taran is a free lance writer specializing in immigration affairs.*



## THE KLAN AND THE CHURCH—WHAT IS THE NATURE OF PO?

*Michael Curry is a graduate of the Harvard Divinity School and a minister in the United Methodist Church. Ella Curry is a registered nurse with a specialty in coronary care and psychiatric nursing. With the exception of the three years they spent in Cambridge, Massachusetts while at Harvard, the Currys have lived their entire lives in their native state of West Virginia.*

**W**e had arrived in Smithburg only two weeks prior to that initial telephone call . . .

"Hello. Is this Reverend Curry?"

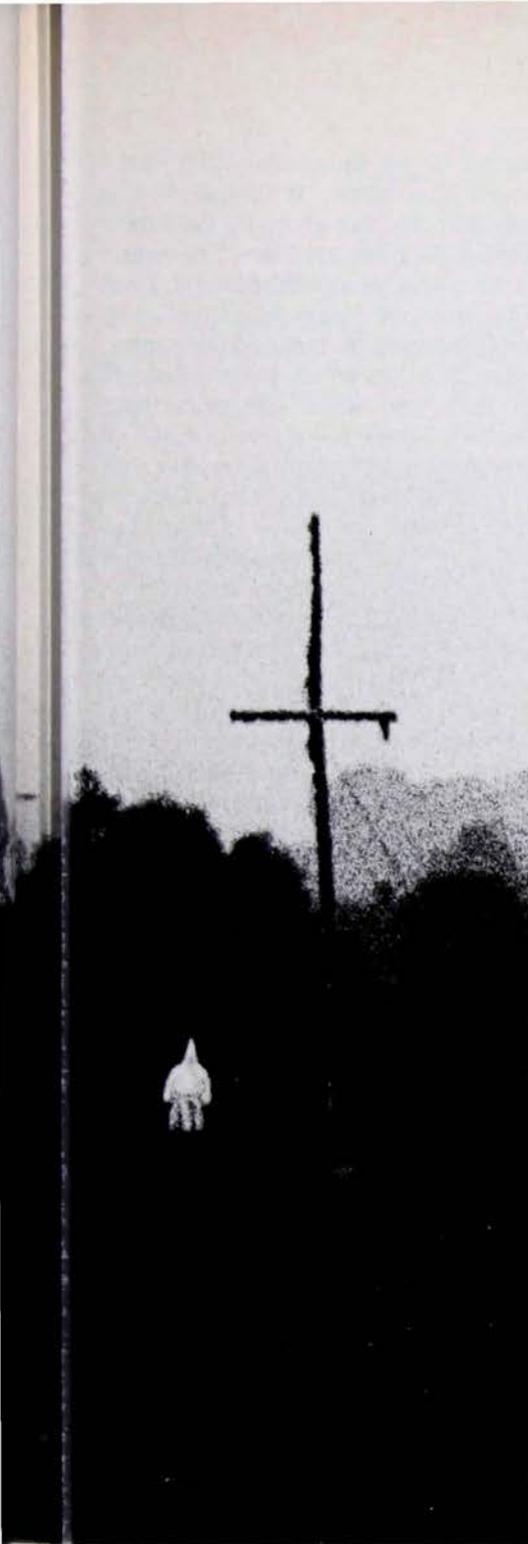
"Yes it is. Who is calling please?"

"I am a representative of the Ku Klux Klan of America. We have great respect for your churches and would like to involve one of them in some of our activities in the area. Specifically, we want to preach to your congrega-

tion next Sunday and then give the people a chance to join the Klan after the service. Of course, we will be fully robed—we have found it to be more effective that way. Also, we would like to use your church as a recruiting base for our efforts in and around the county . . ."

Upon refusing to allow such a thing to happen in the church, a six month campaign of terror developed, involv-

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## What? Michael and Ella Curry

ing everything from childish name-calling and hate-letters to property damage and actual physical assault at gun point. As native West Virginians, we were absolutely astonished that such events could happen to us right in our own back yards.

I (Michael) was raised in the southern part of West Virginia, deep in the coal mining country of Appalachia. My dream had always been to serve a

small circuit of churches somewhere in the rural sections of the state. Those were the people with whom I identified; I knew their sorrows and their celebrations. Most important of all, I held an enduring respect for the local church which plays such a crucial role in the cultural life of the mountaineer. Ella was very familiar with the Smithsburg area, having grown up in a town only thirty miles away. However, we were soon to discover that the dream which we had held so dear for so long—having our own team ministry back home—would crumble under the pressure of a political terrorist group.

**F**or the six months we were there, our ministries were undermined and Ella and I lived in fear for our very lives. Ella faced the threat of rape on two occasions, and eventually was forced to withdraw from the local college where she was pursuing an upper level nursing degree. The seven mile drive to and from campus became so threatening to her that the church purchased citizen band radios for the parsonage and her car so she might be equipped to call out for help should the need arise. I was told that I would be "shot in the pulpit one Sunday if I did not denounce the entire body of social policies" found in the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church.

We were not the only ones to suffer at the hands of these irrational fanatics. A woman of our congregation told us about an encounter her children had experienced in the school playground . . .

"They told the children to go home and tell their mommies and daddies not to go to our church on Sunday. They said they were going to pour blood on the altar and burn a big cross. They frightened the children when they said how *dangerous* it could be." The very thought of these people willfully involving innocent children in their terrorist tactics was beyond my comprehension. Was this the price we had to pay for living in a free society? Was there not something that we could do to bring an end to this harassment?

Much to our amazement, we learned that there seemed to be very little that could be done to end this nightmare. Without concrete evidence that could lead to a *specific individual's* involvement in these crimes and abuses, we simply had nothing that would "stand up in court" or justify an FBI investigation. The law enforcement officials

told us that they could not investigate or infiltrate a group per se without violating their civil rights. The Klan's rights were protected. We often wondered what had happened to ours? The notes and letters signed "KKK" were merely circumstantial evidence and the telephone threats, although illegal, were impossible to trace to a particular party. The "KKK Toll Roads," wherein on one occasion Michael was forced out of his car, verbally and physically assaulted, and threatened with a high-powered rifle, were described by one police officer as "no different from majorettes and brownies who ask for money at public intersections." We will never forget the day when a high-ranking officer told us, "It would be different if you had been shot. Then you might have stood a better chance in terms of the law."

**W**ith the generous help of Congressman Peter Peyser of New York, we were able to stimulate an investigation of sorts; but considering that it was initiated months after the fact, at a time when we were already relocating in another region of the country, it all seemed to be another case of "too little, too late." The investigation would uncover only confusing contradictions and conflicting accounts. Our choice then was to pick up the pieces of our lives and ministry and try to start anew the work we felt called to do.

Ours was an experience devoid of the convenient abstractions which color academia and scholastic debate. That arena of hypothetical dilemmas was suddenly and radically transformed into a concrete struggle between the most basic principles for which we stand and a band of individuals whose very right to exist hinged upon those same principles—principles which they seemed dedicated to destroy for others. The protections which were designed to protect the civil rights of all persons were twisted and utilized as a smoke screen for subversive behavior which would eventually rob us of the most basic freedoms of all: the right to live safely in our own land, to pursue a career of our own choosing and to live free from the threatening conditions which typify so many other nations around the globe.

The immense political ramifications of this issue are extremely important to all citizens. Yet, it is the *theological* implications which arise out of experiences such as ours which I feel the

church must address directly.

The resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan is not simply a racial or religious problem. Historically, we can see a clear pattern of Klan activity escalating during periods of economic and political instability. Today, the persistent thief of inflation pushes us deeper and deeper into a sense of disenchantment and powerlessness which seems to contradict everything that the Protestant work ethic propagates. Nearly every time we turn on our televisions and listen to the nightly news we hear about the decline of American influence across the globe.

