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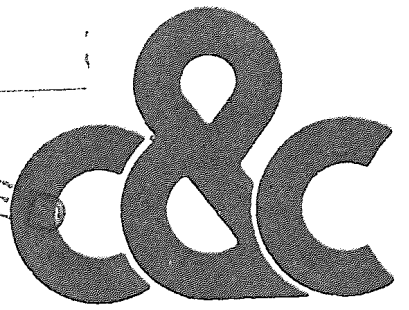
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WILLIAM SLOANE COFFIN  
**Sanctuary and beyond: an editorial**

PHARIS J. HARVEY  
**Kim Dae Jung goes home**

Christianity and Crisis  
Vol. 45, No. 4 March 18, 1985  
\$1.35 a copy

*Democracy and meritocracy*

# Promise & practice in public education

A New World Foundation report



ROBERT LEKACHMAN  
**Optimism**

DOUGLAS STURM  
**Honoring the Fourth Commandment**

GAIL HOVEY  
**After the famine, what?**

## Values and actions at the grassroots

Mike Miller

# Letters

## Religious leaders ask Congress for new policy on South Africa

Following is the text of an open letter to members of the United States Congress calling for a new U.S. policy toward the Republic of South Africa. The letter was released February 25. Signers include the president of the National Council of Churches, heads of the United Church of Christ, Presbyterian Church (USA), Reformed Church in America, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Disciples of Christ, Unitarian Universalist Association, Syrian Orthodox, Church of the Brethren, Society of Friends, Association of Community Churches, and 65 bishops, including 23 Episcopal, 20 Lutheran, 15 Methodist, and 10 Roman Catholic. Signers also include prominent women and black religious leaders, rabbis, imams, and heads of numerous religious orders, theological schools, church councils, and denominational agencies.

The letter was circulated to signers by Clergy and Laity Concerned (CALC), of which Sister Barbara Lupo, M.M., a C&C board member, is codirector. Other C&C-related signers are Wayne Cowan, editor-at-large, board members Timothy Smith and William L. Wipfler, contributing editor James Cone, columnist Cornel West, and William Sloane Coffin, author of the guest editorial in this issue.

**D**EAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: Nations, as well as individuals, face moral challenges. When an individual or a nation fails to meet such a challenge, there is a weakening of moral fiber and a loss in the capacity to exercise moral leadership. Slavery posed such a challenge in the 19th century, colonialism and Nazism in our own. These are moral challenges so clear that there is little room for "reasonable people" to differ. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. saw such a challenge in the '60s when he said, "We are in a struggle to save America's soul." We write to you, our elected representatives, because our nation faces such a clear moral challenge today in the matter of our government's policy toward the Republic of South Africa.

South Africa is the only country in the world that constitutionally enshrines

white supremacy and racial oppression. Under apartheid, officially implemented as South African government policy in 1948, the black majority is denied freedom of speech, assembly, and travel, access to a fair trial, and the right to choose where they live or work. Blacks are forced by law to carry a passbook which states where they were born, where they work, and where they presently live, in order to control their movement. All effective political and economic power is in the hands of a white minority. Describing the systematic violence of apartheid, Bishop Desmond Tutu, 1984 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, said, "The primary and provocative violence is the violence of a deliberately inferior educational system...of hunger and malnutrition...of forced population removals of blacks uprooted from their home and dumped in the poverty-stricken bantustans...of the migratory labor system which forces men to live an unnatural existence in single-sex hostels with deleterious consequences for black family life, the legalized violence of detention without trial...as well as the violence that kills nonviolent opponents."

During the last half of 1984, we witnessed the intensification of mass violence and repression against the black majority of South Africa by that country's white minority regime. Nearly 200 people were killed, mostly at the hands of the police, and over 1,000 were injured. More than 3,000 opponents of apartheid were arrested, many under laws that permit indefinite and incommunicado detention. There have been numerous reports of torture. Many of those arrested were children under the age of 18. Some detainees have been released, others charged with "subversion" and "high treason," while others still languish in prison without charge. The apartheid government has escalated its crackdown on the young independent trade union movement. Six thousand, five hundred workers at one state-controlled company were summarily dismissed and sent back to the bantustans in retaliation for their participation in the November general strike. In December, the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference issued a report condemning police atrocities during the recent unrest. Archbishop Denis Hurley, chairman of the Bishops' Conference, said that, "A kind of state of war is developing between the police and the people."

The South African government also

seeks to silence religious leaders and organizations which are critical of apartheid. Archbishop Hurley is facing charges under the Police Act because of statements he has made regarding South African military atrocities against the people of Namibia, a country South Africa continues to occupy illegally. The government has also threatened to charge the Rev. Allan Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, for criticizing the police. The South African Council of Churches has been continually harassed and intimidated.

The current wave of repression is only the latest excess of a system of institutional racism that affects the daily lives of the overwhelming majority of South Africans. Despite this harsh reality, the Reagan administration has followed a policy

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## Editorials

# Sanctuary for refugees — and ourselves

**W**ERE RUSSIAN JEWS being forcibly returned to the Soviet Union, or Poles to Poland, neither the Congress nor the American people would stand for it. Yet both sit idly by while innocent Salvadorans and Guatemalans are returned to countries where death squads long ago would have assassinated a Lech Walesa.

In 1980, Congress passed a refugee act recognizing political asylum as a right due those fleeing persecution. It's a good law, but it is being miserably misinterpreted by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). While correctly classifying persons escaping a variety of communist countries as "political" refugees, the INS insists on labeling people fleeing El Salvador and Guatemala as "economic" refugees. The reason is transparent: It would be highly embarrassing to grant "political" status to refugees coming from countries whose governments our own enthusiastically supports with military and economic aid.

Because it has knowingly deported innocent people to torture and death, the Reagan administration has blood on its hands, but only because Congress and the American people have water on theirs. Now nuns, priests, ministers, and Christian laity are being indicted for doing God's work of hospitality: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

The arrest of church leaders will only strengthen the sanctuary movement, whose Head is just beyond the reach of the INS. But what do such arrests, if they continue, and the continued deportation of innocent Guatemalans and Salvadorans say about the callousness of Congress, the willingness of the American people to tolerate activities so blatantly un-American?

Congress could put the

sanctuary movement out of business tomorrow by doing one of two things: (1) insist that the Refugee Act of 1980

be administered according to the spirit and the letter of the law; (2) pass the Moakley-Deconcini Bill which would grant temporary extended voluntary departure status (safe haven) to Salvadorans and Guatemalans now living in the United States.

Were Congress to do so, the sanctuary tasks of the sanctuary movement would be accomplished. But much would remain to be done, as the movement is committed to attenuating the suffering not only here, but more importantly there, in Central America.

According to the Reagan administration, the current revolt in El Salvador is largely inspired and sustained from abroad. But as Mexican author and diplomat Carlos Fuentes testified to Congress two years ago, "If Cuba and Nicaragua were to sink into the sea, and the Soviet Union contract to the size of medieval Novgorod, the local bitter conflict in El Salvador would continue. It is born and bred in local oppression."

He might have added, "Not even revolutionaries make revolutions," for revolutions are manufactured by governments that grind the head

of the poor into the dust. As President Kennedy observed, "Those who make peaceful evolution impossible make violent revolution inevitable." It's finally quite simple: You can't have a revolt without revolting conditions. The fire won't spread unless the wood is dry. Only when the oligarchs are few do the guerrillas become many.

Of course there are Marxists in Central America—lots of them. Capitalism has not been kind to the people of those countries. (Costa Rica is a possible exception.) But not all Marxists are Stalin-



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ists. Those I know claim that Stalinism is to Marxism what the Ku Klux Klan is to Christianity—a manipulation of the symbols in order to deny the reality. Furthermore, as a former (non-Marxist) president of Venezuela wrote, “Latin American revolutionaries are attracted to the promises of Marxism, not to Soviet power.” (When will we realize that the Soviet Union is so ideologically bankrupt that it is the only country in the world presently surrounded by hostile communist countries?)

Blind anticommunism, however, is not all that drives us on to further military adventurism in Central America. We *wish* to believe the destinies of Central America are being designed in Havana and Moscow, for then we are free to redesign them in Washington. The United States wants to continue to do what it has done all along—control what goes on south of its border. It’s not a matter of national security, it’s a matter of national pride.

And then, I suspect, there’s a third reason, beyond anticommunism and national pride. To a degree not generally recognized, foreign policy reflects a government’s attitude toward its own people. For instance, were the Reagan administration serious about combating racism at home, it would never come up with “constructive engagement,” a toothless euphemism for a policy in South Africa termed by Bishop Tutu “an unmitigated disaster.”

Or consider the following: Our foreign aid to Central America is making the rich richer, the poor poorer, and the military more powerful—which is exactly what the administration’s domestic policies are accomplishing in this country. Are not the farmers in the midwest demonstrating that the need for land reform may soon be as urgent a task in this country as it already is in El Salvador?

Most revolutions and coups d’etat in Central and South America have simply replaced one head of state with another, leaving untouched the pyramid of power and property relationships. But occasionally they have sought to turn the pyramid upside down, to end the exploitation of the many by the few, to put the needs of the many poor at the top of the national agenda. I am thinking of Guatemala under Arbenz, Cuba under Castro, Chile under Allende, Grenada under Maurice Bishop, Nicaragua under the Sandinistas. It was against *these*, and only against these revolutions (or duly elected governments) that the United States reacted with fury.

In other words, what our government seems most to fear is that for which millions of Central and Latin Americans long—a successful economic and social revolution. We always pose the issue in terms of civil liberties—freedom vs. Marxism, freedom vs. totalitarianism. But the real issue is human rights in economic terms, the pyramid of property and power relationships. Perhaps the fear deepest in the hearts of those who run this country is that a successful economic revolution, say in Nicaragua or El Salvador, would not only be a beacon of hope to other

Central and South Americans, it might also cast a few rays of light in our direction.

