



Motivated by our different religious traditions, we believe that attitudes, priorities, and institutions can be changed to reflect a just and democratic use of the universe's bounty; we believe in the value of work that contributes to the common good; and in the healing influence of respect for the differences as well as the commonness of human experience.

AUTUMN 2000

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Religious Socialism

THE JOURNAL FOR PEOPLE OF FAITH AND SOCIALISM

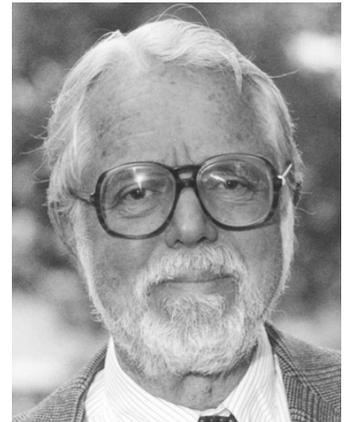
RELIGION AND POLITICS: WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE RELIGIOUS LEFT

AN INTERVIEW WITH HARVEY COX

Harvey had recently returned from Israel where he had been participating in an Interfaith conference. Harvey, a member of DSA, has always been a perceptive interpreter of the relationship between religion and society.

RS: Harvey, you just returned from Israel, and I'm sure you saw a lot of interactions between religion and politics. What were your reactions when you came back to the U.S.?

HC: I was glad to be home. I had the impression that in contrast to Israel, American politics are simplicity itself. The threat of a religious subversion of our republic seems very modest compared to the genuine problems facing the Israelis. In Israel, you have increasingly powerful political parties that are religiously motivated-- On the one side, there are religious nationalists and those demanding special privileges for their people. On the other side, you have Prime Minister Barak who is trying to change the constitution to make Israel into a lay state-- into a democracy with a constitution that guarantees equality to all religious groups, with no special privileges granted to any group. That is a very wide divide. The fact that Barak is making this move at this moment is to some extent an appeal to a



“it is inconceivable that socialism could have emerged over history without that core vision that comes from the Bible”

large number of Israelis, who are angered and enraged by what religious parties are foisting upon them. We must remember that religious parties represent a small fraction of the people of Israel, including the religious people of Israel.

I happened to be in Israel when the nomination of Joseph Lieberman was announced and noticed that the reactions were immediately divided. One paper said: “it is wonderful, Jews in America will have one of our own in that office which has never been open to the Jews”. Another one said; “Oh,Oh- This is not good for the Jews” The same debate is taking place among the Jewish community in the U.S.

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editor's notes

During this past election season there was much discussion of religion and politics, including the work of government with faith-based organizations. There were some concerns raised about Social Security and Medicare, but other issues related to urban areas, such as racial and economic justice, never surfaced as prominently as they should have.

This Fall issue of *RS* begins with an interview with Prof. Harvey Cox, long associated with DSA, and a renowned interpreter of the interaction between religion and culture. In this interview, Harvey addresses some of the issues of religion and society in our American context, and especially the role of religion in the recent political campaign and what that means for the future of the Religious Left.

In light of our society's obstinacy and unwillingness to address economic justice issues, we also thought it desirable to have a reminder of the contributions of the Judeo-Christian tradition, as found in the Bible, to our understanding of egalitarian economic thinking, a concept that is clearly "off limits" in our political discourse. In this regard, we are including portions of an article that was written and excerpted by Stephen Mott, social ethicist and Methodist minister. Stephen comes from an evangelical tradition and his excerpts show why the Judeo-Christian or biblical tradition should not be conceded to the Religious Right. The focus of the article is on the significance of the Jubilee theme, which is clearly articulated in the Hebrew Scriptures and is carried over to the New Testament.

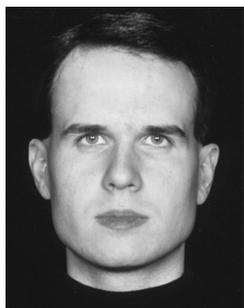
There is much debate about whether the Jubilee Year was ever implemented, and if so, for how long? But they are not the relevant questions. The real message is that the Jubilee theme is a powerful motif in the biblical canon and it recognizes a creeping inequality in society, an inequality that needs to be periodically remedied, even if we know that inequitable conditions will creep back in again. That is why the Jubilee motif affirms a need for a fresh start and for continual renewal, always moving in an egalitarian direction, even if full equality will never be attained in this world.