The barrage of gloom and doom has the effect of creating a "cultural depression," the likes of which have not been witnessed since The Great Depression. Desperate citizens appear to be searching for something to which they can hold while riding out the storm of social uncertainty. Surrogate social groups, such as the Klan, effectively exploit our societal confusion and frustration, and provide individuals with a sense of empowerment, peer affiliation and self-esteem which they lack while standing apart from this crowd. These special societies come complete with their own private rituals and symbol systems known only by those who actively participate in the group's activities. Through such an affiliation, the members find a basic sense of centeredness and orientation for their otherwise disjointed lives. They are suddenly a part of something significant. They belong. They finally realize that they have a place, even if that place is within a group whose basic principles and behavior runs counter to the principles and values which were held sacred prior to joining the group.

**T**he obvious question which comes to mind is "why does the church continue to fail to fulfill these fundamental needs?" It is not helpful to moralize superficially and simply say that the church "should" be fulfilling these needs. Further, I do not find it helpful even to ask "how" we might begin to satisfy the cravings for peer sanction, self-esteem and power. Yet, many in the church today seem extremely preoccupied with these very ideas. Granted, one can hardly doubt the benefits of true fellowship and the personal gratification which accompanies many religious experiences. However, one must question if

the church has not taken a wrong turn in trying to provide its people with a tangible sense of power. Undoubtedly, a terrorist group such as the Ku Klux Klan can give its members a very real sense of power.

This constitutes a powerful package which must look very attractive to many individuals who are floundering amid their own meaninglessness. Sadly, it is the poor and the dispossessed people who suffer the greatest degree of political and economic powerlessness, thus, often becoming the prime targets in the recruitment drives of terrorist groups. Clearly, the church does not need to offer its own version of this type of power. Even if we tried, we would fail miserably in comparison. Instead, the time has come when the church must begin to address its most basic presuppositions regarding that which we claim constitutes *Christian power*—namely, *powerlessness*.

If we are to take the fundamental reality of the cross seriously, it seems that we must awaken to the reality that many of our churches are failing to equip our people with the ability to live with or to understand this notion at the very core of our faith. In light of our inability or unwillingness to live with ambiguity, some churches are choosing to seek power instead of the cross. However, it is my belief that those churches which try to offer their members a basic sense of power either end up doing it less effectively than the other more potent groups, or they drift so far from that which is central to the faith that they become unrecognizable amid the various agencies whose goals they have adopted.

The most basic question in the entire discussion centers on our understanding of the direction or flow of our faith. Is the Christian faith in its most basic sense, a faith which results in the *acquisition* of something special, or a faith which results in the *relinquishment* of something special? In other words, does the believer "possess power" because of his/her spirituality, or does the believer opt for a fundamental position of "powerlessness" due to his/her spirituality?

**T**hese questions, like the gospel itself, center around the nature of love. Is love something acquired or given? There are those who would argue that there is no greater manifestation of grace than God's gift of love

offered to all believers. With this I would fully agree, as long as it was clear that the love given by God *must* likewise be given to others. The nature of love is always a *giving* process. Even to say that one "possesses love" is to misunderstand its most basic nature. Those churches which try to transform our faith into some sort of vertical economy wherein the sole purpose of believing is to acquire power, or esteem, or even God's favor, circumvent not only the nature of love, but also tragically misunderstand the miracle of the Cross of Calvary.

The Cross of Christ fully exemplifies the true nature of love. It represents the most radical manifestation of humility, self-sacrifice and powerlessness that the world has ever witnessed. It is this same cross which Jesus calls us to bear and only in doing so, can the believer finally embrace the true significance of the *power in powerlessness*. Only then can we as the church begin to curb the individual's craving for the type of power offered by such groups as the Ku Klux Klan. Further, when this basic sense of power through powerlessness begins to affect the daily attitudes of believers, then we will actually benefit from the struggles associated with the current socioeconomic alienation and political powerlessness. By refocusing our attention upon the cross and away from the seductive idol of power, we can most effectively alleviate those cultural and spiritual conditions which give rise to violent and destructive movements within our society and church.

Finally, the current resurgence of a terrorist group such as the Ku Klux Klan does not represent the final destruction of our pluralistic society nor does it simply represent a necessary evil with which we must merely endure. Rather, those hooded men who held Michael at gun point represent one symptom of a broader cultural and spiritual crisis. For Christians, it is nothing other than a challenge of faith which presents us with a choice—the age-old choice which faced the first disciples. We can choose to acquire more and more power and security through the affiliation with any and all groups which claim to offer such goods, or we can choose to embrace our own cross, drawing upon that power, and become in reality members of the Body of Christ. Therein, we will decide how the church shall fare in this crisis of faith. ■

# FROM THE EDGE OF OBLIVION

MARY LOU SANTILLAN BAERT



"¡Allí viene la vieja!"

The seventh-grade class was suddenly alerted by one of the students standing at the door that the teacher was coming back. It was not that the students were rowdy, out of their seats, or talking loudly. Most of them were just not doing the assignment. They were making plans for after school. But the alert had been sounded. Everyone began to write or read.

The teacher had also heard the warning and knew the magic of those words. She had heard them so many times before, even though she still had not learned the meaning. She was young and this was her first experience with an almost 100% Spanish-speaking student population.

Sure, we knew English—we were seventh graders! Nevertheless, it was easier for us to speak Spanish in the classroom, the playground, the lunch room, wherever two or more of us gathered together. This was the only language most of us had spoken for the first six years of our lives. This was the only language we spoke at home, at church, in the neighborhood, on the street. This was the language we had used from the beginning to express our

joys, sorrows, pains, delight. It was impossible to forget it overnight. We had been nurtured in this language and we had drunk deeply.

Why was it necessary to use only English, even at home? Most of the parents did not speak or understand English. To cease to speak Spanish at home meant having no communication with our parents. Was English more important than communication with our parents? That's how it seemed to us.

Occasionally, the teachers would come into the neighborhood to visit or take the census. There were never enough lines on the forms for all the children's names. The children often became the interpreters. In frustration perhaps, the teachers again insisted that Spanish must not be spoken in the home, that it was no good, that the customs, culture, and language of the old country must be forgotten. How could we explain all this to our parents? It would have broken their hearts to be made to believe that what they knew and kept alive in us must be destroyed, eradicated, uprooted completely from our lives so that we could become "good Americans." We were

bewildered and confused knowing that we had not fully interpreted everything to our parents that the teachers had said, and we felt ashamed and guilty for continuing to speak Spanish.

My father spoke and understood English, so he spoke for himself and his family. He kindly informed the teachers that he believed he had the right to determine for himself what could and could not be spoken or done in his home. His and mother's culture was rich and the language was the language of the angels. We maintained the culture, the customs, the language of our parents—all eleven of us children.

In the midst of all this "wrongness"—wrong language, wrong culture, wrong everything—one thing stood out: the sense of community, the importance of the family. The community was aware of the birthdays, the marriages, the baptisms, the funerals, the unemployment, the promotions. We were everyone's "ahjado" or "ahijada" (godchild) and the adults were our *padrinos* (godparents). Whether you knew the people by name or just slightly, you were taught

to deny no one your greeting as you passed them on the street.

Many children in the community, it is true, never finished out the school year. Their family took them out of school and left town—to go to the beet, tomato, cotton fields, or wherever there was work. The teachers could never understand why the families did not stay in town and try to put at least one of the children through school. One? Why not all? How would you choose which one? No, the family was more important than the individual: all must survive, not just one. To accomplish it each individual gave up his or her personal desires to assume responsibility for the whole family. Children were taken out of school not because parents were not interested in their children getting an education. Far from it. In their poverty, they knew what an education could mean for their children. They wanted their children—all of them—to go to school, but how can hungry children learn? If there is no money for food, there is even less for a pencil or a piece of paper.