If that analysis is correct (if only in part) we can no longer separate foreign policies from domestic policies, and the best way to change the former may lie in changing the latter.

By making these connections the sanctuary movement risks losing some of its middle-class supporters. But only by making them can the movement hope to gain converts among the poor in this country who tend to resent so much attention being paid “foreigners” when they could so easily use more attention themselves.

In any case, our immediate goals are clear. We must continue the sanctuary movement in its present form until Congress makes it unnecessary to do so. Beyond asking for extended voluntary departure, we must urge Congress not to fund the “contras,” and to slow down, rather than speed up, military aid to El Salvador, so that the military there will be pressured to allow Duarte to negotiate an end to the conflict. Personally, I would enthusiastically welcome, rather than reject, the Cordoba initiative. Mediation is exactly what we need—in Geneva as well as in Central America—if only we had the humility to accept it.

**William Sloane Coffin**

*The Rev. William Sloane Coffin is pastor of the Riverside Church in New York City.*

## Ethiopia revisited

**O**UR DECEMBER 24 EDITORIAL struggled with the problem of celebrating Christmas while millions of people face prolonged drought and famine in Ethiopia and other parts of Africa. One practical conclusion of that comment—to the effect that development, not merely relief, must be funded—was strongly affirmed in February by representatives of Ethiopia’s Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA) during a visit to New York. In an interview Asrat Gebre, the Ethiopian chairperson of CRDA, and Brother Augustine O’Keefe, a member of the Holy Ghost Congregation from Ireland and coordinator of CRDA in Ethiopia, corrected some misconceptions about the food crisis in that nation and reiterated the need for long-term aid strategies there.

Nightmare images of huge camps holding vast numbers of starving people have moved countless Americans to contribute to Ethiopian relief. “It is always easier to get money for relief programs [when] television shows pictures of people in desperate situations,” O’Keefe said. But, he added, “the general public does not respond to the rehabilitation and development needs as they do to the relief needs.”

In fact, the pictures of the vast camps tell only a part of the story. The majority of Ethiopia's 40 million people, even in times of extreme drought, do not live in these much-photographed camps. They live at home, making repeated trips to food centers for rations. The advantages of maintaining a regular life are obvious. Families can function better at home; abandoned houses fall into disrepair. When rain finally comes, people who have left their land are not able to plant. The problems of resettlement and rehabilitation are enormous and the government tries as much as possible to avoid these problems by encouraging people to maintain their homes.

In the most severely affected areas, however, the authorities decided that more aggressive measures were needed, and they instituted a program of mass removals of people from northern areas of the country to the south. This program has been controversial since two areas in the north, Eritrea and Tigre, are regions where insurgent groups have been engaged for many years in guerrilla war against the Addis Ababa government. That government has been accused of moving people out of the north, including Eritrea and Tigre, to weaken the popular base for the independence movements in those areas.

Asked whether the movement of people out of the north was voluntary, O'Keeffe told what he had personally seen. "I visited the registration center in Makale and also the one in Wollo. We talked to various people and the people were saying that they certainly wanted to go. The target was to move 50,000 families in the first three months. That would be about 250,000 people. A month ago they were well on target to move that number. If the program continues it would move up to 1.3 million people from Tigre, Eritrea, Wollo, and north Shoa. I think an indication of the fact that many people want to move is

the fact that people are walking out of Wollo, certainly out of northern Shoa, and are reaching Addis."

O'Keeffe stayed clear of the debate about Eritrea and Tigre, commenting instead on the long-term consequences of the mass removal of people. One of the most serious problems in the areas of Ethiopia affected by drought—now 12 of 14 provinces—is deforestation. Deforestation is part of a vicious cycle. Without trees, soil is more quickly eroded, water runs off instead of being held in the ground, less water is evaporated into clouds and rain patterns change—all of which aggravates the drought. O'Keeffe worries about the future. "The new people [in the resettlement areas] have to build houses. That means cutting down more wood. And they have to have fuel. Which means cutting down more wood. So the problem will be there [in the south] in 20 years."

**D**IRECT U.S. AID to Ethiopia stopped completely after the present government came into power 11 years ago. Only the urgency of the situation brought about a change in U.S. policy and aid began to flow last fall. But the U.S. government has made no secret of its distaste for Ethiopia's government, which it describes as pro-Soviet and Marxist. There is sometimes an implied suggestion that this Marxist government is responsible for the current drought and famine.

Gebre thinks otherwise, that the socialist aims of the Mengistu government are not responsible for the current crisis. It is true, he says, that the intention of the government is to socialize the means of production. But, "where does this affect the people, the 99.9 percent of the people?" he asked. "I don't think it affects them. The state farms contribute not even three percent of the food needs. The peasants that are collectivized or cooperatized are not five percent. So it is not true to say that the problems of this drought are because of state farms and cooperatives. It might be true in the future. The government is intending to continue in this direction to socialize and cooperatize. Whether that is good or bad is a political judgment."

Gebre went on to talk about the security problems in the north, problems which make it immensely more difficult to address Ethiopia's development needs. For one thing, scarce resources go to maintain one of the largest military establishments of any country in Africa. Gebre sees no quick resolution of the conflict between the Addis government and the movements in Eritrea and Tigre. In fact, Gebre thinks the problem is getting more entrenched and feelings are becoming stronger on both sides. "I think the origins of the problem are economic," he said. "The birth rate in that area is very high, and the young people cannot be absorbed into the economy. They have nothing to do. Fighting is something to do. They go to the forests to fight."

The people who support the movements in Tigre and

### Editor sought

The Board of Directors of *Christianity and Crisis* requests applications for the position of editor. Now entering its 45th year of publication, *C&C* is an independent biweekly Protestant/ecumenical journal of opinion addressing a wide range of social, political, and religious issues. As chief executive officer, the editor supervises both editorial and business departments, should have solid grounding in ethics and theology, experience in religious journalism, administrative and leadership skills, some knowledge of promotion, fundraising, budget preparation. Please send letter of application, resume, salary requirements, and samples of published writing to: The Rev. Eileen Lindner, *C&C* Search Committee, Room 572, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115. *C&C* is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Eritrea would define the problem very differently. Where they would agree is that the problem is not one to be solved quickly and easily.

What Gebre and O'Keeffe were most interested in talking about was the work of Christian Relief and Development and the continuing need for support. "Everyone will agree," said O'Keeffe, "that relief, especially relief extended over a long time, is a bad thing. But that doesn't mean one can or should discontinue the relief program. If you do that, people are going to die. The aim is to make people self-supporting as quickly as possible."

CRDA coordinates both the relief and the development work in Ethiopia of 32 U.S., European, and Ethiopian church and nonsectarian agencies. Its members include Church World Service (CWS), Catholic Relief Services, Oxfam, and Lutheran World Federation/World Service. While Gebre and O'Keeffe were in New York, Church World Service announced the kind of grant that CRDA thinks is most important. Separate from the ongoing relief work that CWS funds, \$2.3 million will be spent on development—on seeds, agricultural tools, and livestock. In addition, a program for water resource management will be developed with CWS's colleague agencies in Ethiopia.

**F**EW WOULD DISPUTE that the problems of drought and famine must be solved at the governmental level, that aid is political, or that intractable political problems must be resolved before solutions to Ethiopia's development needs are found. Nevertheless, Gebre and O'Keeffe stressed that small projects, like the ones CWS can fund, are often important far beyond their size. They demonstrate what is possible, and major donors can then move in and pick up where small donors have begun. It would be difficult to overemphasize the urgency of keeping the churches and other agencies interested in supporting the development side of aid.

But the representatives of CRDA are fully aware of the difficulties. Gebre put it this way. "People feel guilty about hungry children, and they want to feed them as long as they know they are hungry. But when you are told, unless these people are self-sufficient that same thing will continue in the future, that is rather difficult for people to see. Ethiopia—we don't count. Today we are here with you. In two weeks' time we are out of your minds."

Gebre would be more than happy to be proved wrong. Donations can be sent to Church World Service, Africa Emergency, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, Indiana 46515.

**Gail Hovey**

## Optimism

# Personal perspective: 1

**ROBERT LEKACHMAN**

**T**HE POLLS REPORT—and who am I to quarrel with sophisticated statistical sampling?—that Americans are in a cheerful mood these days. Things are going well for them and for the country. To all appearances, most of the citizenry applaud an economy on a roll and rejoice in the spectacle of Russians properly subdued by Field Marshal Weinberger. In their eyes, the future is rosy as it should be for Americans. Even blacks, though in noticeably fewer numbers, participate in the general euphoria.

These emotional phenomena are passing strange. Factory wages are actually declining, an almost unprecedented statistic in the third year of an economic expansion. For two straight months, unemployment has edged upward. The January rate was identical with that of Jimmy Carter's final month in the White House. Remember how the Great Communicator scourged the unhappy Jimmy during the 1980 campaign over the joblessness that disgraced his tenure? Quite right too. For his part, Mr. Reagan has sponsored the highest average unemployment in any presidential term since the 1930s. Not to worry. He cheerfully takes, and amazingly is offered, credit for pushing unemployment down to the level he scorned less than five years ago.

Since 1981, the poverty population has steadily recruited new members. Farmers are going broke in droves. Mortgage foreclosures and business bankruptcies resemble depression records. Farmers are victims of an overvalued dollar which has cost them foreign markets and favored Canadian, Argentinian, and Australian wheat and soybean growers. They are crippled by high interest rates on land and equipment that less than a decade ago they were urged to acquire by their friends in Washington. There is no mystery surrounding the height of the dollar and interest rates. Both are direct consequences of an enormous, still ballooning federal deficit caused by imprudent tax cuts and enormous Pentagon expenditures. The Treasury's tremendous demand for borrowed money has naturally raised interest rates and attracted huge quantities of foreign investment. Buying dollars with yen, francs, or marks, the foreigners raise the price of dollars and depress the prices of their own currencies.

