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Sanctuary defense presses for dismissal

By David Barlett

Defense lawyers in the trial of 11 Sanctuary church workers who were indicted by the U.S. government for their work in sheltering refugees from Guatemala and El Salvador are pressing motions to dismiss the case on the basis of selective prosecution.

The trial began in mid-November in Tucson, Ariz., after a lengthy period of pre-trial hearings which focused on jury selection and on various motions for dismissal by the defense. Defense arguments were largely turned down by Judge Earl Carroll.

These motions included requests that the charges be dropped based on free exercise of religion and challenges to Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) procedures at the Mexican border. Judge Carroll also refused to hear arguments based on the Refugee Act of 1980, or to allow expert testimony on conditions in Central America and on U.S. foreign policy.

The Sanctuary workers were indicted by

a federal grand jury last January on 71 counts of harboring, transporting and conspiring to aid illegal aliens. Recently, three counts were dropped from the indictment, and a twelfth defendant accepted a plea bargain arrangement for personal reasons.

The motion for dismissal on the basis of selective prosecution was still under consideration at press time. To prove selective prosecution, the defense must first show that the government's actions had the effect of discriminating against the defendants, then demonstrate that the government intended to do so. Judge Carroll has not clearly indicated that the effect has been established. Only once it has will he hear testimony that the selectivity was intended.

To help prove the selective prosecution, defense attorneys filed a motion for a "discovery order" requiring the federal government

to provide information on the conduct of the Sanctuary investigation. Such information could provide evidence of selective prosecution. Judge Carroll granted the order on only one of 12 points requested: a November 1984 meeting in Washington, D.C., among Arizona-based and high-level officials from the INS.

Once information is provided by the government, Carroll will review it privately before determining how to proceed with the dismissal motion. Opening arguments were scheduled for November 14 and completion of the dismissal hearing on November 15.

Earlier testimony by government chief investigator James Rayburn had suggested that the meeting and other communications between the INS central office and its Arizona staff were unusual practices. Rayburn attended the 1984 meet-

ing in Washington, the first time in his 15 years at INS, he said, that he had been called to Washington for consultation.

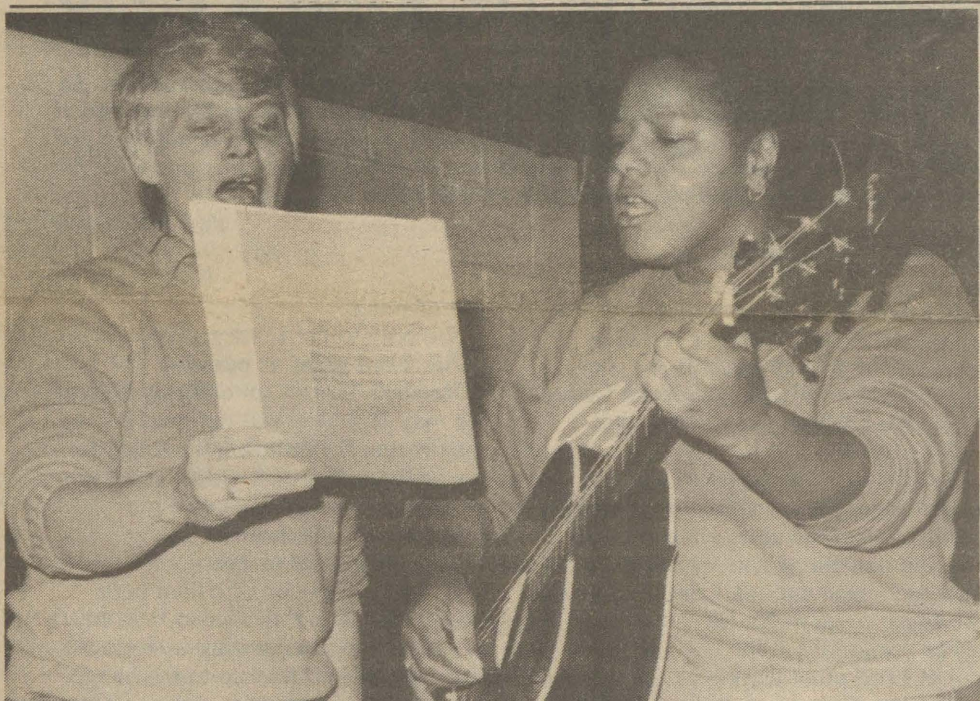
Rayburn also indicated that INS categorizes "alien smuggling" operations according to level of organization and number of aliens involved. He noted that the Sanctuary activity falls under the less-organized, smaller-number category, which is not usually targeted for undercover investigations.