We—my brothers and sisters and I—were “fortunate” in that we were able to stay in school year after year. Somehow, even with eleven children my father managed to feed us, clothe us, and send us to school. We were “fortunate” in that we had an opportunity to learn. But we were not so fortunate because we were subjected to ridicule and ignorant statements about ourselves. Our names were changed because they were too hard to pronounce. The teachers did not realize that for us, too, their names were hard to pronounce, but we could not change their names.

Once, one of the teachers was given a Christmas present. It sat on her desk for an hour or so. The teacher said we were just not curious, that Mexicans did not like surprises. Had she bothered to check, she would have discovered that we had been taught to respect other people's property and must not touch what did not belong to us. Curiosity was present, but not at the expense of not respecting someone else's property.

In college, the Spanish teacher asked me to write a paper on my experience at my first bull fight. I told her that I had never seen a bull fight in my life. She came back with, “All Mexicans go to the bull fights. You just don't want to write the paper because you're lazy. I expect that paper from

you.” I went to the library to read up on bull fights and wrote the paper about my frightening experience when I watched my first bull fight. I do not even remember what grade I got and I did not care because it was all a lie, but who would believe me?

It was not always so terrible. There were always one or two teachers who really made us feel human and decent, especially those in elementary school who stayed with us for many years. They were the ones who prepared us for high school and always encouraged us. They were the ones who learned Spanish so they could be a part of us. They were the ones who finally caught on to what “¡Allí viene la vieja!” meant.

Growing up in a Spanish-speaking barrio in Dallas, I never dreamed that one day my family would become involved with the Wesley Community Center in our community or that we would be joining The Methodist Church. It never occurred to me that day that we joined the church that several years later I would go to Mexico as a missionary. I was looking out the window of that social center. The poverty, the sickness, the hopelessness of my people gripped my heart as I heard the hymn, “The voice of God is calling . . .”

There was no need to go to language school—it was part of my heritage. I had spoken it at home, at church, everywhere. I could begin to share the Good News immediately. There was no need to adjust to the customs and the food. I had been brought up in the best Mexican tradition. I would be able to feel at home.

As I look back at my life, I am grateful for parents who believed deeply in the benefits of keeping the culture alive in us, especially through the language. My parents certainly had no silver or gold to give us. But how well I remember the family gatherings, the neighborhood wakes, the games, the story-telling in the doorsteps in the evenings, the news—full of drama, excitement, and rich humor—spread by the women across the fence, the music, the relatives, food cooking, the cultural programs in the park on “el cinco de mayo” (May 5th) and “El Grito” and the celebration of Mexico's independence on September 15 and 16. Even the school principal let the classes out early on those dates in September, and he was an Anglo!

We had a great pluralistic barrio. In the midst stood a Jewish synagogue.

Our neighbors—our landlord—were Jewish. There were a few Anglos also. And we lived in peace.

Why must people be assimilated? Why can't we live according to our own heritage and customs? If God had wanted an assimilated people, he would have made sure that we were all made like paper dolls—all alike, one color, one culture. I believe in a God who finds excitement in diversity. Look at his rainbow! Look at the fields!

God even sent Jesus into a world of different cultures and different languages. The sign nailed on the cross—“Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews”—was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek.

Does one culture and one language make one people? If love casts out fear, why are we so afraid of the “other” who is of a different color, speaks a different language, lives in another part of town? Assimilation means death for those who are different, pluralism means life for all. ■

*Mary Lou Santillan Baert is a minister in the Rio Grande Conference of the United Methodist Church. She served as a missionary in Mexico for 14 years.*





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# The Story of Justin Haruyama

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Connie Myer

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Justin Haruyama was a man of two cultures. Born on November 27, 1932 in Brawley, California, he was the son of a Japanese father and American mother of Japanese descent.

His father, the Rev. Chozo Haruyama, a minister in the Methodist Protestant Church (Nihon Mifu Kyoyai) of Japan, who had come to the U.S. for seminary training, remained to serve Japanese Methodist congregations in the 1920s. Due to the Great Depression and to discrimination, many Japanese returned to Japan in the 1930s. The Haruyama family went back in 1936 when Justin was four.

Justin's father started a new church in Yokohama and his mother began a kindergarten connected with the church. Then came World War II. Mr. Haruyama became an interpreter for the Japanese Army, forced to leave his wife and three sons alone. For a long time, Mrs. Haruyama didn't know if her husband was alive. The family also was in constant fear from bombing attacks. Mrs. Haruyama found support in daily prayers.

When the family was reunited after the war, Japan was in a poor economic condition. Universities had virtually ceased to operate. Many Japanese—either former residents or new arrivals—came to the United States to study with the aim of returning to rebuild their nation. It was decided that Justin's older brother, Bernard, would go to America for education. Justin, then 14, wanted to come, too. His parents, reluctant because of his age, finally approved. The boys were met at their ship in San Francisco by their uncle, the Rev. Lester Suzuki, also a Methodist minister, who took them by bus to Seattle. During the long ride, young Justin became ill and vomited in his shirt. He didn't want to distress his uncle, so he didn't tell him. Mr. Suzuki only found out about it years later.

### An Admirer of Gandhi

Even though they were American citizens, it was a difficult transition for the Haruyama sons to be in the United States in 1946. They were in the land

of their former enemy where some Japanese-Americans had been in detention camps during the war. The brothers found jobs as houseboys in American homes to support themselves while going to school. They had to relearn their English. Despite these problems, young Justin persevered. He studied hard, joined a school debating society and filled student body offices. He was so popular that he was nominated to run for student government president in his senior year at high school in Oakland, California, where his uncle had moved. On the election eve, the 19-year-old Justin stowed away on a ship leaving San Francisco. He was caught and detained in Yokohama. Justin's wife, Sara, says his goal was to sail on the ship to India to become a follower of the late Mahatma Gandhi.

In Yokohama he was taken off the ship in handcuffs and sent to a harbor jail. During the ten days he was in jail he made friends with the other prisoners. He asked his mother to bring sweet potatoes, a delicacy, to those prison-

“Justin Haruyama was a true sensei (teacher) to many.”

ers, when his parents came to release him.

Justin finished high school in Japan, at the same time helping his parents in the church and school. He decided he wanted to become a Christian minister and teacher. His plan was to return to the U.S. to get higher education and then come back to help his father. He received an A.B. degree from the University of California at Berkeley where he also worked with church youth groups. To sample east coast life, in 1956 he went to Columbia University Teachers College in New York City to study for a master's degree. After traveling across country by bus, he got a job to support himself during his studies.

### The Church in New York

In New York he was an active member of the new Japanese-American United Church, a merger of Methodist and Reformed Japanese mission churches. Haruyama taught Sunday school and sang in the choir in musicals presented by the church youth group. During summers he worked in a gift shop of church members at Lake George in upstate New York.

At Teachers College Justin met Sara Frances Hamilton, from Troy, North Carolina, who was studying to prepare herself as a Methodist Church missionary teacher in India. Perhaps because of their deep Christian commitment, and their common interest in India, the two fell in love. Though Sara changed her plans about going to India, both were still strongly motivated for eventual overseas work. When they graduated in the spring of 1958, they were married. Justin enrolled at Duke University Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina, so he could see and get to know Sara's family. Sara taught school to support them and their first child, Andrew, was born.

### Back in Japan as Missionaries

The now Rev. Justin Haruyama had planned to return to his father's church after his ordination, but now he, too, changed career goals. He and Sara were accepted in 1961 as missionaries to Japan by the mission board of The Methodist Church. Justin was one of the first Nisei (first generation Japanese born in America) to be a Methodist missionary. They served under the United Church of Christ in Japan, the Kyodan, as regional missionaries in

the southern-most prefecture of Kagoshima in Kyushu.