Farmers are not the only victims. Manufacturing is in trouble for identical reasons. Caterpillar has shut down in Peoria because its highly regarded earth movers cannot compete against Japanese sellers able to price their

merchandise in cheap yen. Just to add to Caterpillar trauma, Kawasaki has now invaded the American market. Wherever American manufacturers compete, in foreign markets or at home against imports from abroad, they are battered by Japanese, European, or third world rivals who can underprice them in their undervalued currencies.

Rather wistfully, the AFL-CIO boasts that a majority of its members supported Mondale-Ferraro instead of Reagan-Bush. But the best of the union findings simply assert that as many as 59 percent of unionists went Democratic. Other family members strayed into the Reagan camp and the vast, unorganized majority of blue and white collar operatives gave Reagan a majority. Why for that matter did 41 percent of union cardholders cast their ballot for the most anti-Labor administration in more than half a century?

I don't know the answers to these questions, but I am willing to speculate. To the distress of all properly socialized economists, Democratic voters manifestly are moved by more than pocketbook calculations. Presidents set a national tone. Jimmy Carter bore the burden of office with visible anguish. He imprudently confided to the public his sense of the world as a dangerous place. Instead of pointing to new frontiers in the skies, he brooded over the impending exhaustion of oil and other resources. Most tactlessly of all, he accused his fellow citizens of suffering from spiritual malaise.

His successor refuses to fret about anything, cuts his losses cheerfully as in Lebanon, defines foreign policy as a series of glorious triumphs over the Grenadas of the globe, works harder clearing brush in California than mastering the details of his own Treasury's tax reform scheme, and looks younger with the passage of the days. As the Washington gag goes, the president has delegated aging, like other onerous tasks, to his staff. Certainly James Baker has visibly aged after four years of guiding his inattentive principal and turning his unintelligible press conference responses into coherent policy.

Expectations change. It is possible that most of us expect less than we used to. For most families, the 1970s were a troubled time. Two oil crises, a pair of recessions, higher unemployment than in the preceding generation (though considerably less than the 1980s were to bring), dangerous inflation, sky-high interest rates, and, perhaps more distressing than any one of these painful economic maladies, the sense that the country was drifting without a firm hand at the tiller. True enough that Mr. Reagan promptly ushered the country into its deepest recession since the 1930s and slashed unemployment compensation, welfare, and other benefits even as the need for them intensified. But the 1981-1982 mini-depression could with tolerable plausibility be blamed on the preceding administration. When recovery began at the end of 1982 and burgeoned in 1983 and 1984, splendidly timed for

Reagan's second coronation, credit was royally taken by the president.

Euphoria depends on comparisons. Family incomes now are maintained by the ever rising number of women at work, most of them in routine jobs at the conventional 60 percent of average male earnings. But at least work in supermarkets, fast food emporia, and offices is available. With the income from second jobs, average families can avoid losing ground in the consumption race. Things are better than they were in the last two Carter years and the first half of the initial Reagan administration.

By comparison with the 1960s or even the first three years of the 1970s, 1984 and 1985 present a statistical picture of substantial distress and lingering unemployment. But few make such comparisons. It is appropriate that a president of confused recollection should induce his many admirers into a state of amnesia about events more distant than five or six years ago. □

*The writer teaches economics at Herbert Lehman College, City University of New York.*

### *Honoring the Fourth Commandment*

## **Personal perspective: 2**

**DOUGLAS STURM**

**'S**IX DAYS SHALL YOU LABOR and do all your work!" That's an imperative not much emphasized in commentaries on the Fourth Commandment. All the stress goes to appropriate observance of the Sabbath; the mandate that one should be working the rest of the week is almost always glossed over.

But suppose one hasn't any work? What then? Can the Sabbath have the same significance in the absence of labor on the other six days? In the story of creation, the seventh day was blessed *because* at that moment God rested from all the work of creation. That means: no work, no blessing! The holiness of God—and therefore, one presumes, the holiness of God's people—is present not only in moments of worshipful rest, but also in hours of meaningful labor. And therein lies a problem for our social order.

Every month, the Labor Department releases its most recent calculations about conditions of employment and unemployment to the public.

Unfortunately, the announcements no longer have the dramatic import of two years ago when the rate of joblessness soared well above 10 percent. The reason is evident. Statistically, it seems, we are on the far side of the crisis. Since then, the number of employed has gone



steadily up and the proportion of unemployed has, with some fits and starts, gone gradually down.

Over the past calendar year, the official rate of employment has dropped almost a full percentage point. During each of the past several months, the scale of joblessness has fluctuated up or down barely one-tenth of a percent, more or less. At the beginning of 1985, the department declared that only slightly over 7 percent of those seeking work remain unsatisfied.

Combining such statistics with other data, government officials gloat over the growing strength of economic recovery. Press Secretary Larry Speakes calls 1984 a "banner year" for the nation's work force. Whatever anxiety about economic matters remains is reserved for more important questions: the federal deficit and the international imbalance of trade.

But behind the percentages are the anguished experiences of individual men and women, their families and their communities. And the actual number of unemployed men and women is staggering. At the moment, over eight million people cannot find work. And over one million more have given up looking. Thirty-eight percent of the latter group are blacks.

Rather than gloat over statistics, we should instead be reconsidering a principle tendered before the Congress 40 years ago last month, prior to the end of World War II: the right to work. The meaning of "right to work" is developed below and should not be confused with the popular anti-union use of the phrase.

On January 22, 1945, Senate bill 380, "The Full Employment Act of 1945," was placed in the hopper by James E. Murray, a wealthy senator from Montana. A year prior to that action, President Roosevelt, echoing a report of his National Resources Planning Board, announced an Economic Bill of Rights in his State of the Union message, declaring "the right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries or shops or farms or mines of the nation." FDR's language was incorporated in the opening affirmation of an early draft of the bill.

Though the language was altered prior to the bill's submission to the Senate, the intent remained the same: to secure as a matter of fundamental national commitment the right to work in American society and to fix the obligation of the federal government to assure employment opportunities for all those able and willing to work.

The bill was emasculated before it was signed by Harry Truman the next year on February 20 as the Employment Act of 1946. Despite its weakened condition, however, the bill was a watershed. It formalized the responsibility of the federal government to engage in some degree of national economic planning and established the duty of the president and Congress "to use all practicable means...to promote maximum employment."

In 1974, Hubert Humphrey tried to nudge the process on. He introduced a bill setting a definite goal of not over

3.5 percent unemployment within five years. Once again, the time was not politically propitious. Over subsequent months, the bill was badly compromised. When it passed in 1978, six months after Humphrey's death, it merely announced a target of 4 percent unemployment in 1983. No specific actions were instituted to meet the target.

### Fulfilling the mandate

About the Humphrey-Hawkins Act, A.H. Raskin, longtime labor columnist for the *New York Times*, commented,

In and of itself, this belated effort to make real the commitment so artfully fudged in the Employment Act of 1946 deals with the foundation stone of any concern for the quality of working life, the right to a job for everyone willing and able to work. It may be disingenuous to believe that any democracy can enter into a compact with its citizens to hold unemployment inside a 4 percent ceiling, but no administration dedicated to human rights can shrink from the duty of mapping programs calculated to test the feasibility of such a goal.

Why do we shy from the test? Why do we persist in backing away from firm commitment to the principle of the right to work? Why do we, time after time, push other issues to the fore of our economic agenda? Why, given the corporate character of our economy, do we let individuals scramble for themselves?

To be sure, the federal budget is in shambles. The American economy as a whole is suffering from grave uncertainty. The political mood of the citizenry shows little concern for radical reform, however sensible and just it be.

But we must heed those psychologists and sociologists who warn us about the utterly devastating impact of unemployment on the lives of our fellows and the texture of our communities. And we must be more sensitive to the importance of work in the dynamics of human life.

*Ora et labora*—pray and work—is a central motto of the Christian monastic tradition, even though within that tradition the contemplative life assumes a position of preeminence over the life of labor. The doctrine of vocation, extended to embrace all occupations, save those detrimental to existence, is fundamental in Lutheran and Calvinist communities. To John Locke, a progenitor of modern liberalism, labor is the direct extension of one's self, and thereby the basis of the right to property. To Karl Marx, who in this one respect at least is indebted to John Locke, labor is the species-activity of humanity and the reason why the appropriation of labor power by the bourgeoisie is a form of exploitation and alienation.

In sum, in all these traditions—Catholic and Protestant, liberal and socialist—work is a central expression of human existence.

Should not this conviction be translated into the right to work? Should not the government as an agency for the common good have an obligation to secure that right? Should not the investment policies of corporations be brought under public control to protect employees and communities against unnecessary plant closing and relocations?

The bishops' draft statement on *Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* has, in this respect, taken the right step:

We recommend that the nation make a major new policy commitment to achieve full employment. We believe that an unemployment rate in the range of 3 percent or 4 percent is a reasonable definition of full employment in the United States today.... Toleration of present unemployment rates would have been unthinkable 20 years ago. It should be regarded as unacceptable today.

"Six days shall you labor": We are obliged, are we not, at least to provide the opportunity?

The writer teaches in the Department of Religion, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.

### The return of Kim Dae Jung

## Clarifying South Korea

**T**WO WEEKS AFTER he returned to a turbulent welcome by several hundred thousand supporters and a roughing-up by government agents at Seoul's Kimpo Airport on February 8, Kim Dae Jung, the most important opponent of the military-dominated regime of Chun Doo Hwan, is at home. To make certain he stays home, some 2,000 police and intelligence agents crowd the alleys and paths near his house in Seoul, posted at 11 guard houses set up "for his protection," or wait in dozens of buses fully equipped with riot gear parked nearby in case he should have visitors. Now that the foreigners who accompanied him to Korea and the international press have left, he and his wife are alone. No one may visit them, not even relatives except for his son and brother, and neither of the Kims may leave their front gate.