Rayburn disclosed that local federal prosecutors had failed to prosecute produce growers in Arizona, whose participation in alien "smuggling" is documented.

The defense has argued that other departments of the Reagan Administration have been involved in the conduct of the case, resulting in a prejudicial political influence on the prosecution. Moreover, the U.S. government has itself given sanctuary to other Salvadorans, including the family of Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte, the church workers note.

(continued on page 4)

**Refugees no longer
gather for Bible study or
worship at Alzona
Lutheran Church
in Phoenix.**
— story page 4



Rev. Barbara Lundblad of New York City (left) and Rev. Gladys Moore of Jersey City, N.J., teach a song to participants in the recent "Sisters in Celebration" conference. "Sisters' Song" was written by Moore especially for the meeting. The group celebrated 15 years of women's ordination in the Lutheran churches.

Sisters celebrate 15 years of women's ordination

Note: This reflection by LHRAA co-director Susan Ruehle reports on "Sisters In Celebration," a conference held October 21-23 to recognize 15 years of women's ordination. Elizabeth Schussler-Fiorenza, the Talbot Professor of New Testament Studies at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., was the keynote speaker.

I held the camera to my eye trying to capture our time together. Now, I have 36 images, reflections of the moments on film. The feelings of excitement, connectedness, and celebration are remembered — but they are not in the photos.

The first pictures are of Elizabeth Schussler-Fiorenza. In her address entitled, "Struggle is a name for hope: Women, church and patriarchy," she began by telling participants that "women are the church and have always been the church" and that "patriarchy has no power over us

who have moved into feminist time and space."

"Language reflects and shapes the world, and as we learn to speak we are socialized into our status as human beings." Stressing the importance of language, Fiorenza demonstrated how women are oppressed in church and society. She also shared how women of color are doubly oppressed by "grammatically androcentric culture" and a culture which is racist.

Calling for an end to the "alienation between women" and for a "solidarity in our common commitment against patriarchal violence," Fiorenza encouraged participants to "a critical/feminist interpretation and rereading of the Bible."

The camera was there looking at Elizabeth Schussler-Fiorenza, but it did not capture her words...nor the spirit behind them. Nor did it see the faces of the women as they lit up in recognition of the meaning those words had in their lives.

The camera captured the faces of almost 80 women, most ordained, some lay; a few men; and several babies at the retreat center at Stony Point, NY. It saw the title of the conference, "Sisters in Celebration," and the words that said we were celebrating 15 years of women's ordination in the Lutheran Church. These memories are there in black and white, and full Kodak color.

Even living-color photos don't begin to reflect what those 15 years have meant for the women at the conference. There are no pictures of the stories of being the first or second or third woman, the only woman, the rejected woman. And there are no pictures of the male friends willing to risk, or the male colleagues afraid to change.

But the time at Stony Point was filled with these images...strong women, sad women, angry women, happy women...women working in congregations, women serving in national churches, sharing each other's stories and looking forward.

There was worship written by women, for women, women were named and women celebrated. It can be read in the worship handouts, it is reflected in the pictures. But worship by and for women was different than my past experiences, unexplainable, but real...

(Continued on page 4)

Ortega speaks at New York church

By Ruth J. Chojnacki

Over 400 North American churchpeople gathered at Riverside Church in New York on October 25 to hear Daniel Ortega, president of Nicaragua.

Ortega acknowledged that the Sandinista government's imposition of a state of emergency on October 15 caused difficulties for those in the U.S. who have publicly defended the Nicaraguan revolution against the Reagan Administration's five-year effort to overthrow it.

Ortega asserted that his government had chosen "the life of the revolution" over the demands of public relations in declaring the emergency.

"We cannot forget the painful experience of the Chilean people," Ortega insisted, contending that Salvador Allende's failure to take constitutionally-permitted emergency measures contributed to the fall of his government in 1973 under CIA pressure.

Ortega noted that North Americans are still faced with a question: Are the emergency decrees the legitimate defense of the revolution as Ortega asserts, or are they the "real face" of a totalitarian pro-

ject ordered by Moscow, as the Reagan Administration claims.

Nicaragua is an open society, Ortega answered, which any U.S. citizen can visit freely to see first hand the "real face" of the revolution. Hundreds of U.S. churchpeople have already done so in the past five years.

Ortega's remarks remind us all that the question of what to believe is always in the end a biblical quest for discernment that penetrates the surfaces of "public relations." We must understand that Jesus taught in parables precisely because truth always escapes the literalist.

A state of emergency "literally" means government suspension of certain civil liberties in defense of a larger national interest. From the current Sandinista perspective, it means defense against CIA subversion at a critical moment in the struggle against the *contras*. Washington sees the same action as the tightening of a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship.