Justin supported about eight Japanese pastors in Kagoshima district, a stronghold of Buddhism. Though church growth was slow, the faith and enthusiasm of the Christians was vibrant and alive. Preaching, as well as organizing Bible classes, work camps and summer camps, kept Justin busy. Sara, who had studied the Japanese language in Tokyo, taught a Bible class, did translations and tutored their two oldest children in English. Stephen and Amy were born to them in Japan.

### In New York Again

During a furlough in 1967, Justin attended his former church in New York City. The pastor, the Rev. Alfred Akamatsu, planned to retire and asked Justin if he would be interested in replacing him. But Haruyama was committed to five more years of missionary service. More letters were exchanged between the two pastors. Justin knew many new Japanese people were coming to New York City; they needed to be reached with God's message. In 1972 he accepted the offer to be the church's new pastor. The church was now in a newly renovated building at 222 Seventh Avenue, between 24th and 25th Streets, in Manhattan.

The church opened vast new areas of service for Justin Haruyama. In the years of search for a new building, the congregation had become somewhat disheartened. "He had a vision for our church, a vision that came from God," said a congregation member. That vision brought new life to all groups in the church. Inspired by Haruyama, young people openly expressed their faith; older shut-in members were cheered by his visits; he challenged women to take leadership roles. "I thought I never could teach Sunday school," said Mrs. Kinko Poulsen, "but Justin, in his gentle way, pushed me to keep going. Now I'm the superintendent!"

### A Wide-Ranging Ministry

Mr. Haruyama expanded the Japanese language church school, attracting children whose parents were in New York from Japan on business. He also began a summer youth camp with some teachers from Japan. He guided the church's older youth group, which meets Sunday afternoons for prayer and discussions and holds retreats, Lenten services and Bible classes.



Mr. Haruyama (left, above) at a home meeting of a church group. On page 37, he is shown speaking, preaching and welcoming a Laotian refugee family.

Fluent in both Japanese and English, Justin continued the church's bilingual worship services, choosing hymns that were printed in both English and Japanese. The call to worship might be in English or Japanese; prayers and the sermon were in both languages. He began a weekly bilingual church newsletter with an inspirational message.

He soon realized the estimated 50,000 expatriate Japanese in New York needed many services. He was especially concerned about wives of businessmen, who were mostly at home and bore the burden of raising the children. Haruyama was instrumental in beginning the ecumenical Special Ministries to Japanese in the Metropolitan Area, which includes Christian radio and TV broadcasts, house meetings, cultural and English classes at local churches or community centers, counseling and Bible study groups. The Kyodan in Japan sends missionaries to New York to direct the program.

#### A UMCOR Director

In the cause of the United Methodist Committee on Relief, where he became a member at large, Haruyama visited Latin America and the Caribbean. Combined with his international background, these experiences helped him bring the Japanese-American United Church to a new understanding of Christian mission. The congregation shared some of its 25th anniversary funds with the Chinese United Methodist Church in New York City and in 1979 sponsored a Laotian refugee family of four.

Justin Haruyama was well known in

wider church life. In 1979 he was elected chairperson of the United Methodist New York Annual Conference Council on Ministries. As the minister of the only UM Japanese-American congregation on the east coast, he brought new insight to the denomination's emphasis on ethnic minority ministries. He also became a member of the United Methodist Northeastern Jurisdiction Task Force on the Ethnic Minority Local Church. His concern about urban mission led him to serve on the United Methodist City Society board, where he pointed out needs of Asian Americans. He was a member of the UM Asian American Caucus Executive Committee.

Despite all these responsibilities, Justin's first loyalties were to his family and his congregation. Each summer the family spent a month's vacation at a cabin in North Carolina's Great Smoky Mountains. There they drank water from a chilly mountain spring and feasted their eyes on trees and distant horizons. "We are truly refreshed by God's wonder and beauty," Justin said.

#### His Last Sermon

At Sunday luncheons, served after worship at the church, Justin loved to walk from table to table, often carrying his plate, laughing and greeting everyone. He stayed on after luncheon for other activities, as the far-flung congregation, some coming from Westchester County, New Jersey and Connecticut, renewed friendships and ties. He found time to visit and to write letters to bereaved church members and to accept the Lenten folder of a 102-year-old man who had traveled

alone by subway to the church to deliver it.

On April 6, 1980, Easter Sunday, Justin Haruyama was proud to baptize an entire family as Christians. "On this Easter Day we celebrate again the triumphs of Your Son over death, and His promise to us that like Him, we, too, shall live beyond the grave," he prayed. There was a strained look on his face that day. At night he told Sara he felt very tired and didn't want to eat. The next day he went for a doctor's checkup. At first, anemia was diagnosed, but later tests revealed cancer. Justin was admitted to a hospital and never preached in his beloved church again.

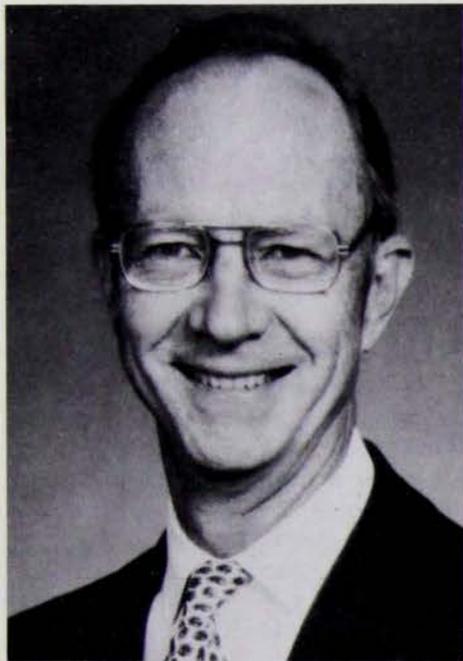
Sara and the children had daily devotions at his bedside throughout his hospital stay. Church members and other friends who visited him went away cheered by his faith and his concern for them despite his own pain. More than ever, they realized that Christ's spirit of humbleness, and yet great strength, was inside him. "Share your faith," were his last words to some of them. "I cannot keep myself from telling others the words of our Lord and teach and share with everyone that which overflows from my heart." He died of cancer on May 28, 1980 at the age of 47.

Justin Haruyama was a true Sensei (teacher) to many. Perhaps he may be best remembered as a bridge builder between people of different nationalities and cultures, between rich and poor, among children and adults. ■

*Connie Myer, a free-lance writer, was formerly on the staff of the Education and Cultivation Division.*

# viewpoint

Creighton Lacy



In reporting on my first impressions in Latin America, I must refer to Roman Catholic and Methodist partnership in defense of human rights.

Dom Helder Camara has earned world-wide esteem for his courageous defense of the poor, the neglected and the exploited. The Archbishop—tiny and frail with hands hardly more than skin and bones—clasped me like a brother. In very truth, every person is to him a brother or sister.

Some observers regard his assignment to Recife, in the drought-stricken northeast, as a deliberate "exile", to remove him from centers of influence. Coming from the luxurious cities of Rio and Brasilia, I knew immediately that that was where he belonged, that was where he ought to be, that was where he would want to be. For Recife is a city of the poor, filled with beggars and hucksters, with farmers driven from their land.

Acknowledging that the Catholic Church in Brazil had oppressed its "Evangelical brethren" in the past under the claim of majority rule and that "great responsibility (for widespread injustice) lay above all on the Catholics," the Archbishop emphasized that since Pope John XXIII and

Vatican II "we have been given the joy to work and walk together."