Some may wonder why Kim would yield up the freedom he enjoyed in the United States for this form of isolation and captivity. Is he not much less able to influence events from behind the massive police guard in Seoul than he was in Washington, where for the past two years he had open access to the world's media and the

American political and academic world? That may be true temporarily, but in a far more significant way, Kim's presence in Korea is itself a force for democratization more powerful than anything he might do overseas, regardless of his personal circumstances.

The importance of Kim's presence in Korea was vividly demonstrated on February 8 when he arrived home. His reentry at Seoul's Kimpo Airport was not "trouble-free," to the surprise and dismay of our State Department, which had frequently expressed that rather lame hope for him. Nor was it, as American Ambassador Richard Walker characterized it, a "nonevent."

Quite the contrary, in fact. In the view of this on-the-scene observer, the return of Kim Dae Jung and the events that followed illuminated in one moment the nature of the Chun regime, the character of the American ambassador in Seoul, the personal popularity of Kim, and the depth of popular longing for a more democratic government in Korea.

For 14 years successive South Korean governments—encouraged in recent years by the Reagan administration—had worked to make Kim a nonperson politically. He was the target of four assassination attempts, was subjected to three imprisonments including six years of solitary confinement, was also subjected to house arrest for another three years, sentenced to death, then exiled for two years. During this time the Korean press was not allowed to mention his name except negatively to label him an extremist or seditionist.

In spite of this, when word began to spread through the South Korean grapevine that Kim would return to Korea, nationwide efforts to welcome him sprang up seemingly out of nowhere. More than 90 local welcoming committees were formed. In the days before his February 8 arrival, thousands of Kim's followers and supporters made their way to Seoul to be on hand at the airport. South Korea's tolerated political opposition vied to identify with him, even those who had until recently echoed the government's vilifications of the returning exile.

How many actually came to welcome the Kims home may never be known. For several days, police made the rounds of Seoul's inns and hotels, driving out guests whom they suspected of being Kim's supporters. Hundreds were put under house arrest to prevent their attempting to get to Kimpo. The airport road was blocked almost 10 miles from the entrance. Some 17,000 riot police in full battle gear enforced the blockade. The smell of tear gas filled the air.

In spite of these measures, however, tens of thousands walked the long distance to the airport that morning. As the Kim entourage bus passed their ranks in early afternoon, they could still be seen, a solid mass of people 10 miles long. Others, we were told, filled the back roads to Kimpo. Estimates ranged from 50,000 to one million.

(The latter was improbably high, but indicative of the surprise and delight of Kim's supporters at the turnout.) Whatever the actual count, the meaning was clear: Kim Dae Jung's return was understood by an entire nation as significant.

Lest any of the hundred or more foreign journalists accompanying the Kims miss this point, the Chun government arranged a welcome guaranteed to impress. When Kim and his friends, including two members of the U.S. Congress, several former State Department officials, and a bevy of human rights activists including this author, stepped off the plane, we were suddenly confronted with a well-rehearsed police attack aimed to bodily separate Kim from all the rest of us. Without a word of warning, those of us in front of the Kims were pushed, pulled, and shoved ahead through the passageway while those behind were blocked by a separate phalanx of plain-clothed men who had been waiting behind a curtain. Two of the group, Congressman Tom Foglietta (D-Pa.) and former Ambassador Robert White, succeeded in staying beside the Kims for a moment, until they too were suddenly and forcibly shoved away, pushed to the floor by the gang who threw Mr. and Mrs. Kim into a waiting elevator and whisked them away. Not the most gracious welcome, but certainly one designed for maximum international publicity.

The U.S. Embassy afterward expressed its disappointment in the Korean government's actions, indicating that an agreement about airport procedures had been breached. Why had this happened? The most plausible explanation to me is that officials of the Chun regime, angered that a delegation of prominent Americans had actually dared to accompany the Kims home to "assure a safe return," determined to put them (us) in their place by a blunt frontal assault.

Such a decision to rough us up, however, would have been unlikely unless the U.S. Embassy had signalled directly or indirectly its disdain for Kim and his retinue. A few days before the group's departure from Washington, Elliott Abrams, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, had referred contemptuously to the group in a press interview as "Kim's circus." Cooperation by the U.S. Embassy in Seoul with the group's advance person had been minimal. Ambassador Walker did not go to the airport to meet the congressmen, sending instead three low-level consular officials. (Nor did he accompany the group to the Foreign Ministry the following day to protest.) With such attitudinal cues from the U.S. Government, South Korean officials apparently felt confident that they could ignore an agreement with the embassy with impunity and deny embassy officials access to the airplane, rough up the delegation, and take Kim and his wife by force to their home by a military-use road that avoided the welcoming crowds. But since the world was able to see what had happened at the airport on their

television screens, the subsequent denials of violence by the ROK officials served primarily to underscore that government's disdain for world opinion and to further undermine its credibility.

### The 'nonevent' still isn't over

Four days later, on February 12, another event took place which clarified the Korean public's attitude to these developments: the National Assembly election. In a country where virtually every official from the village level up is appointed by the president, the direct election of 184 of the 276 members of the National Assembly (92 are appointed on a proportional scheme that guarantees a government majority) has an importance quite beyond the actual political influence that rather weak body wields. This was the first occasion since 1981 that people could express their approval or disapproval of the government. Candidates for the 184 positions vied in a tense atmosphere, with the government dominating or controlling access to the media, using vast sums of money, intimidating the opposition with heavy-handed police presence everywhere on the streets to prevent unauthorized rallies, and threatening tax harassment of potential contributors to opposition party coffers.

The results were dramatic nevertheless. The government party lost substantially in every city in Korea to a new party, the New Korea Democratic party (NKDP), backed by Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam. In Seoul the margin of victory was 42 percent for the NKDP to 27 percent for the government party. Because of its strength in rural districts where government credit unions and other community control mechanisms are almost absolute, the government drew an overall popular vote of 35 percent, which because of uneven district sizes yielded it a 48 percent plurality among the directly-elected members of the assembly. This was further strengthened to a 54 percent government majority by the proportional system.

The new party had only been allowed to form a few weeks before the elections. Formed by Kim Dae Jung's supporters and banned politician Kim Young Sam, the NKDP, which had campaigned for a scant 10 days on the single platform of ending military dictatorship, emerged as the largest opposition group in the assembly. There is little doubt that its sudden prominence was due in great measure to a feeling of hope encouraged by Kim Dae Jung's return.

Elliott Abrams, trying to downgrade the events at Kimpo Airport, called them "trivial" in comparison to the significance of the elections a few days later. In ways which he probably didn't intend, he was right. Far more significant for the future of Korea is the fact that all of the major cities rejected the Chun regime's military rule. But it would be a mistake to see the two events as separate. What happened at Kimpo was integrally related to the

election a few days later, for it was typical of a government that has few graces of persuasion and has turned increasingly to the use of force, violence, and threat as a means to work its will. That was what happened at Kimpo, and that is what was rejected at the polls.

Despite these gains, the immediate future of democratic change in Korea is uncertain at best. The government has an unprecedented opportunity to undertake reforms in keeping with the election results, as it has promised it would. But other signs are not encouraging. In ruling-party shakeups this past week, military colleagues of President Chun, who were part of the small group who staged the 1979-80 coup d'etat, have risen to new political prominence. Also during the past week,

millions of leaflets have been distributed throughout the country charging Kim Dae Jung with being a demagogue, procommunist, and corrupt. The government party is behind this campaign, which suggests that hardliners in its core continue to attempt to rule by disinformation rather than dialogue. The political opposition, and with them the radical students and workers poised to respond if trouble comes, are waiting. But they will not wait long.

**Pharis J. Harvey**

*The writer, executive director of the North American Coalition for Human Rights in Korea, accompanied the Kims on their return to Korea February 8.*

*Democracy and elitism in the classroom*

# The mission of schooling: quality and equality

**A NEW WORLD FOUNDATION  
REPORT**

**F**OR THE PAST TWO YEARS we have been in the midst of an intense national debate on public school reform. The issue at stake is most often cast in terms of the question, "What should we do about the public schools?" But this question almost always means: "What should public schools do?" Beyond the focus on teacher morale or academic standards, we are probing the purposes of schooling, sorting out which needs schools should meet, what expectations they should fulfill.

For the general public the debate expresses a rising fear about declining school performance and, perhaps basically, fear about the future for youth in our society.

This concern is a natural product of recurring economic and social insecurity. The country is experiencing profound structural shifts in technology, in job and income distribution, in family life, and in government commitments. These shifts intensify existing inequities and threaten familiar patterns of individual mobility and community cohesion. Yet the debate also expresses hope. Americans turn to our schools—one of the few institutions that are public and local—as a social tool for adapting to new demands and for protecting the coming generation.

Underlying these impulses to fear and hope is an unspoken tension between priorities for school change. Should our schools serve the competitive demands of a stratified society, or should they play a socially integrative and democratic role, ensuring the right of all children to develop to their fullest potential? Some people do not see these two goals as divergent. Yet choices about school policy are being made that do not place democratic values in the forefront.

The school debate may not be well directed, but it is well founded. Our schools are not endowing students with the knowledge and skills they need, and for a large percentage school performance has been disastrous. Nor

*This article is excerpted, with substantial adaptations, from a report on public education to be published later this spring by the New World Foundation, New York City. The report reflects the findings of a working group of 30 educators with experience in both formal and non-formal schooling who convened once a month for more than a year under the auspices of the Foundation. Authors of the report: ANN BASTIAN, social policy consultant at the New World Foundation; NORMAN FRUCHTER, a consultant on education and a member of the school board, New York City District 15; MARYLYN GITTELL, professor of political science at the Graduate Center, City University of New York; COLIN GREER, vice president of the New World Foundation; KENNETH HASKINS, director of the Principals Center of the Graduate School of Education, Harvard University.*



are the schools fulfilling the democratic purpose which, though as yet unrealized, is the ideal most Americans value. That much is clear. The roots of the crisis, however, are not at all self-evident. In fact, the analysis of the crisis is a crucial part of the debate, since whoever shapes *how* the problems are perceived will determine which solutions we pursue.