Following up on the excellent article by Catlin Baker on Charitable Choice in the Spring issue of *RS*, the Rev. Joyce Caggiano expresses her views on Charitable Choice in light of her experiences as head of an ecumenical social service agency in Detroit. Joyce sees the inherent problems in working as an agent of the state in a program that is based on false premises. That is, the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 is prefaced on the notion that poverty is the result of personal deficiencies, and those deficiencies can be corrected if people are dropped from the Welfare roles and are forced to get jobs—even if they are dead-end jobs.

I would note that although I concur with Joyce regarding the faulty structure of the

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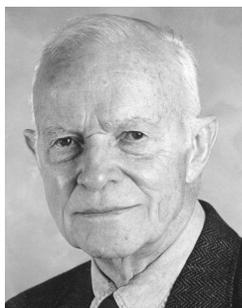
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**UNION MADE
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LETTERS

I've received more than I expected from you guys. Haven't gotten too far in Christian Socialism, by Cort, because you pack so much in so few words. I have to stop and think through what I just read-- and that's great.

But now I've run into an anomaly. In your news newsletter RS, you list the things you don't like about our government and ask Linnea Rawls how she feels, and it comes back about the same. And it is the way any clear thinking Christian would feel.

Then you interview and report on Tom Wakely's run for office in Texas as a member of the Green Party, and then Rawls and Cort say they are reluctantly voting for Gore.

Is anyone awake there? There is a real and vital choice-- Ralph Nader and the Green Party. The usual line is "voting for the lesser of two evils". A Green came up with the real story-- "Don't go for the evil of the two lessers".

....If every group that wants to see our country become what it was meant to be would at least study Ralph's message, they would see backing the Green candidate would at least shake up the Democratic party enough to

back it way from where the Republicans want the country to go, and bring out enough Democrats that have not been voting to get the Congress back.

Gore betrayed us all by backing the China charade. He is not worthy of a vote. Tweedledee and Tweedledum need to be put out to pasture.

Yours truly, and Go Green,

Rogers R. Kimball, Jr.
W. Melbourne, FL

upon receiving a copy of RS from John Cort"

..... Thank you for your thoughtfulness. I received both the Spring and Summer issues and I am especially grateful for the Stockholm Declaration.

Thank you for finding a political home (but not for nesting).

Mary Evelyn Jegen, S.N. D.(Sisters of Notre Dame),
Cincinnati, OH

... In his "Swan Song of Sorts", John Cort suggests that we not consider Daniel Singer and Paul Sweezy as socialists, but as "seductive seducers" of "democratic communism". Under his heading, "What are the Differences?", Cort is the classic inquisitor. Several years ago Cort was condescending toward another of our times most ecumenical socialist writers, Paul Buhle (See my letter to the editor in the Spring 1997 issue of RS.).

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editor's notes cont'd

1996 Welfare Reform Act- as well as the perils of religious institutions taking government funds, I would note that government funds that are made available to secular social service agencies are absolutely essential. Only government or public funding can address the massive social needs in our society. The religious institutions have a special prophetic role to play and can generate financial support from their constituents to do social services, but all of those efforts combined will never be able to address the vast array of social needs and social problems confronting our society. And religious institutions need to ask: under what circumstances would the acceptance of government funds be justified? Not all government programs are based on faulty premises such as those the Welfare Reform Act of 1996.

In addition to the articles, there are book reviews by Alex Mikulich of two important works by William Julius Wilson- *When Work Disappears* and *The Bridge Over the Racial Divide*. Wilson's sociological insights into the nature and structure of poverty in the U.S. have been widely acclaimed, as well as his call for new types of coalitions that cross urban-suburban and racial boundaries. In addition, Alex

also has a review of the book by Cornel West and Sylvia Hewlett on *The War Against Parents*. -- In another book review, John Cort assesses a work by Eileen Eagan (*Peace Be With You*). John is an admirer of Eileen Eagan, who was a friend, associate and confidante of Dorothy Day. But John criticizes the book's inherent pacifism and its failure to address "just war" theory.

Last, but certainly not least, we have the letters from our readers and, in particular, a spirited exchange between Gregory Giacobe and John Cort. Although Gregory expresses his regrets about John no longer being one of the editors of RS, he need not fear. In the future, John's voice will not be silent. We thank John for his many years of service to RS, and we look forward to his continued work with



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Interview with Harvey Cox

cont'd from front page

RS: What do you make of the religious scene in the U.S. today in terms of religion and politics?. What do you see happening?