Admittedly the Church in the past has been the "supporter of the social order" in liaison with the government and the rich. Obviously the beneficiaries of such an alliance are not happy with the new stance of many Christians. Certainly the Gospel calls for personal conversion, but "we must have social conversion as well"; we must make clear that the Creator (who made the world, not the corporations) demands the elimination of all misery and suffering and dehumanization.

One comes from the presence of such a man with awe and gratitude. But several people had suggested that another man in the Brazilian Catholic hierarchy walks "ten steps ahead of Dom Helder." That man is Paulo Evaristo Cardinal Arns. In the center of Brazil's largest city, Sao Paulo, the Cardinal wields a power which the government cannot afford to ignore. Where Dom Helder, at our interview, wore a beige cotton surplice over a plain white cassock, His Eminence looked like a conservative New York business in dark suit with a cross in his lapel, bustling from one office to another to receive an endless stream of callers in rapid but gracious manner.

"You Methodists were first in working for justice in Brazil," the Cardinal commented after courteous greetings. In the struggle for human rights, he continued, the welfare of people is always paramount. There was a difficult time in Brazil, from 1969 to 1976, when Christians had to press for civil rights against persecution and brutality, but now the churches are freer to concentrate on poverty, inadequate wages, the rights of workers, etc.

Such human concern is not yet universal in the Catholic Church of Latin America—nor among Protestants. But it is growing. A dynamic, attractive, progressive Methodist bishop, Paulo Ayres Mattos of Rio de Janeiro, explained to me at some length why "the Protestant Church (as such) has no future in Latin America"

because the major denominations are bound to the past, historically and theologically, with "no commitment to the future." Two groups, he said, are moving into influential positions in the continent: the Roman Catholics and the Pentecostals. The Catholic Church, he continued, "has understood very well the social dimensions of the Christian life . . . (but) sometimes does not distinguish between the Christian religion and cultural environment." On the other hand, the rapidly growing Pentecostal movement "has lost the social dimension"—though some of its younger pastors now being trained in ecumenical seminaries are blending their Spirit-filled enthusiasm and pietism with a newly-awakened political conscience.

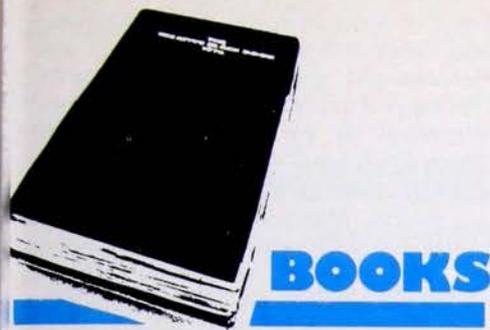
The opportunity exists, therefore, for the Methodist Church to be a bridge, to fill a role far greater than its miniscule numbers suggest. John Wesley, Bishop Ayres admitted, may have been theologically conservative and many of his positions may be irrelevant today, but he knew that "sanctification must lead in a social direction," to concern with economic problems, to a struggle against "mysticism" and eschatological escapism. But, he warned, the Methodist Church is still self-centered. "We don't see the mission is done outside the church instead of inside. . . . We have lost our drive and enthusiasm. . . ."

To accomplish this, the Bishop argued, the church must overcome three common patterns. In the "traditional" model pastors see themselves as managers rather than spiritual leaders, and the laity become consequently observers, "not involved, not part of the mission of the church." In the "neo-traditional" model the institution may adopt all sorts of modern techniques and action programs, but there is no real shift in the role or purpose of the church. The "liberal" model is theologically sophisticated, and intellectuals may criticize the pietism and sentimentality of popular religion, but "they do not understand the people in the local church." Often there is "much more verbalization than action," and even ecumenism is imposed, not interpreted theologically. In this situation the Methodist Church has the challenging task to merge spiritual vitality with social concern, to "help discover new life in Christ and at the same time, a real commitment to the struggle for justice and liberation." ■

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**CHRIST'S LORDSHIP AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM**, edited by Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky, Maryknoll, N.Y., 1981: Orbis Books, 203 pages. \$8.95.

This is a collection of papers presented at a conference on "Christ's Lordship and Religious Pluralism" held at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia in late 1979. A cross-section of Christian thinkers is represented here, including a number who are quite well known, such as Krister Stendahl, Orlando Costas, Arthur Glasser, Stanley Samartha and Wilfred Cantwell Smith. Some are theologians, others church or mission bureaucrats, from a variety of traditions—Roman Catholic, conservative evangelical, Orthodox, etc. Several are former missionaries now heading mission organizations; unfortunately, none of the speakers is a current missionary and this seems to be a lack. Still, this kind of dialogue was unthinkable just ten years ago.

Professor Donald Dawe of Union states the problem posed by the conference in an introductory essay: "The problematic for the Christian is that he or she is committed to a very particular faith that claims universality for its vision of God and God's purposes in the world. This faith is summed up in that earliest and most universal of all Christian confessions: 'Jesus Christ is Lord.' The question that presses upon the Christian community is what faithfulness to that confession means in a world where the overwhelming majority of humankind lives by other faiths and ideologies."

With such a difficult topic it is not to be expected that it will be handled equally well by all participants. Several take refuge in obscurantist language. Orlando Costas uses words such as "infrahuman" and an "infrastructural" (praxial) role" and no one has the courage to ask him what he means. (At another time he uses *tabula rasa* when he clearly means *de novo*.) Others sound off on pet themes instead of facing the crucial questions posed by the topic. Kofi Appiah-Kubi gives a rambling and irrelevant discourse on African religions. Mary Carroll Smith, who teaches at Vassar, accuses Orlando Costas of re-enforcing the "Indo-European ideology of racism and sexism" because he talked about Jesus ministering to the outcasts (the reasoning was a bit hard to follow here). Mr. Costas

naturally found this interpretation of his remarks offensive. There might have been more "pluralism" illustrated here than the conference organizers anticipated.

On the whole, though, there is some serious wrestling with the theme. Professor Krister Stendahl's opening Bible study underlines the basic universalism of Christianity which is nonetheless not "self-glorifying" and is centered on God's mysterious plan for creation. The world, he says, is not divided between those who accept Jesus and the rest who must perish, but the Church is a minority whose witness God "needs" in his total mission. On the other hand, Arthur Glasser argues strongly that Jesus' stress on the Kingdom of God led Him to climax his ministry with a mandate to his people to make disciples of every tribe and tongue and nation. And evangelical Waldron Scott says that evangelicals are aware that God has "not left himself without a witness" and is constantly active in the Christian and non-Christian world alike, and thus evangelicals are open to dialogue. But the purpose is not, he says, to discover more about God, for that has been fully revealed in Jesus Christ, but more about humankind. Presbyterian executive Margarethe Brown finds this approach too triumphalistic and argues for an understanding of Christ's Lordship that emphasizes his servant role.

Roman Catholic Pietro Rossano sees Christ as the origin, center, and destiny of the various religions, "as the One who brought them to birth, takes them up, purifies them, and fulfills them in order to take them to their eschatological goal. . . ." so therefore the Christian's attitude toward other faiths is one of humility and respect and of frankness in giving witness to Christ. In response, United Methodist Gerald Anderson points out that since Vatican II the Catholic position has emphasized the broad inclusive tradition in Christian faith, which describes a basic continuity between God's revelation in Christ and God's activity in other faiths, rather than the exclusive tradition which was the pattern before Vatican II. Anderson suggests this tradition of discontinuity is not getting enough attention, as these things seem to have the movement of a pendulum. There is also a lively discussion on the Christian mission to the Jews.