The current focus on education arises within a national climate of resurgent conservatism. Education has become an arena for intense ideological, social, and political contention. Both the Old and the New Right have taken the initiative in reshaping the education debate with the same objectives that guide their economic and welfare policies: to reduce government responsibility for social injustice, to reinforce competitive structures of mobility, to lower expectations for social and economic security, and to popularize Social Darwinist thinking.

To be sure, few education experts endorse the program of the right. All the national reports on education since 1983 call for sustained federal funding and uphold the principle of public education. Yet the consensus that has emerged even from these major national commissions reflects a neoconservative analysis, based on these assumptions:

1. Economic performance is closely linked to school performance. The crisis in education is most seriously identified with declining achievement levels of college-bound students and by a shortage of the highly skilled personnel needed to maintain our economic and technological advantage in world markets.

2. Our education system previously provided all Americans the opportunity for a rigorous foundation in skills and knowledge, and in doing so it advanced the nation to the forefront of economic well-being.

3. The decline in school performance is the result of the misguided egalitarian reforms of the 1960s and 1970s. Schools have become permissive and eclectic; quality has been diluted by the introduction of inappropriate social demands. The problem, as characterized by Diane Ravitch, is a pervasive "loss of authority," stemming from "confused ideas, irresolute standards and cultural relativism." Reform efforts, therefore, should concentrate on a return to academic basics and more rigorous demands on student and teacher performance: standard pedagogy and curriculum, fewer "frills," more standardized and competitive testing to presort and track students, more stringent graduation requirements. A number of proposals also stress economic development goals, and science, math, and computer literacy.

In its overall thrust, the neoconservative analysis shifts public concern away from both the institutional basis of failure and the social and political issues that are central to equality in education: disparities in school funding; isolation of schools from their communities; denial of access to effective schooling for millions of American

children. Its claim to realizing our democratic ideal for education rests on the promise that its reforms will reverse economic decline by restoring educational productivity, with benefits accruing to all. This claim has great appeal for a wide range of people, both middle and working-class, who feel increasingly powerless to control their occupational destiny or to improve the quality of life for their children.

The neoconservatives present a tidy package, to be sure. But is it true? Specifically: (1) What model for success did traditional schooling really offer? (2) What really were the effects of equity-seeking reforms in the 1960s and 1970s? (3) What in fact is the connection between schooling and our economic status? A closer look at public school history exposes the three great myths of the neoconservative analysis of public education.

### The myth of a golden age

Today's school problems are presented by way of contrast with the notion that our schools used to work well. We hear about the *loss* of authority, the *rise* of mediocrity, the *watering down* of curricula, the *lowering* of standards, the *decline* of achievement.

Once upon a time, the image tells us, there were public schools which provided the masses of American children with solid basic skills, sound work and study habits; these schools were the basis for a disciplined, motivated, and highly productive workforce, which made possible an unprecedented degree of economic development and mobility, particularly among immigrant groups. Further, our schools were a key to social integration, effectively drawing diverse peoples into the mainstream of American civic culture, forming the bedrock of democratic pluralism.

In reality, today's schools do not function in radically different ways from the past. The traditional school system prior to World War II was a rigidly two-tiered system, with separate and unequal schools for the elite and the masses and with two distinct missions: to provide a rising middle class with academic proficiency and preparation for mobility, and to provide the poor and working class with custody and preparation for the low-wage industrial labor market. The public schools of the privileged were the model which the neoconservatives universalize. The schools of the masses, however, were little more than holding pens, promoting high failure rates among the children of the lower strata. Many children remained outside the system, shut out by child labor, by the lack of classroom space, by language and cultural barriers, by schools that were distant or seasonal.

Mass education in its first half century does not make today's failures look exceptional. Dropout figures cited in urban school surveys conducted in the early 1900s are nearly identical to the figures cited today, although the

incidence of failure was more likely to be at the elementary school level. Descriptions of traditional mass schooling present the familiar features of educational inequality: intense overcrowding, overworked and underpaid staff, grim and decaying facilities, insufficient and arcane textbooks, ethnic and racial hostility, vast disparities in funding. The socialization which occurred was not a lesson in democratic values, but it was a convincing exposure to the hard realities of competition and social stigmatism. And repeatedly, the concept of meritocracy served to bridge the gap between elitist practice and democratic promise: It justified the double standard by presuming that the disadvantaged were deficient rather than underserved.

There were, of course, intense battles waged by the disenfranchised to gain more widespread inclusion in the promise of education, as well as concern among civic reformers that the abysmal conditions in mass schooling would contribute to social division and unrest. Yet, reforms between 1900 and 1930 did not challenge the two-tier structure. Schools remained instruments of socio-economic competition, even as the number of competitors expanded. The most significant change was the introduction of free public high schools, a reform largely stimulated by the middle class need to acquire secondary education and to defray its growing costs through the public treasury. High schools, and certainly academic high school programs, however, were not widely accessible to working-class and poor students; entrance was selective and their preparation was poor. In effect, the high school diploma upped the educational ante, with the result that elementary education became more truly universal, and at the same time, more devalued.

This pattern of school reform held for 80 years: The pressure for inclusion was accommodated by gradually increasing access to established levels of schooling; elite status, meanwhile, was preserved by adding new levels which only the middle and upper classes could widely attain. In the process, the lower levels which approached being universal were worth less, both in terms of the range of instruction and in terms of their labor market value. In addition, the extension of public schooling was always accompanied by rigorous sorting mechanisms within each rung of the ladder. What the history of the "golden age" tells us is that public education never transcended social or economic stratification; it reproduced them. There were democratic gains, but they extended only the narrowest forms of equal opportunity and did not outpace or overcome the elitist dynamic of school institutions.

What, then, of the immigrant children? The myth celebrates their rise to middle American comfort as the triumph of public education. But often a closer look at history tells a different story. In the industrial age, until mid-century, only a select group of immigrant children

### JACK AND JILL



### JACK AND JILL plowed up the hill

With blisters on their feet,

To raise a crop for an  
idle fop

Who lived on Easy Street.

—Ryan Walker, *National Rip-Saw*, 1912

reached the professional or corporate elite and usually after their parents had acquired middle class status within the ethnic community, if not beyond it. In the more exceptional cases, when ethnic children made it up the educational ladder without economic security, they were likely to have come from backgrounds where literacy was well established. As happens today, schools confirmed pre-existing advantages, but did not generally succeed where those advantages were absent. Among the ethnic working class, mobility has been more a factor of jobs and income, of unionization or political patronage, than a reflection of the value of their schooling or the attainment of school credentials.

The inequities and devaluation of mass education were not so apparent, however, during periods of economic growth, and particularly during the 1945-65 boom. Economic expansion both extended the layers of schooling and pushed upward the general base of attainment and duration of schooling. Job growth helped to mask and mitigate school failure by absorbing dropouts and displaced workers into blue-collar and service employment, which afforded training and promotional opportunities on the job. With the significant exception of marginal workers, minorities, and women, prosperity raised absolute living standards and income mobility, with only minimal relation to educational attainment or proficiency.

The historic irony is that just as minorities and the poor fought for access to secondary and advanced education in the late '60s, prolonged economic expansion gave way to prolonged stagnation. But the myth of education as a springboard for economic advance and a catalyst for economic growth was not thereby dispelled—quite the opposite. Instead, it is assumed that what is wrong with the schools is what's new about them, the influx of disadvantaged minorities and their demands for egalitarian reform. What has been the historic failure of mass education, now occurring in conditions of economic stagnation, is most readily attributed to its latest victims.

### The myth of egalitarian reform

The school reform movement of the 1960s was not only a battle for access to all layers of public education, but also a demand that equality of result become the standard for school performance.

What was and was not achieved by this movement is very much at the heart of the school debate in the 1980s. The new elite theorists have propagated the notion that the enacted reforms have undermined the model of traditional school success and are either responsible for the present crisis or make no real contribution to solving it. Curiously, this perspective generates two different interpretations of the impact of the '60s movement. In one version, equity demands were translated into powerful reforms, determining the context in which schooling is now conducted. The result, in this view, has been the dilution of quality and the reduction of competency standards. In another version, equity demands produced reforms which had negligible impact on eradicating educational disadvantage. The conclusion is that they are not worth pursuing, and further, that the problems of unequal education are not within the province of schools to remedy.

As we see it, neither conclusion is right. Nonetheless, many progressives feel trapped in the uncomfortable bind of defending previous reforms as hard-won responses to egalitarian demands, when those reforms were for the most part limited compromises. Moreover, even limited reforms have been continuously eroded in the past 10 years. Advocates for more, not less, democratic education have thus been caught in a complicated middle between the failures of the old liberalism and the dangers of the new conservatism.

To understand this dilemma we need to understand recent school history. Following World War II, there was a broad consensus in corporate, government, and public opinion that secondary education, and to some extent higher education, should become more widely accessible. The postwar economic expansion promoted a vast expansion of schooling and raised social expectations for literacy and for school duration. The high school

diploma became the mass standard for school performance. Junior colleges and public universities proliferated; the GI Bill was the opening wedge of the modern school mission.

The upward mobility of organized workers and of the new white-collar middle strata also produced grassroots social pressure to broaden educational enfranchisement. Adequate schooling became a symbol of the American Dream; although not a root cause of the rising standard of living, education was one of its measures. The democratic and economic missions of schooling were indeed coinciding, and appeared to be converging. Significantly, the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision marked a formal commitment to include blacks in the promise of mobility for the first time.

Through the '60s, educational opportunities were thus greatly extended, particularly for the children of white workers in the primary labor force. But opportunities were still negligible for the poor, for the marginal working class, and for minorities. The upsurge of the civil rights movement, reinforced by a mobilized student movement and by the progressive education tradition, raised new demands that challenged these barriers. Universal access to public education was demanded, centering on the struggle for racial desegregation, but calling also for the expansion of inner-city high schools and colleges, for revising admissions to selective institutions. Resources to overcome social and educational disadvantages were demanded, including preschool services, nutrition and social services, remediation, enrichment, and vocational programs.