HC: We are going through a period in which two major things are happening, One is the tendency to equate the separation of Church and State (which is in our Constitution) with the separation of religion from society. That has now reached a point where it has evoked a movement in the other direction.-- I am strongly in favor of the separation of Church and State if that means no religious intervention, no institutional utilization of state power for religious purposes, and, equally, no state intervention in religious decisions and religious institutions, as well as the preservation of the freedom of religious groups from government intervention. That is one thing. But in the U.S.A, to separate religion from civil society is empirically impossible, especially when you have a country in which the vast majority considers themselves to be religious. In contrast to Europe where you have 2-3 % of the people showing up once a year in churches and synagogues, in the U.S. we have 60, 70 and 80 percent of people who consider themselves religious, who are active in religious institutions, and who say that religion is important in their lives. It is puzzling to many Europeans how this is possible. Separation of Church from State and separation of religion from society are not the same. But at least for the last couple of decades, there have been groups within American society have maintained that they are the same thing and now we are seeing a backlash against that.

The other change is that religion in public life for the last 10 years has almost always been identified with ultra-conservative positions, policies and groups. Go back to the Moral Majority, the Christian Coalition and to Gary Bauer's candidacy, and so on. There is one exception, of course--Jesse Jackson, who actually played down, to some degree, his religious affiliation, but spoke in a religious, rhetorical style.

Some have claimed that one thing Joseph Lieberman has done is to drive a wedge between the word "Religion" and the word "Right". I think that is healthy, because the idea that one side should claim God is wrong. I would feel the same way if in last 15 years the more liberal and progressive forces had said "God is on our side"- which was the case in some points of American history - with Bob La Follete and other movements. Maybe God cannot be corralled by either side. We are also seeing a change there and both of those changes are welcomed. But I am glad to see that religion is no longer simply identified with the political Right.

RS: Harvey, what is your feeling about the state of religion and politics, particularly with regard to the future of religious socialism or progressive religion in the US? Does it have a future?

HC: I think religious socialism has a future; whatever one calls it. As we know, the word "socialism" does not necessarily draw in droves of supporters and voters, largely due to the bad name alleged "socialism" got in Eastern Europe and in the USSR. We might outlive that period. But the reality is there. The reality of a society dominated by large corporations that are in business not to serve the commonweal but to serve their stockholders and their managers, and have made an ideology or even a religion out of "free market" economics--(not "free" except for corporations)-- to do what they want to do. In long run, this will cause a lot of damage and has already eroded the Social Contract which has been part of American life since the New Deal. We had a certain sense of responsibility to each other which has taken the form of legislation such as Workmen's Compensation, Medicare, Social Security etc, all of which are being questioned.

But even with these changes, some gains seem to be part of our social fabric. For instance, George W Bush had to actually apologize because of the attitude of his party toward Medicare. Ronald Reagan thought that Medicare was one of the worst things to happen in the country-- the camel's nose of socialism. However, just try to run for political office in America as an opponent of Medicare. People complain about how it is administered, but the vast majority of Americans know that it is essential. In a society based solely on market values, you will not have things like Medicare. I think therefore that the public mentality will move toward a critique of the shape society is being given by this unchallenged corporate domination. We will see a rebirth of populism and progressivism. It has happened before, as in the New Deal, the New Frontier, and it will happen again.

There is something cyclical in American life. We have gone too far in one direction. The problem is that the options have become somewhat marginalized by the panicky retreat of both parties toward what they call a "center", which leaves out a lot of interesting alternatives. While I do not plan to vote for either Ralph Nader or Pat Buchanan, the very fact that they are raising these issue is a healthy thing. Third and fourth parties have a function in American political life of raising issues that eventually find their way into the major parties-sometimes rather quickly. This might be slowed down or skewed by the massive role of television or image mongering in U.S. politics. But new options

"...one thing Joseph Lieberman has done is to drive a wedge between the word 'Religion' and the word 'Right'."

“historically, the vision of socialism, at its best, is a society where we care for each other, where each contributes according to his/her abilities and receives according to needs, where there is, equity and compassion, not just on an individual basis, but built into the social fabric and supported by public institutions.”

will find a way in American political life, so I do think there is a future.