Standing before Jesus, Pilate asked, "What is truth?" Pilate spoke from the all-too-human world of conflicting perspec-

tives which we inhabit. Jesus replied by taking up the cross.

For those of us engaged in the struggle for justice and peace for Nicaragua and all of Central America, the cross is the burden of the poor. We test Washington's perspective against Managua's by asking, does the state of emergency or, alternatively, the U.S.-backed *contra* war, ease the burden or add to its weight?

Responding to a question at Riverside about the effects of the emergency measures on the church, Miguel D'Escoto, the Maryknoll priest who is Nicaragua's foreign minister, urged that North Americans' first concern ought to be the conversion of their own church and their own nation.

In the context of the controversy about the state of emergency in Nicaragua, conversion means listening with renewed attentiveness in order to discern the cry of the poor beneath the clamor of warring political perspectives.

Ruth Chojnacki is a member the Sanctuary Coordinating Committee in Milwaukee, Wis.

Celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.

Suggestions for a celebration

Monday, January 20, 1986, will be the first observance of a national holiday to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

This first observance provides an opportunity for the citizens of our nation to recall his life and work, and to recommit themselves to the on-going quest for interracial understanding, racial justice, opposition to racism, and promotion of social change through non-violent action. Events at the national, state and local level are being planned.

The following are a few suggestions on how individuals and congregations can make this day a special celebration in Dr. King's memory.

Individuals

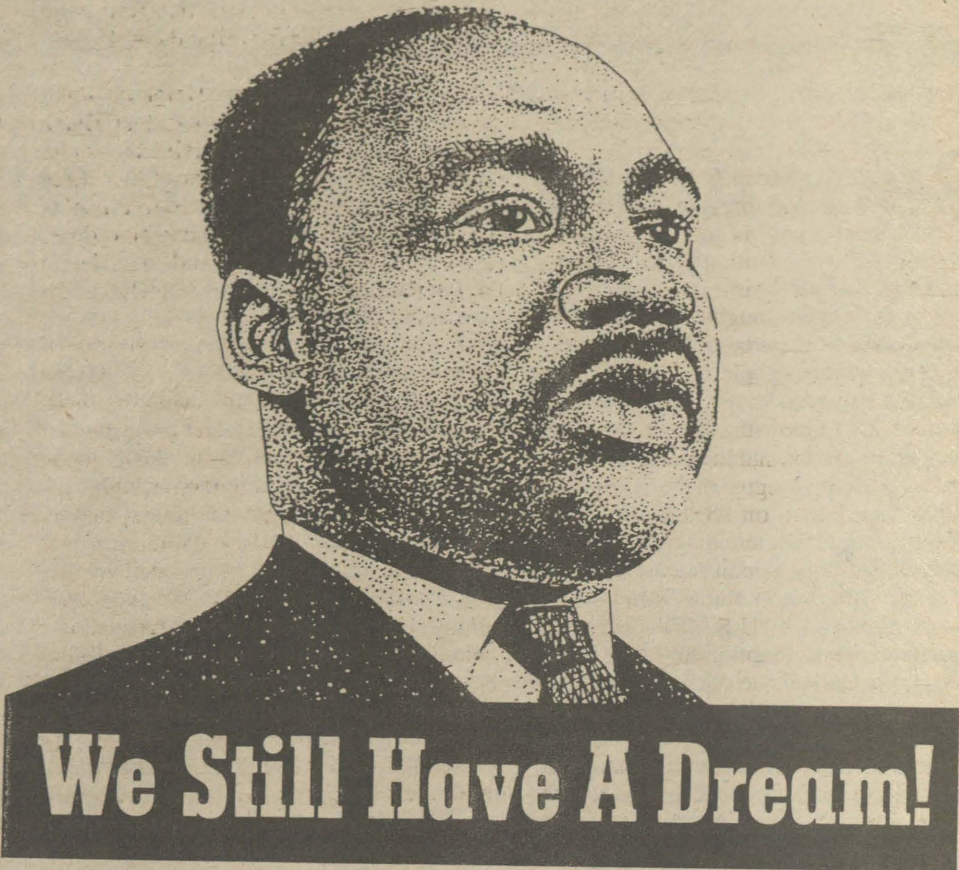
- 1) Reflect on the principles of racial justice and non-violent social change expressed by Dr. King. Read some of the books by and about him. (See the Resources listed on this page for some titles.)
- 2) Fly the United States flag on January 20 in tribute to Dr. King as an American hero and patriot.
- 3) Ask that your place of work, school or community organization observe the day in an appropriate way.
- 4) Make a personal pledge to work for peace and justice, the end of poverty and the creation of jobs, and the elimination of violence in all its forms. (See the Pledge Campaign described below.)
- 5) Consider joining others in Atlanta for the planned Parade of Celebration on January 20. For more information, contact: Lloyd Davis, Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Commission, 449 Auburn

Ave. NE, Atlanta, GA 30312.