In the 1970's interreligious dialogue tended to focus overmuch on method rather than content. There was much talk about politeness, respect, humility, partnership, etc. Sooner or later, everything would be said that needed to be said (though not everyone has heard it) on this topic. Now, at long last, interreligious dialogue has shifted to issues of content and meaning. It is here that the serious work must now be done. This conference in late 1979 and this book are a good start in that direction and deserves to be studied by everyone concerned with Christian witness in an age of pluralism.

(C.E.B.)

**OLD TALES FOR A NEW DAY**, *Early Answers to Life's Eternal Questions*, by Sophia Lyon Fahs and Alice Cobb. Illustrations by Gobin Stair. Buffalo, New York 1980: Prometheus Books, 198 pages, \$9.95.

**EXPLORING BASIC ISSUES WITH YOUNG PEOPLE** (Accompanying Handbook) by Alice Cobb, \$7.95 paper.

Church school teachers challenged to find interesting and enlightening material, speak of having the added burden of giving religious instruction to young people among whom are many coming to church for the first time as late as ages 9 and 10.

A helpful tool for this young set (victims of a generation of parents so busy "finding themselves," that they've been remiss in giving spiritual nourishment to their offsprings) is *Old Tales for a New Day* written by Sophia Lyon Fahs and Alice Cobb with illustrations by Gobin Stair.

Subtitled, "Early Answers to Life's Eternal Questions," *Old Tales for a New Day* is a collection of 39 ancient stories covering five continents and 28 cultures. There is something for almost everybody here. In spite of the seriousness of this study humor is not spared; it comes subtly throughout many of the tales. Easy to read, these stories are short and to the point—the kind children enjoy best. There are lessons for parents too—particularly those who forget all too soon what a complex task growing up can be.

Sophia Lyon Fahs, who died prior to publication of "Old Tales," was dedicated to exploring the mysteries of life for young people. Besides this current collection of fables, she has produced two others books of this genre.

Co-author Alice Cobb, professor of the Sociology of Religion, was a student of Sophia Fahs. Through cooperation of Ms. Fahs' family and numerous scholars and researchers Alice Cobb was able to complete this project initiated by Ms. Fahs.

Pen and ink illustrations by Gobin Stair bring another dimension to the stories; children can stretch their minds in seeking the symbolism of these delightful sketches.

Grouped in categories there are: stories about Reaching for the Good; stories about What We Cannot See, Love and Loyalty, Reward and Punishment, Seeking Riches, and The Meaning of Living and Dying, to name a few. Contemporary topics such as ecology and equality between the sexes are even woven into this collection. There are three Bible stories, feeding the multitude, (Mark 6:30-45), the healing of the epileptic boy (Mark 9:14-29), and the rich young man (Mark 10:17-22).

Approximately three to five stories come under each section, all with interesting subtitles: for instance, a tale from New Zealand listed under the category of "Stories About Love and Loyalty", subtitled, "How Can Loving Children Stay Close to Their Parents, Even Though They Are Apart." Although the stories could

easily be understood by an average 9-year-old reader without subtitling, it nevertheless aids the exceptional, or younger child who might experience difficulty grasping the full meaning of a given tale.

An accompanying handbook to the study states:

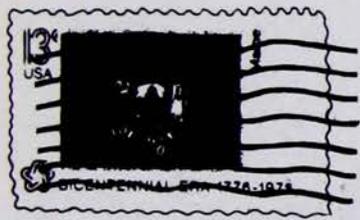
"The stories from *Old Tales for a New Day* comes from many parts of the world. Although most of them are very old, they all deal with problems and questions which are still troubling people today. . . . People can help each other, and people who lived long ago and far away can help people today. They can do this through their stories."

The handbook is packed with creative suggestions for parents and teachers using "Old Tales" as study material. However, because the book itself is so well written and organized it stands sufficiently alone.

Alice Cobb acknowledges the honor it was to have been granted the privilege of finalizing *Old Tales for a New Day*. I'm sure that she and all who knew Dr. Fahs feel a deep personal loss in her death, but there must be warm contentment in knowing the legend she has left for young people.

Brenda Wilkinson

Brenda Wilkinson is the author of three young adult novels published by Harper & Row. Bantam Books will publish the paper edition of her second novel, LUDELL & WILLIE in the fall.



## LETTERS

### More on Polygamy

I have read with mixed feelings your March article entitled "African Churches Reconsider Their Approach to Polygamists," by Paul Bock. My concern, and what I say in this letter, stem from my own struggle with this issue, among others, in breaking away from my "Mormon" background and father and mother to follow Christ.

On the one hand, it is probably good to bring this problem out into the open, rather than just hinting, as has been done, that Christianity in Africa seemed to be developing in questionable ways.

On the other hand, some of the reasoning in this article sounds like propaganda which I read, considered carefully, compared with what I found in studying family history and with an intensive study of the Scriptures on this issue—and rejected.

Did Jesus say anything about polygamy? The Bible contains only a very small part of what He said. Can we look at the Bible as a license to do anything Jesus did not specifically forbid? Jesus did make some very definite statements about looking at a woman with lust, and he always seemed more concerned with the inside of a man or woman than with the overt acts. He also said some very positive things about monogamy. "From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife." (singular). "And the twain shall be one flesh. . . ." (Mark 10:6-8. Also note the parallel passage in Matthew 19:3-12.)

Jesus seemed always to have the purpose of lifting people up to their highest possible level, and putting down their pride. He showed respect for everyone, regardless of their marital or social status or their vocation in life, and expected them to do the same.

I believe that when a man who has a wife takes another woman, with or without divorce and/or marriage, he is putting his wife down, saying in effect: "You don't satisfy me; you are not good enough for me." I am in agreement with the statement by the Bishops of the United Methodist Church a year ago, that the only two options for the Christian are fidelity in marriage and celibacy. We may grant that these options are not always easy, but was Christianity expected to be easy? (Except, maybe, for little children?)

While I think that polygamists, like alcoholics, liars, and politicians should be treated with respect, and made welcome in our Christian assemblies, there should be no equivocation concerning the standards required to follow Christ. A personal relationship to Him is more important than the outward acts of baptism, communion, and denominational membership.

Desma H. Galway  
Salt Lake City, Utah

### Protestantism in China

"Protestantism in China Today" (Feb.) by Mel Williams is a superb piece. My only regret is that the caption on page 18 tells of Moen Church in Shanghai. Did you note the Chinese sign on the church tower reads "Safeguard World Peace"? A fitting tribute even though the building was not used as a church at that time.

Bud Carroll  
Hong Kong  
*The writer is a UM missionary.*

### The Electronic Church

I am a member of one of the larger Protestant denominations but I feel I must speak out in defense of the criticism directed at the so called "Media Denominations."

We must not be too ready to ridicule other than "Mainline Churches." Protestantism was a break with tradition. Every-

one can learn from the Bible about the beginnings and form of worship of the Hebrews and what is expected of us as Christians. If the "Mainline Churches" feel threatened by the TV evangelists and "Book Churches," it is time to take stock and realize that something is missing. . . .

Until the "Mainline Churches" see and minister to the needs of their members, I say, let the TV evangelist and "paper-back" ministers fill that need. Criticism and ridicule of these media will not bring the people to the churches.

(Mrs.) Mary A. Austin  
Naples, Texas

### The View from Jamaica

Today I received our February, 1981 issue of *New World Outlook*. Immediately I turned to the article by Ellen Clark on the Charismatic Movement Stirring Methodism in Puerto Rico and all the ramifications.

Here in Jamaica, as an American UMC pastor, I can see a similar pattern coming, but we are far behind the Puerto Ricans. Our Caribbean Methodist Churches adhere largely to the British "Mother Church's" doctrines, and recently are facing issues connected to pentecostalism and the charismatics.

I feel there is a deep problem of vitality here, too, but in contrast, the shortage of ministers is very acute. At the Synod in January in Kingston, an English missionary pastor faced the judgment of his colleagues due to rebaptizing church members. But his charismatic spirit, not very common in Jamaican Methodism, was appealing and acceptable to most everyone present.