You ask about religious progressivism. Almost always in the US- not always in other places-- the inner value core of progressivism has been religious - time and time again it was not inspired by anti-clerical or anti-religious movements, as in other places where church supported the ancient regimen or the political Right. Think of the abolition movement, the civil rights movement, the peace movement, etc., these all had a cluster of ideas, values and images which were drawn directly from Judaism and Christianity. If such a progressive movement is to gain traction and support it must draw upon the idiom of biblical religion. It is the language people speak. We do not have a key figure in public life today who articulates this very well, such as a Martin Luther King, Jr. It is too bad that Ralph Nader does not have a command of some of that language. Bush and Gore, despite all their references to religion, tend to be more pietistic and do not bring biblical imagery to the public arena.

RS: You seem to be more promising about religious socialism in this country-- despite its moves to the Right-- than you do are about Europe, which is more secular and more progressive.

HC: I am. Europe is in a post-Christian phase. The deadening alliance of the churches in Europe with the ruling regimes is now taking its toll. It think, however, there will be a religious renaissance in Europe, but at the moment Christianity is at a low ebb with native

Europeans. The most vigorous Christian Churches are filled with immigrants from the Caribbean and elsewhere, and in France and Italy there are increasing numbers of Muslim immigrants. What Christianity is alive seems to be the type that appeals to people because it can offer solace and retreat from the hurley-burly of life. An amazing statistic is the increased number of visitors to the pilgrimage sites and retreat centers where you need reservations in advance. Consider Lourdes- where you have to be booked three months in advance. And most people do not go Lourdes to be cured, but go there to find a new spiritual experience. A study done by a researcher at the Harvard Center for World Religions found that over 98 percent of those going to Lourdes are not going there for healing but to touch some type of spiritual atmosphere, and many do not go to church at home. What are they looking for? Part of the answer is that life in a technological/information society is so accelerated and fast-paced that people need to go to places where they can be quiet and to touch the roots of the past. I do not believe that Europe is not lost forever for some kind of religious awakening, but at the moment it is at a low ebb. Therefore, the progressive political movements in Europe will have to be based on something else. There is even Tony Blair, the new British Labour Prime Minister, who is a very serious Anglican, but never says anything about it. He was influenced by Archbishop William Temple in a Christian Socialism, but probably knows that these images do not connect with the mind of the British people today. But it is different in America.

RS: As you hear the religious rhetoric tossed around in a political campaign does it buoy your spirits or does it make you more cynical?

HC: Absolutely both. I'm glad the language and references are there-- it enriches and broadens and give resonance to the campaign, and from my point of view, it takes the religious card away from the Religious Right. That is all for the good, for they do not have an arm-lock it any more.. They even have to defend Lieberman against secular attacks. But it also gives me the he-be-gee-bees because so much of it is posing, image manipulation and mere hypocrisy.

RS: How should Religious Socialists read it-- the same way?

HC: I would think “yes”--It could open the door for a genuine revival of religious progressivism or religious socialism, but it also warns us that there is very high degree of snake oil in the political messages.

RS: The “spirituality” quest you see in Europe, don't you also see it in the US?

HC: Yes, but a traditionally based and more institutionally grounded, socially aware Christianity is more viable in the U.S. Unless the New Age mentality takes over entirely, I

MORE ON CHARITABLE CHOICE

GOVERNMENT

&

GOD

REV. DR.

“(T)oo many lives are at risk to remain silent”. These words conclude Cathlin Baker’s well-articulated argument against Charitable Choice in the Spring 2000 issue of *Religious Socialism*. Baker understands the conservative moral framework that is the underpinning of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWOR). Baker states in her article, “Advocates of Charitable Choice suggest that poverty is... related to the general moral breakdown in our society”. She is correct in stating that the 1996 legislation keeps any discussion of poverty within a context of “individual morality,” which were words used to justify the vast gap between the rich and the poor that characterized the turn of the 19th to the 20th century.



Perhaps putting some flesh on the modern problem will help to illustrate some of the issues and people who are at risk. Recently, Ernie came into *Crossroads*-- a 501 C (3) ecumenical social service agency begun by the Detroit Episcopal Cathedral in 1971. Ernie had compound fractures of both wrists from a fall he had taken while on the job. He is homeless and has no health insurance. His employer had no insurance either. He was taken to the Detroit Receiving Hospital, the one hospital in the city that takes care of the uninsured. The doctors performed emergency surgery, placing plates and pins in his wrists. After three days they let him out of the hospital while he was still unable to care for himself in the most intimate details of personal hygiene. The social worker at the hospital tried in vain to get him into some kind of shelter, rehab center or nursing home. The medical staff had determined that he was capable of caring for himself and would not keep him without insurance. The mental health staff could not put him in any facility because he was “unable to care for himself”. No Nursing Home would take him because he was too young (45) and that would cause problems because a government-funded home is required to provide activities for younger residents.