Congregations

- 1) In Sunday worship on January 19 (Epiphany II), spotlight connections between the justice commitments of Dr. King's life and work, and Epiphany themes of God's love and hope to all nations. Thank God for the special gifts of all who work for justice and peace (see second lesson, I Corinthians 12:1-11) in both proclamation and prayers of the day.
- 2) Sponsor a community religious service, in cooperation with other congregations, on the evening of Sunday the 19th or Monday the 20th. Alternatively, encourage members of your congregation to participate in the programs and services of other local churches and civic organizations. (See service resources on this page.)
- 3) Display books and show films about Dr. King's work. Encourage your public library and schools to do the same.
- 4) Offer a workshop, seminar or education series on Dr. King's ministry of non-violent social change.
- 5) Join the nationwide program of bell-ringing at churches and synagogues at noon on Monday, January 20.

These suggestions are adapted from a list prepared by the American Lutheran Church's Standing Committee of the Office of Church in Society. For additional ideas and information, contact Dr. Claire Randall, chair of the Committee on Religious Community Involvement, King Federal Holiday Commission, 451 Seventh St. SW, Suite 5182, Washington, DC 20410, 202-755-1005.



Remembering Dr. King's work

Editor's note: The following litany is excerpted from Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Packet available from the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice (NCCIJ). The packet includes two liturgies, a celebration and dialogue for small group use, and a household service of prayer and dialogue. It is available for \$4.25 from NCCIJ, 120 Varnum Street NE, Washington, DC 20017.

Prayer of the Faithful

Presider: O God, author of love, we lift up our hearts in prayer to ask in faith for the gift of peace as we commemorate the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. Through Christ our Lord,
All: Amen.

Reader or Member(s) of the Congregation: That in calling to mind the deeds of Martin Luther King, Jr. and his commitment of non-violence, we may each incarnate his mission of peace for which he gave his life.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord grant us peace.

Reader: That our faith in a God of life unites all races, colors and creeds to fashion a seamless garment covering the unborn, the hungry, the homeless, the war torn, the lonely and dying.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord grant us peace.

For an end to the arms race. That our leaders convert their swords to ploughshares and work to transform our world into a haven of justice for all.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord grant us peace.

Reader: That each of us may be redeemed from the evil of division, hatred and racism, and be granted the

gift of peace.

We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord grant us peace.

Reader: That in spite of our failures, we may in season and out hold fast to the dream of Martin Luther King, Jr. for a world where all God's children will be free at last.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord grant us peace.

Reader: That our Christian hope transform the evil of racism into the promise of peace, moving us from the paralysis of indifference to the hunger for justice.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord grant us peace.

Reader: For our world, our nation and our neighborhoods: that our example of loving, caring communities become the yeast that transforms lives and changes oppressive structures.
We pray to the Lord.

All: Lord grant us peace.

Presider: God, through our brother Jesus, the Prince of Peace, grace us to see everyone as brothers and sisters to us, and through us, to help the creation of your kingdom on earth.
All: Amen.

RESOURCES

LHRAA has a number of resources available to help you with your celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday and holiday.

"Martin Luther King, Jr.: The Enduring Dream" is a 14-minute filmstrip especially good for introducing the life and work of Dr. King to young people. Rental fee: \$12. Reservation dates are subject to confirmation.

"Strength to Love" is a collection of sermons preached by Dr. King. In a foreword to the book, Coretta Scott King describes it as "one book Martin Luther King, Jr. has written that people consistently tell me has changed their lives." *"Strength to Love"* explains the central elements of Dr. King's philosophy of non-violence. \$4.50.

"Three Critical Works" is a brief book including three important works of Dr. King: "Loving Your Enemies," a 1957 sermon written while King was in jail during the Birmingham bus boycott; "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," King's famous response to critical pastors; and "Declaration of Independence From the War in Vietnam," a 1967 address against the Indochinese War. \$1.

Also available is a Martin Luther King, Jr. button featuring a photo of King with the words "Don't let the Dream Die." \$1.

Order by writing *Lutheran Human Relations*, 2703 N. Sherman Blvd., Milwaukee, WI 53210, or by calling 414-871-7300. For book orders, please add 15 percent for shipping.

A pledge of non-violence...