And out of these initial struggles, a new vision of democratic education emerged, embryonic to be sure, but distinctly different from prior movements for inclusion. The school institution itself was questioned, its educational content and its forms of governance. The movement sought schools which did not function as socio-economic sorting mechanisms and did not assume that children failed because of individual or family deficiencies. The movement sought schools which operated with the expectation that all children could learn given appropriate resources and flexible approaches. The vision of democratic education was neither meritocracy nor the lowest common denominator, but a recognition that quality and equality must be measured by each other, that democracy must be taught by example.

### The unkept promise of reform

The pressure exerted around schools, as central social institutions, did produce an unprecedented series of landmark legislation: the Vocational Education Act of 1963, targeting low-income, handicapped, and female students; the Civil Rights Act of 1964, extending federal jurisdiction over equal opportunity; the Economic Op-

opportunities Act of 1964 establishing the basis for community-based education and training programs; the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the first broad federal support for public education, including Title I funding for compensatory education; the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, providing aid for bilingual programs; the Education Amendments Act of 1972, barring sex discrimination in school services; the Equal Educational Opportunity Act of 1974, mandating schools to redress language barriers; the Women's Educational Equity Act of 1974, funding women's studies; the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, assuring access to school records by parents and students; the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, mandating a free, appropriate education to all handicapped children.

The period also produced significant court decisions, including *Mills v. DC Board of Education* (1972), establishing the access rights of handicapped children, and *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), mandating access rights for students with limited English proficiency. Desegregation plans were ordered, the right of undocumented immigrant children to public education was upheld; students' civil liberties were expanded; affirmative action was applied to school personnel. In addition, some school systems, particularly in urban areas, experimented with new approaches, introducing more socially relevant curricula, scrutinizing sex and race bias in texts, establishing alternative schools for dropouts and students at risk. A number of community colleges experimented with open admissions. Early childhood education programs were greatly extended in low-income communities.

Although the list is impressively long, the reforms enacted still fell far short of the egalitarian demands that prompted them. The most important advance was enlarging access to public education for those previously disenfranchised, but inclusion was not matched by improvements in the quality of education. Schools were indeed given new demands to meet, but these demands were not accompanied either by the level of resources or by the structural and political changes necessary to the task. Enrollments were broadened, but again the educational ante was raised, and the high school diploma or junior college certificate meant less. Taken as a whole, the reforms of the 1960s and '70s were cast in the classic pattern of extending inclusion, while maintaining meritocratic structures of achievement.

The most significant potential challenge to the predictable outcome, school failure for the lower strata, was the enactment of compensatory federal entitlement programs. These programs—Title I, bilingual education, and special education for the handicapped—did go a real step beyond legal access. They acknowledged that added resources were needed and that empowerment was an issue; each of the major entitlements originally included

unprecedented mandates for parental involvement and intervention.

Yet, in their basic design, even the entitlement programs were generally based on assumptions about the inadequacies of minority students, rather than a concept that the schools themselves were inadequate to an egalitarian mission. The model was for add-on programs, separate from rather than integrated with a reconstruction of mainstream schooling. They have worked within a tiered system to reinforce the segregation of students with special needs. Structurally, compensatory programs have established yet another basis for tracking, stigmatization, and lowered expectations.

If the reform design was a compromise, the implementation process has been an overwhelming betrayal of egalitarian school demands, a record of unkept promises. Each of the major entitlements has been grossly underfunded given the magnitude of services they require. Entitlement funds have frequently been treated as discretionary monies, diverted from their original purposes, in systems which face declining revenues and cutbacks in aid even for regular programs. In many instances, local school authorities have resisted responsibility for children who do not readily survive in the existing system, and they have subverted mandates for parental involvement and approval. Noncompliance has not been systematically challenged by state and federal monitors. Often there are not enough qualified teachers, given low levels of compensation and meager training, to operate adequate programs.

In 1980, only 57 percent of the approximately 9 million students eligible for Title I were provided compensatory services, even though recent studies indicate the program has produced measurable gains. By 1984, Title I reductions had cut 900,000 children out of the program. In 1980, 77 percent of Hispanic children with limited

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English proficiency were not receiving any form of special programming; only 10 percent were in bilingual programs. Special education students remain substantially underserved and overwhelmingly segregated. Vocational programs continue to practice wholesale sex discrimination. Even the most successful of all the programs, Head Start, which operates independently and innovatively with a record of unparalleled benefits for low-income children and their communities, today reaches only 18 percent of all eligible children.

The history of desegregation offers an even more shameful example of rights denied through token policy commitments, feeble administration, and retreat in the face of regressive resistance. Although there are some laudable instances of successful desegregation—the National Education Association cites school systems in Seattle, Houston, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg—the overall results 30 years after *Brown v. Board of Education* are deplorable.

Jennifer Hochschild points out that most of the gains toward desegregation were achieved between 1968 and 1972, with no lessening of segregation since 1976. Throughout much of the rural South, desegregation was accompanied by lowering the tax base for public schools, and local and state tax exemptions for segregation academies. Yet, Hochschild reminds us that overall the southern and border states have made the greatest advances toward desegregation. "Racial isolation has increased considerably in the Northeast and is accelerating. As a consequence, almost one-half of northern black students now attend all-minority schools, compared to only one-quarter of southern black students....[Moreover] resegregation or second-generation discrimination within desegregated schools is considerable." Our nation's schooling remains, to a great extent, separate and unequal.

A large number of democratic demands have been abandoned altogether. Open admissions to public colleges, where offered, lasted less than five years, with little time, funding, or administrative support to establish viable transition programs. High schools and colleges are quietly dismantling their minority, ethnic, and women's studies programs. Decentralization of school governance was never achieved on any appreciable scale. In addition, we have recently witnessed a growing divestiture of federal and local taxpayer responsibility for public education, through cutbacks and tax revolts such as Proposition 13. A recent study sponsored by the National Institute of Education found that with the consolidation of federal categorical funding under block grants, there has been reduced assistance to urban schools, particularly those previously receiving desegregation aid, while federal aid to private schools has grown.

The upshot of all this is that what conservatives attack as corrosive egalitarianism in fact never took place and is not the root cause of persistent school failure. While

conservatives justify the reversal of such reforms by claiming the programs didn't work, they ignore the failure to make them work and the underlying social forces which have stood in the way of a genuine commitment to progressive school change. Perhaps the most decisive of these forces has been prolonged economic stagnation, the pattern of recurring recession over the past 15 years, which has shifted national priorities away from social spending and equality goals.

In this climate of fiscal retrenchment, influential sectors of liberal opinion have retreated from their earlier alignment with social movements. In turn, the social justice movements have suffered serious setbacks and become increasingly isolated, thereby lowering the popular pressure on government. Another disabling factor has been the rising influence of school bureaucrats and professional organizations, which have tended to define their interests in opposition to community demands, seeking narrow control over the school institution and its traditional functions.

### The myth of the economic imperative

The third myth that underpins the new elitism is that we face an economic imperative to adopt "get tough" prescriptions and competitive standards. This myth is based on the assumption that declining school performance is a major factor in declining economic performance. A corollary claim is that the "restoration" of high standards and discipline will help restore economic productivity, competitive advantage, and job creation. The elitism of the new regime is thus justified by claiming that universal economic benefits will result.

Our reading of school history suggests that school performance has never been the motive force for economic growth. In fact, we find precisely the reverse dynamic at work: Economic development has directed school change; economic status has determined school achievement; economic mobility has extended school opportunity. School functions have been largely subordinated to economic trends, and at most, play a supportive, not decisive, role in the economy. And if schools have not shaped the economy in the past, they are even less likely to do so given current economic trends.

For the past 15 years, we have lived in an economy marked by stagnation, recurring recession, and the loss of international predominance. In the past five years, this economy has also gone through a period of dramatic restructuring, gearing up for a new round of global integration and intense competition. These conditions have accelerated the displacement of labor. Today, we are faced with a shortage of jobs in a wide range of skill levels, not a shortage of qualified and motivated workers. The figures for youth and for minorities are the worst. The jobless rate for black teenagers averages five

times the national rate and today is even more disproportionate, at well over 50 percent. Nearly 40 percent of the unemployed are under 25 years of age; nearly 20 percent are teenagers. Longterm trends indicate that the labor market will continue to contract relative to the workforce.

Structural shifts have also produced a widening gap between skilled professionals and unskilled, low-wage service workers. We are witnessing the destruction of what for 30 years was considered the "primary workforce": blue-collar workers in the leading industrial sectors—basic manufacturing, transportation, communications, construction. In general, these workers were unionized and received compensation tied to the rising productivity and the market advantages of their firms. Through the postwar period, they set the standard for wages, hours, and benefits, fair labor practices, and job security. Primary sector jobs were often semiskilled and skilled, but educational attainment was not a major condition of job entry, training, or promotion.

These jobs are fast disappearing today—more than 5 million have been lost since 1980. This is due to several converging factors: the new wave of electronic automation, rising foreign competition, the flight of capital and production to cheap labor havens overseas, and the rise in nonproductive investment. Job conditions are also worsening because of government deregulation of major industries and de facto deregulation of industrial practices. Union protections are rapidly weakening in the face of a new employer offensive. For the first time since the formation of the CIO, union wage gains were below those of nonunion workers. The sector once reserved for low-skill, marginal, unorganized employment—and particularly for women and minorities—is now setting the job standards.