Ernie did not qualify for care at any one of the various agencies that should have been able to help him. He was not accepted at any of the city’s homeless shelters because he “couldn’t take care of himself”. *Crossroads* staff spent many hours and made numerous phone calls to try to get Ernie into a decent, safe, clean place to rest and recover from his accident. In the end, all that we were able to do was to pay for his medication. Ernie knew before any one of us could accept it that there was nothing anyone could or would do for him. He became very depressed and talked about killing himself. When all efforts to find a shelter for him proved fruitless, we said ‘goodbye’ and led him out of our door onto the street without a place to stay. The next day he returned with further wounds: he had been robbed and beaten while trying to sleep in an abandoned house. His drugs, of course, were stolen. One of the pins holding his wrist had been bent. He was extremely vulnerable on the street with no protection from the elements or from victimization. In desperation, *Crossroads* staff continued its search for a place for Ernie. After talking to the president of the Hospital, the head of Social Work division of the hospital and the Hospitals Roman Catholic Chaplain, we got only one answer-- there was nothing that could be done by anyone for Ernie.

**Charitable Choice is
simply a way for
the church to be used
as a tool to reduce
welfare case-loads.**

I tell this story because Ernie is just one of thousands of stories of the injustices perpetrated against the poor in this, the wealthiest nation in the world. When Baker writes, “too many lives are at risk”, she is right on target! *Crossroads* sees nearly 10,000 people every year--more each year since 1996 than in any of its previous 24 years.

But saying that injustices occur is not the point of this writing.

No one would argue that there are not many heart-breaking stories to tell. The point is this: the 1996 Welfare Reform Bill and its “Charitable Choice” component imply two very important things. Both have very real consequences for those who are struggling to survive at the bottom of the economic ladder. Those two things are:

- 1) that the poor are responsible for their lack of success and should be shown the “correct” or “moral” way so that they can be successful; and
- 2) that the church is the charitable arm of the state.

These two implications have a major impact on the public conception of justice and the function of religious institutions. Already there are many churches that are eager enough and poor enough to exploit government’s offer to support their “work in community”. Why not? Isn’t it right that the church should be helping people? It seems so simple. And to answer point number one, isn’t it true that if people would just get a job or stop having out-of-wedlock babies that they would be able to support themselves? If poverty is the result of individual, personal moral failure, what better agency is there to address it than the church?

The real truth is that the poor are not responsible for their desperate condition most of the time. And the real truth is that the church must stand apart from the government in order to exercise its prophetic voice; in order to call society to a more just system of social welfare so that even the poorest of the poor have a chance not only to survive but to thrive.

Ernie is an example of how the social systems, the so called “safety net” have failed. There are five areas in which Ernie was negatively affected by public policy and public services. Those five areas are education, health care, housing, employment and law enforcement. All of these are part of public responsibility and all of them have left the Ernies of the world behind because of inadequate public policy and public funding.

As a poor African American in the City of Detroit, Ernie was lost from the public school system in the second grade. He is illiterate. He is not eligible for health insurance because of state mandated restrictions. He is unable to afford an apartment because minimum wage is not a living wage. Thus, he must find “shelter” in places where thousands of others like him must live, not as an emergency measure but as a way of life. There is not enough affordable or public housing to support huge numbers of low-wage workers. His employer exploited his disadvantages by giving him day to day work without any benefits and did not provide the workman’s compensation required by law. Even the laws designed to force employers to protect workers are unenforceable. The only possession left to Ernie at his most vulnerable time was his medication. Ernie and countless others like him cannot rely on law enforcement to protect them from the kind of treatment he got from the desperate “others” who live on edge of survival like him. “Charitable Choice” is no remedy for these enormous gaps in the so called “safety net”. In fact,

Charitable Choice is simply a way for the church to be used as a tool to reduce welfare case-loads. .