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Commission has developed the pledge duplicated here. Individuals and communities are asked to complete the pledge for the archives of the King Center in Atlanta. You and your congregation could make copies for individuals to sign. They should be mailed to: Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Holiday Commission, Suite 5182, 451 Seventh St. SW, Washington, DC 20410.



Living The Dream Pledge

In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life and work, I pledge to do everything that I can to make America and the world a place where equality and justice, freedom and peace will grow and flourish.

On January 20, 1986, I, _____
commit myself to living the dream by: _____ (Name)

Loving, not hating
Showing understanding, not anger
Making peace, not war.

Address _____

Be a part of history. Sign and mail the pledge card which will be kept in the archives of The King Center, our national memorial to his life and legacy.

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Racism at heart of world's hunger crisis

By Will Herzfeld

In 1968, the Kerner Commission, responding to the question of why the urban riots occurred, predicted that the U.S. would one day split into "two Americas, one white and one Black, separate and unequal."

This report, like so many others, seemed to be close to redefining the problem of racism in this nation, but the report makes only rhetorical contributions to the effort.

An article appeared in Ebony magazine shortly after which sought to correct the course of these reports by defining the plight of the Black people in the U.S. as a white problem.

And so it goes with the problem of hunger in this nation and the world. Why is it that most of the hungry of the world are living in the countries of Africa, in parts of Asia, and in Latin America and the Caribbean? Why is it that, according to an article by Peter J. Boyer on the African crisis news coverage, the U.S. TV networks operate with the assumption that "the more distant the place and the darker its people, the slimmer a story's chances of making it on the air"?

By doing no more than observing the new consumption patterns of the world and with a minimum of social analysis, we can see that the world of the mostly white and European has caused the world community which is predominantly colored to move toward the brink of destruction and death. The cause is racism and all of the "isms" that result from it, especially militarism and imperialism.

Testimony to racism

Two recent reports give loud testimony to the reality of racism within the U.S. context.

First, the Children's Defense Fund released a study which shows that Black children are twice as likely as white children to die in the first year of life, three times as likely to be poor, four times as likely to be without parents and five times as likely to be on welfare and to suffer in their early years the ravages of malnourishment and hunger.

This study, drawn from a variety of government statistics, portrays a widening schism between Black and white children in America. It concludes that over the last five years, Black children have been sliding backwards and are increasingly suffering from "inequality that denies opportunity to millions of Black Children."

Second, a report commissioned by the House Ways and Means Committee containing 670 comprehensive pages shows there are almost 14 million children living in poverty in the U.S., an increase of 52 percent in the last decade and the highest level since the mid-1960s. In examining the poor, this study found that Black children and those born to unwed mothers were by far the most likely to be poor.

These reports should alarm us and trumpet the fact that the explanation of such misery is racism.

Distractions from the problem

There is an elaborate set of euphemisms and distractions that tend to cover up the

devastating effects of racism in this nation, apartheid in South Africa, and various forms of neocolonialism around the world. "People are hungry because they are lazy, or unskilled or uneducated." And in most recent days we hear that people starve and die because of the drought or because of other natural disasters.

Paul Nelson, world issue analyst for Bread for the World, writing in an issue paper titled "Nature Pleads Not Guilty" (No. 79), cites a 1976 report on the West African famine that was published in Britain. The report said that political, social and economic relationships had more to do with the famine than the shortage of rain.

"In 1976 there was also a drought in Britain. We believe that nobody would have thought it would be 'natural' for thousands of British children to die because of the drought."

I would add that this blaming of God and nature is clearly an attempt to escape responsibility for racism in both its personal and institutional forms.

Every conceivable reason for poverty and hunger is given except racism — the drought, corrupt leaders among the nations of color, ignorance, population explosion and many others. Racism is not seen as a cause, so no remedy is suggested to deal with it.

The Task Ahead

To eliminate the problem of racism and its effect is a major task and it will require more than well-intentioned people dealing with symptoms rather than origins. Deal-

ing with this issue requires tremendous vision and a new world view, a view from the underside of history. That view causes one to protest loudly. It is impossible to reconcile the fact that we can explore the outer reaches of the universe and yet we cannot come to grips with the horrors of racism. We must recognize that time is running out.

Let me offer some concluding thoughts about the Christian church. How can we deal with this issue as a community of Christians? First of all, we must expect sacrificial love, and not self indulgence from our Christian communities.

Lyman Abbot once paraphrased the Lord's Prayer with a philosophy of those who are without real faith in the real Christ: "Our brethren who are on earth, hallowed be your name, our kingdom come, our will be done, for there is no heaven, we must get, this day, our daily bread, we neither forgive nor are we forgiven. We fear not temptation, for we deliver ourselves from evil. For ours is the kingdom and the power, for there is no glory and no forever."