We have then a labor market with the middle dropping out and with competition growing at every level. Contrary to the human capital theories so optimistically put forward by current education influentials, there will *not* be more room at the top to compensate for the losses. The labor market of the future cannot be pictured as a bell-shaped curve, but rather as a bottom-heavy hourglass. The emerging top will include only a small, elite stratum of well-paid professional-technical employees, who themselves will face growing problems of skill devaluation and intense competition. (The trend is already evident at the college level. Comparing jobs entered by college graduates from 1962-69 with those entered from 1969-78, the number of professional positions declined from 73.2 percent to 45.9 percent; the drop was taken up by sharp increases in clerical, sales, operative, service, and unemployed categories.) On the bottom of the hourglass will be a shrinking number of blue-collar workers, faced with a continuous reduction of labor standards. The bottom will also include a growing segment of rela-

tively skilled but low-paid employees in paraprofessional, technical, administrative, and service fields, a large proportion of them women, as well as the traditional secondary workforce of low-skill, low-paid service jobs which are dead-end, unstable, and rapidly expanding. In addition, there will be a swelling pool of structurally unemployed workers, joining the vast reserve of irregular workers and "hard-core" unemployed.

What labor market trends tell us is that a longstanding paradox of schooling will become a more intense contradiction in coming years: Education will mean more for a few and less for many. Access to rewarding jobs will require greater educational attainment and proficiency, but there will be fewer chances for success even with the fullest schooling. For the great majority, job destinies will not utilize intellectual skills beyond basic literacy, although years of schooling may still count in arbitrarily sorting out who gets hired and who rejected.

These trends suggest a series of problems we have just begun to fathom. Without intervention, poor and minority youth, who already receive substandard schooling and face 50 percent unemployment, are likely to be left entirely outside the job market. Working class youth, who have no particular advantage in their schooling, will not have compensating job or income opportunities as adults. And schools will be increasingly hard-pressed to motivate students through career goals.

IN TIMES SUCH AS THESE . . .

all Christians must work together



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Given the disjuncture between economic and educational rewards, the effort to link school reform to the market value of education threatens to abandon large segments of American youth. If one argues that schools should reflect the logic of a polarizing labor market, the necessary conclusion is that we must reinforce competitive schooling—raise elitist barriers, add new stratification mechanisms, reward only the most exceptional or advantaged. There are not a lot of other options left within the marketplace framework.

The economic imperatives which are cited to defend competitive standards are to us good reasons for rejecting such standards. If the marketplace offers so many students diminishing rewards for education, we should go beyond it in defining the school mission. This does not mean that schools should ignore the occupational futures that await their students, but that schools should be more forcefully egalitarian in light of employment inequalities. Further, school change should be linked to changing the marketplace itself, to reordering economic priorities so that skill and knowledge are socially useful for every young person. In reformulating the connection of schools to the economy, we see three levels of needed reform.

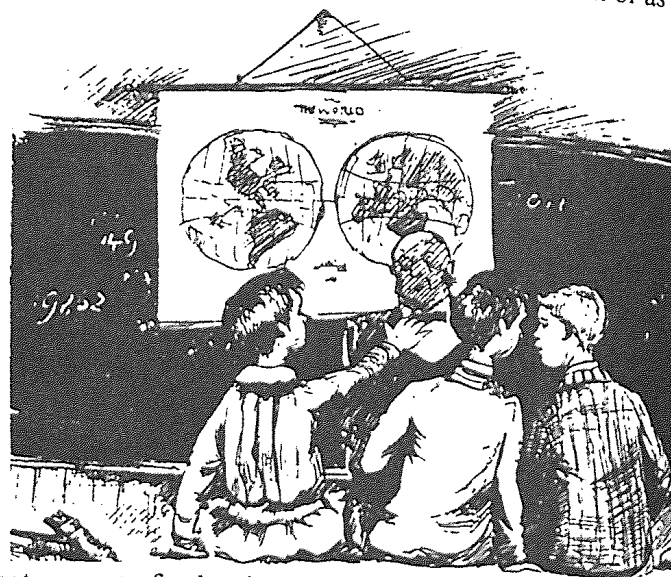
1. The first challenge is to recognize that within existing economic structures and polarities, there is a tremendous battle ahead simply to democratize competition. Even though job chances are limited, all children should have equal chances to be among the successful. The insistence on equity in access and in the quality of schooling will not transform the labor market, but it can work to distribute its tyrannies more evenly. Although this is the minimum level of equal opportunity, we are far from fulfilling it. The focus today is on narrow forms of vocational training, with pressures for early tracking, for test-driven and quantifiable curricula, for mastery of highly segmented and specific skills.

2. Beyond adjusting the school to the realities of the economy, a second challenge is to recognize a larger agenda for adjusting how the economy meets the needs of youth. Addressing this question involves the pursuit of a genuine national full employment policy, which accepts that where the marketplace does not provide sufficient jobs based on market needs the public sector must provide jobs based on social needs. At this point, chronic needs exist both for job creation and for rebuilding our communities. Viable models exist, both here and abroad, for public service employment and job training programs applied to infrastructural repair, environmental protection, social and family services, cultural activities, even schooling.

3. A third challenge posed by economic decline and school devaluation is to define the mission of education in terms of its citizenship function. Education for citizenship means that schools should provide children with the

social and intellectual skills to function well as members of families and communities, as political participants, as adult learners, as self-directed individuals. It means educating children about the way the world works, and arming them to influence how it works. Citizenship requires basic skills, but it requires other forms of learning as well: critical thinking, social awareness, connection to community, shared values. The call is for educational values which recognize all student needs as legitimate and which prepare students for multiple roles as adults, regardless of their labor-market destinies or economic status. The bottom line for democratic education is empowerment, not employment. In fact, only an empowered citizenry is likely to alter our economic priorities and reduce the disjuncture between schooling and jobs.

In 1985 we are still confronting the conflict between political democracy and economic elitism, between education seen as a tool of universal empowerment or as an



instrument of selective mobility. We are still in a contest between extending the democratic potential of schooling or imposing the standard mold of meritocracy on new conditions.

In the end, the earlier decades of social activism have brought about a shift from largely exclusive meritocracy to largely inclusive meritocracy. Inclusion is not nothing, but it is not enough—and now, even formal access is eroding. Measures which recognized compensatory needs, which addressed exclusion and segregation, were real victories, but victories because they represented first steps toward more thorough institutional transformation. In the past 10 years, those first steps have become inadequate and precarious end points. The task now is to take the next steps, to open new ground for equality, to match the inclusion of new populations in the schools with a new, fully democratic mission for public education. Progressives won the first round and lost the second, but the vision that the movement of the 1960s created survives to be built upon. □

## Books & the arts

# The possibilities of community

### Community Is Possible

*Repairing America's Roots*

By HARRY C. BOYTE

New York: Harper Colophon Books,  
1984. 243 pp., \$6.95

MIKE MILLER

**H**ARRY BOYTE IS AT IT again: stirring the democratic spirit, taking us on one of his Tocqueville-like tours of America (he did it earlier with *The Backyard Revolution*), urging us to take seriously our own traditions and values and our own claim to speak for America—rather than leaving that to the Moral Majority and their ilk—challenging us to look beyond traditional categories of “left” and “right,” seeking with us to define the very elusive notion of “community.” And, while doing all this, he tells some very compelling stories of what Americans are doing in some specific places to deal with poverty, inflation, injustice, powerlessness, and alienation.

In short, his new book is well worth reading. Boyte offers a challenge to both liberals and radicals; he argues that their analysis and program miss the mark. Liberals begin with an assumption that there is nothing fundamentally wrong with the system and mobilize around specific issues and policies; they do not look seriously at how power is organized in society. Radicals begin with a critique of the system—of how power is distributed—and seek to persuade others of the correctness of their analysis; they do not give priority to how people experience their own problems and to developing an analysis in the course of common action on social problems. Both approaches ignore the same truth: Democratic movements for change are nourished in specific contexts where deep human relationships are possible: in places like the black Baptist or Hispanic Catholic church; ethnic neighborhoods; community centers tied to the lives of the people in the surrounding area; labor union locals that are more than service providers for an uninvolved membership.

Boyte is a democrat and takes the democratic tradition very seriously. He is a

MIKE MILLER is Executive Director of Organize Training Center in San Francisco.

populist, and wants to take the best of populism and redefine it for the period 100 years after the small farmers of the South and West took on the bankers, railroads and their kept politicians. He is a Christian and finds in the Judeo-Christian tradition a rich legacy of stories and values. He believes that the churches and synagogues of America belong on the side of the poor and oppressed.

*Community Is Possible* takes the reader on a journey that begins with the Oneida Indian Nation and includes a multi-ethnic neighborhood in St. Paul; a neighborhood in Lowell, Mass.; a rural communal farm; a feminist retreat center with close ties to religious communities; a neighborhood development corporation; a predominantly black housing project in St. Louis; a mutual aid program run by disabled people; two broadly based community organizations in the Alinsky tradition; a houseboat community in Seattle; and much more.

In each of these places, Boyte asks people to tell their story. His questions refer to historical precedents and to contemporary issues, and they lead to some common themes: people remember their ethnic and family histories, they connect past struggles for justice with those in the present, they find support in their immediate environment of place or in their congregation to carry on their struggles, and they link their specific experiences to the church and its values. The story-telling form is exactly the right idiom for Boyte; he listens well.

The heart of the argument is stated in the book's title: America's roots, its pluralist and democratic heritage, must be

repaired if we are to reverse the direction in which we are now heading: concentration of wealth and power; “me first” values; consumerism; loss of identity; isolation from one another. To find the strength to fight back and to reclaim America, we must start by linking the specific problems people face to the things that they care most about—to the values and traditions that are at the core of their identities. Where these identities are in danger of being lost, they must be renewed, for without them there is little basis to resist the otherwise overwhelming power of the mass media, the major multinational corporations and the bureaucratized and unresponsive government. A vision of a pluralist and democratic America must be articulated at the same time as specific struggles on issues, programs and policies take place, and this vision must be firmly rooted in community. Only then will it gain the support of the majority of the American people. It is at this juncture that the book runs into some difficulties and they have to do with an ambiguity in Boyte's notion of community.