Ernie needed an advocate more than anything. He needed someone who could fight for his right to receive care. If we had gone to the media (and we almost did) we might have been able to raise some extremely important criticisms of the present welfare system and the unavailability of medical care for people who are uninsured. If we had been funded by the state, that could have put our entire enterprise at risk. The present welfare system has abandoned this young strong African-American male and thousands of other homeless men, women and children on the streets of Detroit and in other cities throughout the nation. Pathetically, even the informal

Charitable Choice is no remedy for these enormous gaps in the so called “Safety Net” ...

**...it is a option that
simply co-opts
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city shelter system failed him.

Charitable Choice is an option that simply co-opts the very institutions that should stand in opposition to such injustices. Religious institutions should not simply become a convenient place to shift public responsibility that the poor are responsible for their own predicament. Charitable Choice corrupts religious institutions and supports the shirking of public responsibility. Who is to stand in judgment over a society that can be so callous as to allow these horrible circumstances to be a regular daily event for hundreds of people who are just trying to exist?

Charitable Choice leaves those of us who value true “justice for all” in a difficult predicament. Do we take public funds from a program that is built on false premises, and also accept the limitations created by federal guidelines and be threatened by the loss of funding and be subjected to political manipulation? Or, do we take our stand as a bulwark against ~~the public crimes affecting those who are poor?~~

Joyce Caggiano is an Episcopal priest who is the Executive Director of Crossroads, an ecumenical social service agency in Detroit, Michigan.

SOME CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE BIBLE TO E G A L I T A R I A N ECONOMIC THOUGHT



STEPHEN MOTT

...The normative economic materials in God's revelation are a reflection of the divine purpose of reconciling all things. The God who inspired these writings is the one God who in very being is just. This God is "the Mighty One, God the Lord (who) speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting" (Ps. 50:1 RSV).

As men and women of God, we need to be concerned that in the economic sphere also God's will may be done and that God may be glorified. For the good work too, we are equipped by the inspired Word of God which has among its glorious purposes our 'instruction in righteousness' or justice ... (2 Tim 3:16f)

The provisions of justice for the needy are expressions of God's compassion for the weak and God's hostility to oppression. The arrangements for Israel have universal implications, (especially) when we take into account Israel's unique elect role of preparation for Christ and the church.

...Society as described in the Bible is a society characterized by conflict between the mighty and the lowly..... The image of conflict in the Bible correspond to its understanding of human nature. There sin is a deep principle of rebellion which stands almost as a mythical personified force over human beings and their communities. At the heart of the individual and the race is sin which is pervasive, demonic and corrupting. Sin is not the self-harmonizing, enlightened and rational self-interest of capitalist and other liberal forms of thought.

....Such a view of sin is reflected in the power of exploitation in social relations. The Bible views individuals as naturally belonging in community. The community formations reflect the rebellion of the individuals composing them, and of the fallen angelic powers guarding them. Evil accordingly is expressed also in group relationships. So Micah perceives a society in which the wicked are controlled by evil desires, and the existence of unequal power allows their desires to be fulfilled, leading to the oppression of the landed inheritance of the peasants. "Woe to those who devise wickedness and work evil upon their beds! When the

morning dawns, they perform it, because it is in the power of their hand . They covet... They oppress....." (Mic. 2:1f, cf. Job 22:8, 35:9; Eccles. 4:1, 5:8; Ps 106:42; Exod. 3:7-8; Ezk. 22:6f, 9, 12).

In the face of such social strife, justice requires an intervening power. "Justice to the fatherless and oppressed" is accompanied by breaking the arm (power) of the evil doer to eliminate the source of oppression (Ps 10:15-18).

....The juxtaposition of wealth and poverty is a topic of importance for an economic ethic, and is part of the message of the prophets. They do not, however, generalize and state that all wealth and poverty share the characteristics that they describe. Accepting the authority of their specific analysis makes us aware of the presence of similar dynamics in different societies; indeed we recognize the widespread existence of such factors. The message of the prophets heightens our awareness and provides us with theological and ethical categories with which to evaluate these factors when we find them.

Productive Property

Ellie Munk, a Jewish scholar, once stated that "the point of departure of the system of social economy of Judaism is the equal distribution of land among the inhabitants" (*La Justice sociale en Israel*). The Law presents God as having presented Israel with a system of property distribution which if maintained would have prevented the later social crisis. Originally, the land was divided among the clans of the tribes so that a relatively similar amount of land was available to all of the family units. The larger tribes got a larger portion and the smaller tribes a smaller portion (Num. 26:54). By lot the land was further subdivided among the protective association of families and then (Josh 18-19) to the extended families. The criterion of the division thus was equality, as is stated directly in Ezekiel's vision of a future redistribution of the land, in which land is said to be divided 'equally' (RSV- literally, 'each according to his brother'-- Ezk. 47:14) The concern, however, is not the implementation of an abstract ideal of equality, but that there be empowerment of all the people.