But the good news about God that Jesus revealed to us is that God is a loving and purposeful God who is involved in creation, who notices when the smallest sparrow falls from the sky, who cares about the least and the lowest. Saint and sinner, landed gentry and outcast leper, no one is outside the love of God.

Christians know that, and therefore will not sit at table with those who refuse on the

(Continued on page 4)

BOOKS·BOOKS·BOOKS

The Fullness Of Life
edited by Cedric W. Tilberg
Fortress Press 1980

Revolution Underway
by Cedric W. Tilberg
Fortress Press, 1984.

The National Lutheran Council in a 20-page booklet published twenty-five years ago said what is often heard today: "The rapid increase of older persons in our population challenges and compels our congregations to give more thought to the needs and interests of older persons."

In "Fullness of Life," Cedric Tilberg challenges us to learn more about the aging process, to become more aware of our own aging, and to confront negative images regarding old people. Its sequel, "Revolution Underway," is a natural progression for a churchperson to challenge congregations and various structures of the church to make dramatic changes to meet the needs of the elderly which have arisen from our negative assumptions about aging.

Here is the most astute observation the author makes to put us on notice that we must be very careful in walking the tightrope to avoid ageism.

"It is obvious that two incompatible images of the older years exist side by side. One equates that period of life with economic dependency, physical and intellectual decline, and personal isolation. This is the image that fosters the negative stereotypes of aging which this study seeks to combat. It is also the image on which most public policy, most church policy, and most of the 'aging industry' are based.

"The second image is the one we have been articulating — that of a large number of older adults as energetic, sexually active, increasingly assertive, and capable of involvement in the mainstream. This view interprets the problems of most elders not primarily as 'needs' arising from disabilities that naturally accompany aging, but as the denial of opportunity and choice arising from the ageism of a society that devalues its old." ("Revolution," p. 45)

Therefore the individual Christian, the congregation and the whole church with its institutions and agencies must become involved in making fundamental alterations in the anatomy of old age in America.

The author illustrates how we have the uncanny ability to simplify in viewing our own future or to simplify thinking about the older person. In the matter of health: to the one side of the tightrope would be the denial that there are real health and medical problems among elders; to fall off the other side is the acceptance of the stereotype that all elders "are sick and must be pampered, protected, and cared for." (p. 28) In the matter of income: we often hear statistics quoted which show that

some of the poorest are among the elderly, and sometimes figures show that the elderly are much better off today. What am I to believe?

The complexity and diversity of the aging population forces us, if we are to keep our integrity, to respond to the dilemma of the tightrope walk. It may be only a "tightrope act" in the beginning, but as balancing becomes more routine and as we avoid simplifying and stereotyping, we will lessen ageism.

The difficulty in walking the tightrope may be the reason the whole issue of aging has not been grasped as a challenge in the church. There are too many people, including the older generation, with too many varying opinions. Nevertheless, Tilberg's programs, suggestions, urgings and drastic changes must be inwardly digested so that we may in steadfast faith receive the promise of long life as a blessing — from the God who created us to age.

Reviewer Karl Thiele served as an Associate Director of LHRAA and is now chaplain at Fair Havens Center in Miami Springs, Fla.

Living the Faith Community
by John H. Westerhoff
Winston Press, Minneapolis, 1985
\$6.95, 106 pp., paper

"A Christian community is most functional and effective when it includes between 200 and 400 persons representing at least three generations, and a diversity of racial, ethnic, political and economic groups." Westerhoff's second chapter on the Christian's need for community is the most useful part of this prolific writer's newest book. He, with sociologists Nisbet and Bellah, challenges modernity's emphases on the individual saying that while we may proclaim equality, cooperation and community, we teach inequality, competition and individualism.

Using the work of Carol Gilligan and Anne Wilson Schaeff, Westerhoff incorporates feminist studies which show how in a male-dominated society our actions, our systems, our values and even our language suggest violence and individuality. Even though we encourage cooperation with team members it is in order to "beat the hell out of the other team." Westerhoff uses Parker Palmer's "The Company of Strangers" in saying that God's reign comes when we can regard all strangers as sisters and brothers. "Christian community is that place where the persons we least want to associate with and those least deserving have a rightful claim on all that we have and are."

This central chapter might have been the first rather than "Church as Family," although family questions are popular today. Nonetheless, Westerhoff has helpful ideas for actualizing the faith community, with chapters on Christian nurture, the common life and, in keeping with Westerhoff's current interests, a great deal on worship as

the heart of community. Within a story-formed sacramental community we make sense of our lives and deal with diversity while maintaining identity and unity.