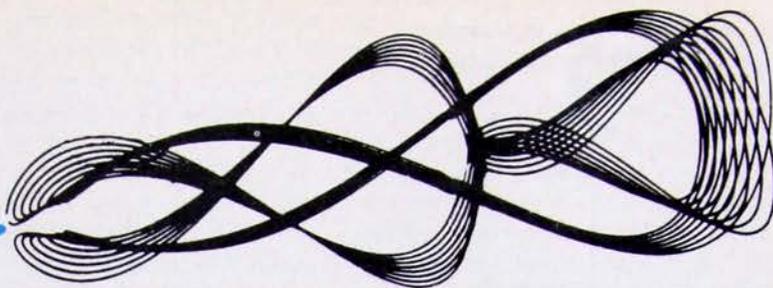
So thanks to Ellen Clark for her excellent portrayal of the spirit and problems of Puerto Rican Methodists. It helps us understand our position and maybe will enable us to be more flexible too, without the extremes. Certainly our churches need the enlivening power of God in Jamaica.

(Rev.) Francis F. Anderson  
Jamaica, West Indies



In July-August, veteran missionary F. Olin Stockwell describes his return to China 30 years after he was imprisoned there as an American spy. In lighter vein, there is an account of the great goings-on in Columbus, Ohio, in 1919 for the Methodist Centenary. Also, a look at a reconciliation center in Northern Ireland, a Chilean exile visits Guatemala, and a photo feature on relief in Kampuchea.

## THE MOVING FINGER WRITES



### PLIGHT OF IRAN'S BAHÁ'IS LIKENED TO THAT OF JEWS IN PRE-WAR NAZI GERMANY

Likening their plight to that of Jews in the early years of Nazi Germany, a Baha'i leader has expressed grave concern for the safety of 500,000 Baha'is living in Iran.

Los Angeles Municipal Court Judge James Nelson, who chairs the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the U.S., noted a March 15 ruling by the High Court of Justice in Teheran that he said "gives legal sanction to the systematic execution of Baha'is in Iran."

The court upheld a death sentence imposed on two Baha'is who had been convicted of "creating discord and disunity among Muslims." One of the men was accused of being a spy and the other was charged with trying to convert Muslims.

The judge said that "the ramifications of the decision have sent an ominous signal throughout the world. The Baha'is are experiencing a religious blood-letting in Iran unprecedented since the rise of Nazism."

U.S. Baha'i leaders, meeting for their 72nd annual assembly, said the government hopes to wipe out Iran's Baha'i community. Its more than 500,000 members make it the largest religious minority in Iran.

"Iran is not doing this quickly because a mass genocide of Baha'is would create a world protest," said Glenford Mitchell, chief executive officer of the assembly. Instead, he said, "they do it gradually—one here, two there—to keep it quiet."

The Baha'i community in Iran is larger than the combined total of Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians in the country, but it is the only religious group not protected by the constitution of the Islamic republic. Actions taken against the community since the Khomeini government took power in 1979 have included the expropriation of the financial assets of Baha'i-owned establishments and the demolition of the



#### DAILY PRAYERS FOR ATLANTA CHILDREN

Standing on the steps of Atlanta's City Hall and holding an open Bible, the Rev. John Sharp leads the first in a series of daily prayer services on April 29, for the missing and murdered children of the city. Other participants, from left, are: the Rev. Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; the Rev. William Revely of Washington, D.C., and the Right Rev. Bennett J. Sims, Episcopal Bishop of Atlanta.



#### EL SALVADOR PROTESTORS CONFRONT COUNTER DEMONSTRATORS

A member of the People's Anti-war Mobilization, left, confronts members of the Collegiate Association for the Research of Principles (CARP) during demonstrations held simultaneously on May 3 at the Pentagon in the capital. The People's group was part of an all-day city demonstration of an estimated 20,000 peace advocates protesting U.S. military aid to El Salvador. CARP was there in lesser numbers to urge continued support of the governing junta.

holiest Baha'i shrine in Iran.

Iranian Muslims are especially bitter against Baha'is because the latter faith developed out of a mystical Muslim movement in Persia in 1844. It is considered heretical by Iran's ruling Shi'ite Muslims.

Mr. Mitchell said the United Nations Human Rights Commission heard testimony from Baha'is in Geneva in March, and that expressions of concern about the situation have been passed by the European Parliament, Australian Senate and Canadian House of Commons. (RNS)

#### ANGLICAN PRIMATES SEEK DISARMAMENT

After a week of meetings in Washington, 27 heads of independent Anglican provinces pledged themselves to "work for multilateral disarmament" and to push for a resumption of strategic arms limitation talks between the United States and the Soviet Union. The pledge came among a

series of statements that the primates issued to the press following the discussions.

The threat of nuclear war emerged early in the week as a priority for Archbishop Robert A. K. Runcie of Canterbury. In a sermon in the National Cathedral and in a speech to the National Press Club, the archbishop twice referred to the weapons of nuclear wars as "evidence of madness" and expressed his concern that "we have made great advance in technology without a corresponding advance in moral sense."

The "just war" theory can no longer be applied to the modern preparations for nuclear warfare, the primates said in their statement, because "the conditions required for a just war themselves (i.e. limited use of force for a just cause) condemn not only the actual use of nuclear weapons, but also their possession as a deterrent."

Realistically, the church could not go so far as to adopt a "unilateralist pacifist" position either, but "this does

not mean that we are either indifferent or uncommitted" to disarmament, the statement said.

"As Christians," the paper continued, "we recognize a demonic element in the complexity of our world, but we also affirm our belief in the good will and purpose and providence of God for his whole creation. This requires us to work for a world characterized not by fear, but by mutual trust and justice."

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Such a mandate may allow for civil disobedience where "appropriate," the primates agreed. Initially, the statement approved of supporting those seeking to influence those people who shape nuclear policy by "education and other legitimate" means, but "legitimate" was changed to "appropriate" when the primates agreed that their interpretation of appropriateness might sometimes differ from that of secular authorities.

The churchmen "strongly identified" with aims of a 1978 United Nations disarmament document which specifically called for "a comprehensive nuclear test ban, a halt to conventional arms procurement and trade, the development of an alternative system of security to the accumulation of weaponry and the mobilization of public opinion to counteract the armament race."

The 27 primates who head national churches with an estimated 47 million confirmed members, also made allowance in a statement on authority for the "dispersed authority" and pluralism that is the hallmark of Anglicanism. Uniformity, even in theological matters, was not to be expected, the bishops said. Underscoring the communion's cultural diversity, it was announced at the conference that the majority of Anglicans are no longer from churches based in Europe and North America. Similarly, two-thirds of the primates in attendance were from non-Western countries.

In their statement on authority, the primates touched lightly on the decision of the churches in North America, Hong Kong and New Zealand to allow the ordination of women, while the rest of Anglicanism, including the mother Church of England, has not done so.

The statement affirmed, "In Christ's one, holy, Catholic and apostolic church, every member has in virtue of his or her own baptism, his or her special vocation and ministry."

But the Anglican episcopate also "acknowledges that it has a special obligation to consult with leaders of other churches and thereby to practice collegiality in a divided church."

The line may have seemed a mild rebuke to the churches permitting women's ordination without seeking a consensus of other church heads. But the message continued, "In the continuing process of defining the consensus fidelium, Anglicans regard criticism and response as an essential element by which authority is exer-

cised and experienced and as playing a vital part in the work of the Holy Spirit in maintaining the church in fidelity to the Apostolic Gospel."