The land thus distributed became a patrimony in land. Patrimony in property in the soil went with membership in the covenant community as inherited property. The concern for empowerment was not merely for the first generation entering the land but also for all subsequent generations. Several institutions had the purpose of preserving the distribution of the land. *The law of the levirate* served to prevent lineage capture. (Deut 25:5) . The stringent *commands against removing one's neighbor's landmarks* were made because the land is one portioned out by Yahweh (Deut 19:14; 27:17). There was also a *kinship redeemer* for the times in which the land was sold in poverty (Lev. 25;25).

But the most important institution for preserving the distribution of the land was the *Year of Jubilee*. Every fifty years all lands, whether sold or lost in foreclosures, had to

be returned to the family whose patrimony they were.

Jubilee

The Jubilee is based on the assumption that the land is Yahweh's (Lev. 25:23) ...The claim made in Scripture that God owns 'the cattle on a thousand hills' and that 'the world and all that is in it' are God's (Ps. 50:10,12) provides a basis to expand the implications. Classically in Christian theology, the basis of the ethic of property was God as the creator of the earth and of every person. Augustine, for example, saw in this basis a right of both rich and poor to be supported from the earth, limiting the concept of private property.

Does the assertion of God's ownership have any economic or social implications? The Jubilee shows that it has. The Jubilee is a built-in mechanism to ensure that the equity expressed in the distribution of the land is permanently institutionalized. As such, it appears to be a significant limitation on the Western concept of private property, which by definition includes the ability to dispose of the property freely. The economic loss to those who temporarily procured the land is not considered. They still have God's intention for them in their own patrimony.

The purpose in the Jubilee was that everyone, or at least every extended family, should have personally-owned productive property. In accord with the original distribution of the land, all units of society were to have adequate access to productive power and to receive similar treatment at this basic level. Through the Jubilee this concern was institutionalized and supported by the formal structure of the community: the law and the pertinent forms of judicial and administrative justice.

The thought behind this provision has broad implications for economics. Within economic arrangements, there is to be a concern about the processes which tear people down. Special attention is required to the minority, or the majority, who do not fare well in the normal social conflict. Attention must be given to power. Economic arrangements should ensure that people in their basic economic units have access to the productive power of their community so that they can have a degree of self-sufficiency. The nature of that productive power will vary from society to society.

This programmatic provision in the Mosaic law is an expression of God's justice for a particular culture. The universal significance is not in that particular arrangement

of property itself. Other cultural situations will demand other forms. The early church in Acts 2 and 4, for example, met the needs of mutual economic support with a very different property arrangement. Whatever it was in actual practice, Luke shows the kind of norm which he intends to communicate about this ideal community in his choice of technical terms found in Platonic and Neopythagorean texts to describe ideal utopian egalitarian societies: 'one soul', 'nothing his or her own', 'everything in common'.

The response to the Jubilee is not to reproduce it in the same form elsewhere, because in a different situation the form would not fulfill its original function. Land, for example, has a very different significant function in an industrial economy or communications economy, than in a pastoral or agrarian society. Rather, one must ask, how did the provision function in its own culture, and how can that function be

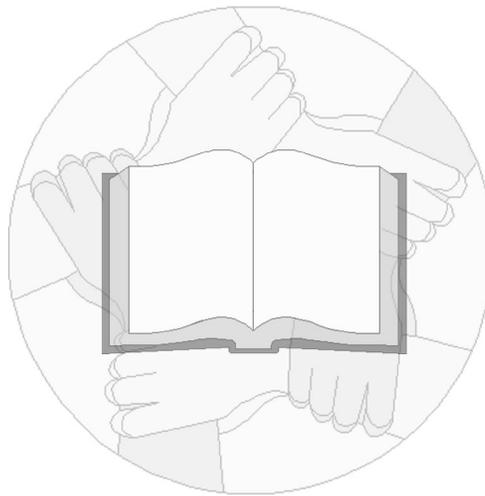
approached in another culture? If land in Israelite society meant productive power, the means of subsistence or of production, then we must identify the form of productive power which is characteristic of the society at hand. For example, in an industrial society the productive power would seem to be the factory and the concern would be participation in the ownership and control of the factories. The same is true for the new technologies.