Although Westerhoff includes an appeal for cultural adaption in cross-culture worship endeavors and says the church can provide an alternative consciousness in the world, he stops short of showing us *how* the church can become not only memory and vision but servant in the world. This useful little book can be read in two hours.

Reviewer Norma Everist is professor of educational ministry and church administration at Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Ia.

Doing Theology in a Divided World
edited by Virginia Fabella and Sergio Torres
Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY 10545, 1985
\$11.95, 218 pp., pb.

Everyone who is seriously interested in Liberation Theology should buy this book. The whole spectrum of Liberation Theology is represented. The book is the product of the Sixth Final Conference by the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians, held in Geneva, Switzerland, January 5-13, 1983. At this final conference, First World theologians were also involved. The names are names to conjure with: Cone, Potter, Ruether, Solle, and the like. About 80 people took part, as well as observers from the press, support agencies and other ecumenical organizations.

Included in the volume are case histories, analyses of oppression, histories of the problem, word and song, and assessments from Third World, First World, and Eastern Orthodox perspectives. At the end a final statement by the conference participants provides a valuable summary of present thinking in Liberation Theology.

Most important is that a large section of this volume deals with methodology. Five participants demonstrate an ability to think beyond immediate concerns for liberation from oppression and poverty. The section on methodology is itself worth the price of the book.

A critic from the First World is normally not allowed a voice. But a critic from the Eastern Orthodox world who was actually present may be allowed to state one important point: "Third World theologians have to be aware of the most significant criticisms offered to their theology." What one hopes for from Liberation Theologians is that at a future stage they will be able to be self-critical about methodology, raising such issues as the problem of relativism, the depth of sin even in themselves, and the history of all renewal movements. All renewal movements need to be optimistic in order to succeed. Yet if self-criticism is not possible, the final result will be a new kind of oppression.

Reviewer Joseph Burgess is the executive director, Division of Theological Studies of the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A.

Advent for El Salvadoran church offers promise, hope and witness

Editor's Note: Rev. Medardo Gomez, pastor of Resurrection Lutheran Church in San Salvador, shared this Advent reflection during his December 1984 visit to the U.S. Visiting just a few weeks after the murder of his colleague Pastor David Fernandez, Pastor Gomez's message reminds us of the faithful witness to the Gospel that the Church in El Salvador provides.

I'd like to say as a witness that each day is like a page of the Church calendar: it becomes for us a religious festival. We live each season of the Church year to the fullest. For example, now, in Advent, our hope is strong that God would come to us, to a place where there are so many problems.

So we wait for God, and for God's presence and for God's peace, so that the pain would be calmed and the bloodshed and suffering would be lessened. United in this hope, we come up to the Christmas festival.

For us to put up a Christmas tree, for ex-

ample, is not a simple adornment. It is for us as if it were a prayer: a symbolic gesture of communicating with God, asking for God's intervention in our lives. The lights and the colors that are put on a tree at Christmas say to us that we have a right to be happy, that we want to laugh and be happy and be peaceful. With the blue, we ask for a better tomorrow; the white symbolizes peace; the green, hope.

We see that God comes to us, is born, in an ugly place. Where Jesus was born was an ugly place. Where there are animals, there is a bad smell, but there the Lord was born. That place was converted into the birthplace of the Son of God. So for us too, it's clear that God can come to an ugly place which now has the stench of so much pain, so much suffering, so much injustice. There, too, the Lord can be born.

Christmas, then, is the hope that God is with us, that God does not forget us, does not abandon us. In this time of crisis, we best taste and we best enjoy and live Christmas.



Dr. Richard Dickinson (center) talks with LHRAA Board members Ted Schroeder (left) and Richard Perry during a break in the October Board meeting. Dickinson, executive director of the LCMS Black Ministry Commission, talked with the Board about the work of the commission. Discussion focused on a study underway of possible creation of a non-geographic Black Mission and Ministry district within the LCMS.

Seeking: Candidates for the Board of Directors of Lutheran Human Relations Association of America. If you are interested in serving on LHRAA's Board of Directors, or if you'd like to recommend someone else, please send name(s), address and a brief biographical sketch to the LHRAA Nominating Committee, c/o Ted Schroeder, 3540 Marcus Ave., St. Louis, MO 63115. Names of candidates must be received by March 1, 1986.

'Women'

There were small groups, workshops, times for sharing, music, jokes, even a stand-up comedian. We danced; we heard the statistics on women in poverty, and women in the church. And through it all we affirmed what it means to be created in the image of God.

The photos don't show the 600 ordained, Lutheran women who weren't there. And if you look hard beyond the glossy surfaces of the photos into the depths, you might see the separation of sisters by color, the distinctions between lay and clergy, the anger and hurt of 15 years of struggle.