Archbishop Runcie, who opposes the ordination of women, told reporters that he hoped he could learn from the American church's choice, and added, "I don't think the church stands or falls on the ordination of women."

Discussions among the primates was closed to the press, but press briefings reflected their topics of concern.

Archbishop Runcie said that a priority in ecumenical relations was resolving differences with the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, both of which strongly reject a female priesthood. That priority was not shared by all the bishops in attendance, some of whom would give greater weight to ecumenical relations with Protestant denominations.

Melinda Gipson (RNS)

## SOUTH AFRICAN ELECTIONS DEBATE APARTHEID LAWS

The "unChristianliness" of apartheid and the "unChristianlike" actions of the government were hot issues in the recent national election in South Africa, the most contentious in 40 years of National Party rule. (Only whites could vote in the election.)

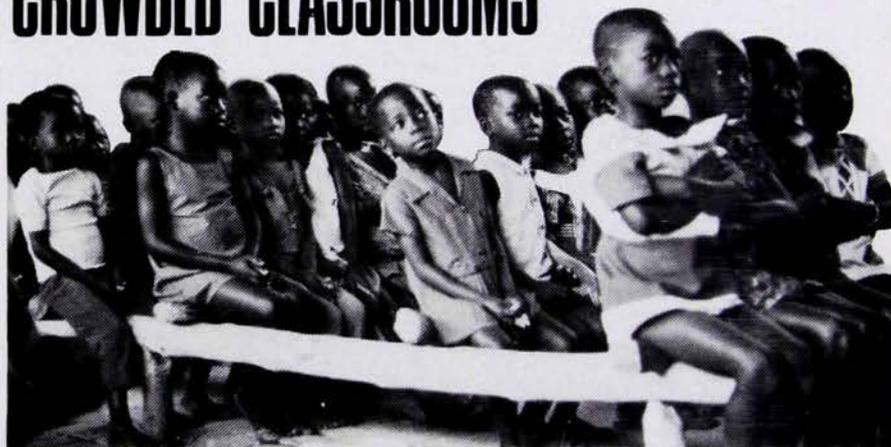
Eric Winchester, former Progressive Federal Party (PFP) opposition member of parliament, sparked a major controversy by saying a National Party voter could not be a Christian.

The Methodist Church meanwhile ran an editorial in its official monthly magazine urging white members to vote PFP as the one party with values worthy of upholding.

The criticism failed to dislodge Prime Minister Pieter W. Botha, whose NP forces won all but 35 of the 165 seats up in the April 29 elections.

The ultra right-wing Herstige Na-

## CROWDED CLASSROOMS



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tionale Party, an NP splinter group, won 13.8 percent of the vote, but failed to capture a single seat.

The PFP won nine seats with a 3 percent increase in its share of the popular vote.

Though weakened by Afrikaner defections the NP still maintains political dominance over a nation of 29 million, a vast majority of whom are disenfranchised blacks.

The remarks of the PFP candidate and the Methodist editorial provoked angry outcries by NP politicians and newspapers—all stressing the “Christian principles” which the party’s apartheid policy of “separate development” of the races, was based.

In speeches and interviews Prime Minister Botha insisted that “the Christian principles must apply that I also grant the same rights to others which I claim for myself.”

As he and other NP leaders put it the party was defending “Christian West-

ern civilization” in South Africa.

Mr. Winchester asserted that apartheid in any form could not be called Christian, and neither his opponent nor any other Nationalist could call himself a Christian.

During the outcry that followed Mr. Winchester qualified his statement, “Of course a Nationalist can be a Christian” he said, “but everyone who supports these apartheid laws and says that he is a Christian definitely does not understand the unChristianlike implications of it.”

The Methodist Church editorial recalled the miseries of black Methodists under the Group Areas Act, adding that there was no “Christ-like compassion” in a government which allowed the death in police detention of black consciousness leader Steve Biko. “We would therefore urge voters not to take the risk of placing people in power who tolerate such a system.”

(RNS)

## ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT ELECTS A NEW PRESIDENT

Trevor Huddleston, Archbishop of the Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean, has been elected as the new President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, which is based in London.

He succeeds Bishop Ambrose Reeves who died in December, 1980.

It was in 1943, at 30 years of age, that Trevor Huddleston was appointed priest-in-charge of the Sophiatown and Orlando Anglican missions in the Diocese of Johannesburg, known today as Soweto while there he emerged as an outspoken and prophetic opponent of apartheid. His book “Naught for your Comfort,” marked a turning point in the understanding of millions of people in the English-speaking world about the evils of white domination in South Africa.

(EPS)

## PENNA. CHURCH GROUPS FIGHT CUTS IN WELFARE

Church groups have joined welfare rights advocates in opposing a plan to remove 78,000 persons who are able to work from Pennsylvania’s welfare rolls.

The bill proposed by Gov. Dick Thornburgh has passed the state House of Representatives and is now going to the Senate. The GOP-controlled House passed a similar bill last year but it failed in the Democratic Senate. This year, Republicans also control the Senate.

Funds saved by cutting off aid to the able-bodied will be used to increase benefits for the “truly needy” and to finance job training programs. The program would shift the unemployed able-bodied to job training.

Being able-bodied or employable are not sufficient grounds to deprive persons of subsistence, said Howard Fetterhoff, executive director of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference.

He said other factors, such as economic conditions and lack of employment opportunities, must be taken into consideration.

Mrs. Kay Dowhower, director of the Lutheran Coalition of Public Policy, said “the rhetoric on both sides of the welfare issue has clouded the real question before us.”

“The basic question is whether as a people we can in good conscience deny limited dollars to those poor who are among the growing percentage of unemployed in our state.” (RNS)

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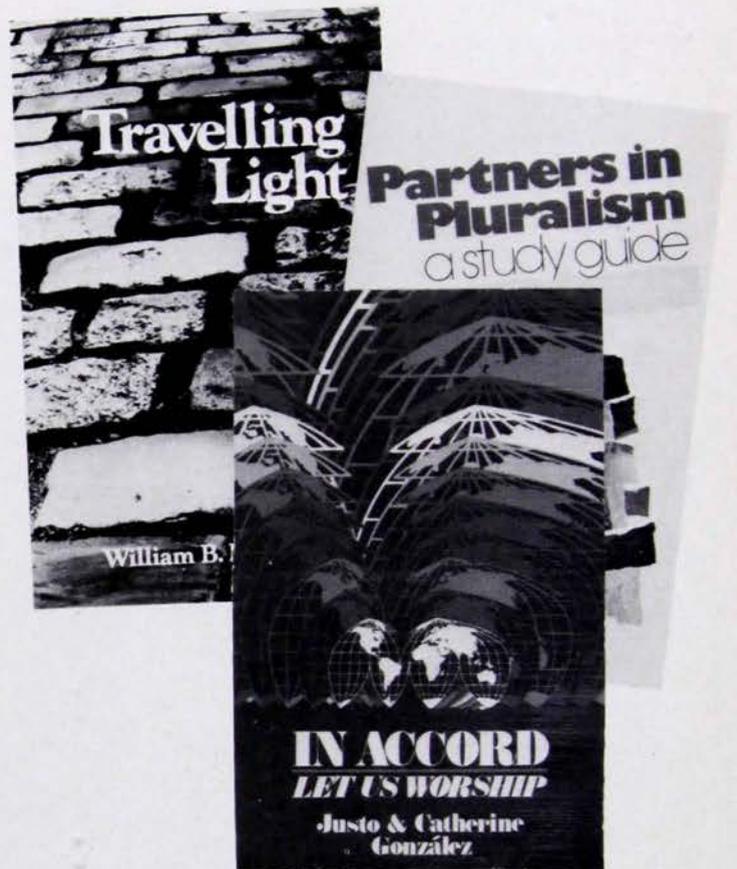
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