### What makes community?

“Community,” Boyte tells us, “is intended as a concept suggesting density and texture of relationship.... Communal ties depend upon a complex set of social relationships that overlap and reinforce each other.” Boyte also cites Craig Calhoun's characterization of communities as meaning a “greater closeness of relations [than is true for society as a whole]. This closeness seems to imply, though not rigidly, face-to-face contact, commonality of purpose, familiarity and dependability.” On these definitions, then, Cicero, Illinois, is a community. So is a bridge club made up of old-timers who've been playing together for 30 years. But these examples aren't what Boyte means. As most of his stories make obvious, he is after a deeper definition of “community,”



one that involves democratic values and action in realizing these values. It is not sufficient, then, to think of "community" simply in the more traditional sense of a group of people who support each other. Lots of churches and synagogues do more or less well at that: social hours; home and hospital visits; initiating, marrying and burying, with counseling in between. What they find more difficult is to take the stated values of the Judeo-Christian tradition and effectively act on them in the world.

This kind of inconsistency is also apparent in Boyte's discussion of "culture," especially in his story of the Oneida Native Americans in Wisconsin. Reacting against assimilation, young Oneida begin to learn their own heritage, studying their language, traditions and history. They also seek to create economic enterprises that are run cooperatively. While Boyte doesn't actually say this, we might imagine that the Oneida understand that culture is elaborately connected with social organization and that social organization, in turn, reflects and influences patterns of ownership of the means of production as well as of the organization of work. The cooperative enterprise fails, Boyte tells us. But he doesn't tell us why. Specifically, he doesn't tell us what it means to renew culture when the economic and social context is totally different. Put another way, if culture is to be more than tragic memory, it must connect with present realities.

Community, then, should be thought of as a group of people who support and challenge each other to act individually and collectively to realize their values and self interests. The values that guide such a community, we would argue and hope, ought to be those of the democratic tradition and the moral, ethical and social and economic justice teachings of the world's great religions. Thus, mutual support is not enough; talking but not acting isn't either. Action unrelated to self interest is ineffective because it is likely to involve the already committed and no one else; so is action based solely on self-interest, for without a connection to our deepest values it can easily decline into selfishness. Symbolic actions with little likelihood of realizing goals are also insufficient, though they may make their participants feel good.

This meaning of community is probably best understood in the black church

where a sermon might include exhortation to register to vote, to boycott an offending product and to back these activities up with, as Albany, Georgia's Rev. Ben Gay put it many years ago, the "granddaddy of them all, prayer." Such a complex definition of community sets tough standards, but they are necessary if we're going to achieve the kind of society Boyte thinks (and I agree) we ought to be striving for. This notion of community, moreover, is as true for the Moral Majority as it is true for those who oppose it. The struggle we face today is over defining the values.

### Acting on values

How to communities act to realize democratic values? Here are some stories: In one case, a synagogue faced the question of whether or not to join a broadly based community organization, and its Board of Directors was about to vote no. The rabbi told them that if they did he would preach against their decision from the pulpit and urge the congregation to overrule its board. He said, and I paraphrase, "We cannot be Jews and refuse to participate in this effort....What would be the meaning of our commitment to justice if we fail to join?"

In a reluctant Episcopal parish, a lay leader asked the vestry how it could participate in collections for the poor and in volunteer services for the poor while refusing to join *with* the poor to seek real solutions to poverty, as well as, by the way, to problems facing its middle class members. And in a Catholic parish in another city, a workshop was held to determine the meaning of a mission statement on justice. The workshop leader made use of Catholic teachings that argue that charity can never be a substitute for justice, and when used in that way is being used improperly. The group concluded that joining a community organization would help them live out their mission statement.

If we do use a rigorous standard for "community" what do we exclude and why? Rural communes and religious retreat centers may be fine for the spirit, but they don't involve action on issues. Government-funded development programs don't last long if they bite the hand that feeds them. The renewal of historic and cultural identities needs to be organically linked to current struggle or it will decline into nostalgia or become a variant of ethnocentrism. Narrow constituencies may

win specific and important victories on issues, but they are insufficient to bring about the broader vision that guides Boyte's travels and writings. To say, "I (or we) *feel* powerful" when one is not really all that powerful is like saying, "I feel like I can fly" and jumping off the Empire State Building. It might feel good for a while, but reality is soon going to change that.

The desire to feel the bonds of intimacy, love, kinship and friendship are widespread in our time of mobility and shallowness. So, too, are the desires of the majority of Americans—and I part company with those who characterize us as a selfish, unfair people—to live with one another on a basis of mutual respect. However, redlining, urban renewal, plant shutdowns, keeping up with the Joneses, street violence, inflation, crime, unemployment—the list could go on—create pressures on our lives that make the realization of our most cherished values difficult to impossible. We will not realize these values if we do not, at the same time that we struggle to achieve them, understand that these concrete pressures must be dealt with as part of the process of building community.

Boyte understands all this...some of the time. Toward the end of his book, he devotes a couple of chapters to broadly based community organizing in the Alinsky tradition. What he fails to do is make clear that these examples are qualitatively different from the rest of his illustrative materials. They are different because of many things, including at least the following: they are multi-issue; they are internally democratic; they involve the widespread participation of the people of their constituencies; they empower large numbers of people through effective collective action; they relate action on daily problems and issues to the deepest values of the democratic tradition as well as to the ethical, moral, social and economic justice teachings of the world's great religions; they are (or seek to become) relatively permanent forces in the political configuration of their communities; they continuously train new volunteer leaders in the skills of public action; they are primarily funded by the activities and dues of their membership.

Where successful, these organizations are the voice of the constituency they claim to represent—not in the phony way

(Continued on page 96)

**E**ARLY THIS YEAR, as in previous years, the Board of Directors of CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS faced a question: Shall the journal continue in publication, or not? As in other recent years, the answer was provided by many thousands of decisions made through the course of 1984: choices made by all our subscribers, new and old, and by all who found themselves able to provide extra support. The Board's decision, then, is really a choice made by the entire C&C community.

To acknowledge that fact and to express our

gratitude, we publish here the names of a sizable fraction of the journal's 1984 donors. We're equally grateful to the hundreds of others whose names do *not* appear; even in tiny print, the full list would be impossibly long.

The Directors join in this giving of thanks. To complete the circle, we of the staff want to use the occasion to thank the Board members, who put in many hours of sometimes onerous work for no pay and little recognition. That's the way it should be, of course. But it's still astonishing.

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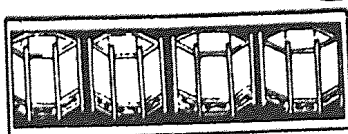
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## Community

(Continued from page 92)

in which one organization described by Boyte defines "everyone" in its area as a member, but in the practical way of being taken seriously by those who wield power and by having a defined and democratically constituted membership. And in this sense they are fundamentally different from movements. The civil rights movement won tremendous concessions from national policy makers, but lacked the power to enforce its victories. The industrial union movement, on the other hand, won concessions and the right to enforce them through a democratically chosen "bargaining agent"—the union.

The need is to create vehicles that hold accountable and ultimately transform the dominant institutions of our nation. Not all the examples in Boyte's book, however, will ever meet this need. Boyte does not make that clear, though he is quite clear that the concentration of wealth and power in America must be fought. This is the major weakness in this otherwise excellent book. Boyte has chosen to wander. That is the prerogative of the traveler. It is not the prerogative of the tour guide. □

## Letters

(Continued from page 74)

of what it calls "constructive engagement" toward South Africa for four years, in the belief that "quiet diplomacy" and "friendly persuasion" will convince the white majority regime to abandon apartheid. Given the increased violence and repression to which we have alluded, such a policy is immoral on its face, temporizing as it does with evil. Constructive engagement has not only been disastrous from a moral point of view, but for practical and political reasons as well. The situation has not gotten better, but worse. Blacks continue to die and suffer in virtual slavery. South Africa has been emboldened to step up military aggression against neighboring states and has been able to stall the process of independence for Namibia. This policy has permitted our country to become identified by black South Africans and independent African states as a supporter of apartheid. In the words of Bishop Tutu, constructive en-

agement has only "assisted in making the South African government more intransigent." It is past time to recognize this policy as a failure and adopt a new one.

The dramatic growth of the Free South Africa Movement in the United States should send a signal to Congress that the American people are looking to their elected officials to forge a fresh approach to South Africa. Your leadership can help in restoring our nation to a position of moral leadership in the world while promoting long-term political and economic stability in the region and furthering the ends of justice and democracy. Such a policy must address the reality that the system of apartheid is strengthened by investments, loans, and other assistance, including nuclear cooperation, coming from the United States. Total U.S. investment in South Africa is now \$14.6 billion; the U.S. is South Africa's No. 1 trading partner.

We urge you to cosponsor and actively support:

- legislation calling for disinvestment of U.S. corporations from South Africa and an end to U.S. bank loans to that country;
- legislation ending coal, uranium, and steel imports from South Africa into the U.S., as well as the prohibition of the sale of the Krugerrand, the South African gold coin, in the U.S.;
- legislation ending all military-related and nuclear exports to South Africa, including all sales to the South African police; and
- a resolution calling on the administration to support the independence of Namibia without preconditions and to use its voice and vote in the United Nations to oppose apartheid and South African intervention in neighboring countries.

Finally, we wish to emphasize that we speak not only as citizens but primarily as religious leaders. While there is a great diversity of faith and doctrine in the religious communities from which we come, there has emerged in the past century a growing religious consensus that every human being is a child of God and therefore sacred. This fundamental religious/ethical principle has profound implications for human and political rights. What makes the case of South Africa so grave is the fact that the principle of the sanctity of human life is denied to the vast majority of its citizens and that this denial is sanc-

tioned by the state, supported by social and some religious institutions, and enforced by a growing police and military apparatus. To temporize with such a system is to be infected by it and to endanger the soul of our nation.

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