Yet the hope that was born when these

sisters in ministry came together in celebration is clearly visible in the faces in the pictures.

'Racism'

basis of race or culture or sex or station in life to affirm all of creation.

We do have a white problem, but it is solved by the radical application of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Will Herzfeld is presiding bishop of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches and pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Oakland, Calif. Reprinted from *The Hunger Times*.

from 1

from 3

Sharing a new vision throughout the year...

This Christmas, share the dream of an inclusive church and share the gift of Lutheran Human Relations. With that gift, you help to equip Christians to bring our dreams to reality.

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EDITORIAL

By Charles Ruehle

I fear that a mean spirit prevails in our nation. This was re-emphasied for me last month when the conclusion of the Achille Lauro tragedy was summarized by Newsweek with the simple phrase, "Getting Even." As a nation, we're so preoccupied with maintaining our "tough kid on the block" image, that we've lost sight of values like forgiveness and reconciliation.

In the international arena, "getting even" means responding to violence and terrorism on the part of others with threats of violence, and acts of terrorism (the forced landing of an Egyptian airliner) on our part.

In the domestic arena, "getting even" means the bombing of the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee offices in Santa Ana, Calif., an act of violence and terrorism that killed the organization's regional executive director, Alex Odeh. For reasons known only to the bombers, Arab-Americans suddenly became responsible for the acts of four Arabs aboard an Italian ocean liner in the Mediterranean.

For some, this comes as no surprise. People in "minority cultures" in the U.S. (Jewish, Arab, Black, Hispanic, Native and Asian Americans) have learned that when Americans want to get even, it's okay to seek out scapegoats to punish, and yes, even to kill.

The FBI is investigating the bombing, and the White House has issued a statement which condemns the act. But, that's not enough. If we continue to act as a bully around the world, we can't help but act that way at home.

The Gospel lesson for the second Sunday in Advent calls us to repentance as we prepare for the coming of the Prince of Peace. This call is for corporate, as well as individual confession. Each one of us must speak out. We must challenge our nation's mentality, and change it from a spirit of vengeance to a spirit of justice.

Charles Ruehle is the co-director of LHRAA.

IN THE NEWS ...

Joel Schlachtenhaufen, director of the Covenant Congregation Program, has accepted a call to the Church of the Wilderness, a Lutheran congregation on the Stockbridge-Munsee Indian reservation in Bowler, Wis. Joel will be concluding his work with LHRAA at the end of December. The Covenant program now has 32 congregations in all parts of the U.S.

Rev. Hendrik Frederick, 50, has been elected bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Namibia. His election is considered confirmation of the church's strong human rights stand against the apartheid government of Namibia.

'Sanctuary'

The Sanctuary movement claims that the Central Americans it aids are, like the Duarte family, fleeing political strife in their homeland. Judge Carroll allowed the defense attorneys to submit further arguments on this motion.

Sanctuary leaders believe that the refugees they have aided qualify for protection under the provisions of the Refugee Act. That act requires aliens seeking

asylum to demonstrate that they are victims of political persecution or to show that they have a "well-founded fear of persecution" in their homelands.

The INS handles Central American applications on a "case-by-case" basis, and a very small proportion of applications are accepted.

Trial updates are available free by phoning 1-800-538-1933.

Trial haunts Arizona churches

In the Arizona churches involved in the Sanctuary movement, the trial has had practical effects on lives and ministries.

The Government action against the church workers has effectively curtailed some of the programs at Alzona Lutheran Church which serves a largely Hispanic community in Phoenix.

Refugees no longer gather for Bible study or worship at Alzona, according to Rev. Jim Oines, the pastor of the congregation. Parishioners are afraid to talk about personal problems on the phone, or to associate with new members who might be government informers.

It was at Alzona that government undercover agents secretly tape recorded refugee Bible studies. The prosecution has since

dropped use of 91 recordings made by the informers as evidence in the trial, but their existence shocked church members and frightened refugees.

One tape recording made at an ecumenical prayer service reportedly included an informer listing the license plate numbers of cars in the church parking lot. Members of Camelback Presbyterian Church are concerned that they may now be listed in government files simply because they attended a public worship service.

The defense in the Sanctuary trial has characterized the undercover INS investigation as "perhaps the most serious infringement upon the free exercise of religion in modern times."

A new vision all year long...

This year, the vision of an inclusive, multi-cultural church can be celebrated every day with an LHRAA calendar for 1986. LHRAA's books, worship resources and music tapes can provide the challenge to bring that vision to reality. Share the joy and gifts of Lutheran Human Relations with your family and friends by returning this coupon soon.