The provision for the Year of Jubilee in Leviticus 25 is followed by a general appeal which I have found most helpful in understanding what holds together the biblical provisions for justice and rights.

Leviticus 25:35,36 introduces injunctions which deal with interest and provision of food. A close rendering of the Hebrew of v 35 would read: 'If your brother becomes poor (the term means 'to be low') and his power slips (literally, 'has hand wavers'; hand is a metaphor for power) in relationship to you, you shall make him strong'. The purpose stated at the end of this verse and in the following injunction

on interest is that he may 'live with you', that he may 'live besides you'. Poverty is understood as a loss of ability to maintain a minimal level of participation in the community. The definition of poverty by the Social and Economic Committee of the Common Market was very close to it. Poverty occurs when resources are so small that people are 'excluded from the mode of life, the normal patterns and activities of the countries in which they live' (M. Harrington, *The New American Poverty*). The statement in Leviticus 25 reflects the conflict in society represented in that chapter as loss of land, credit exploitation, and slavery.

cont'd on page 13



**As men and women of
God, we need to be
concerned that in the
economic sphere...
God's will may be done
and that God may be
glorified**

AN EXCHANGE: GREGORY GIACOBE AND JOHN CORT DEBATE THE LAST ISSUE

Gregory Giacobbe writes:

A debt of gratitude to John Cort for reprinting the complete text of the Stockholm Declaration (*RS*, Summer 2000). It's rare that we get to read what democratic socialism is supposed to mean in today's world. But I was a little taken aback by Mr. Cort's jeremiad against "democratic communism". Certainly, as a casual reader of history may discover, the impulse to abolish private property has been around for some time--way before Marx. And it has usually come about as a reaction to the vast and rapacious concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few. For example, the Diggers, the 17th century English Radical Protestant movement, called for the land, at the time being consolidated into large estates, to be held in common by the people.

But it seems that, whatever Mr. Cort's opinion on the seductiveness of this "oxymoronic" current in leftist thought, another and probably more serious threat to the principles of democratic socialism may be looming. As a recent article in *Democratic Left* ("Millennium Issue Part Two", Summer 2000) strongly implies, many powerful social democratic, socialist and labor parties seem to be caught in the sway of the "Third Way" rhetoric. If carried to their logical conclusion, this trend may spell an end to such socialist goals as the democratic control over production, the staunch support of workers to organize, and the use of the economy for socially useful and beneficial ends. All in the name of "modernity".

Should private property be abolished? Probably not to the extent that old-time Socialists and Communists thought, and definitely not down to the level of personal property. (Well, within limits) But it may make sense in a few prescribed instances, say in the fields of oil, coal, and gas production, electrical power generation and distribution, communications, media (partly), and transportation. While I think we should beware of those who promote unworkable theoretical proposals in the name of socialism, we should also keep on guard against those who would sell out traditional socialist principles by "reforming" them out of existence, and thereby placing us further from those goals that we, as democratic socialists, all wish to achieve-- a truly democratic society where our lives, work and opinions matter!

Finally, I'm sorry to read that Mr. Cort has resigned as editor of *RS*. Although I've often disagreed with his positions on issues like reproductive choice and les/bi/gay trans issues presented in these pages over the years, his arguments were always cogent and informed. He'll be missed. ▀

John Cort responds:

I thank Gregory Giacobbe for his kind words. He worries about the socialist, social democratic and labor parties that now control most of Western Europe. Many American socialists, frustrated as we all are at not being able to build an effective socialist presence here, relieve our frustrations with loud tongue-clucking at the alleged failures, and even alleged betrayals, of more successful socialist over there.

Some of this is what R.H. Tawney, one of England's finest Christian socialists, described as "the great game of overtrumping the Left of today for fear of not being in the swim of tomorrow".

Those European parties, whatever they may call themselves, are all socialist parties because they all belong to the Socialist International and subscribe to the Stockholm Declaration. Those who wish to indict them as flops or traitors should do so by citing chapter and verse of the Declaration as well as specific actions or omissions of those parties in violation of that Declaration. As Norm Faramelli has reminded us, nobody is perfect and neither is any political party. Sins of omission or commission should be serious enough to support the indictment.

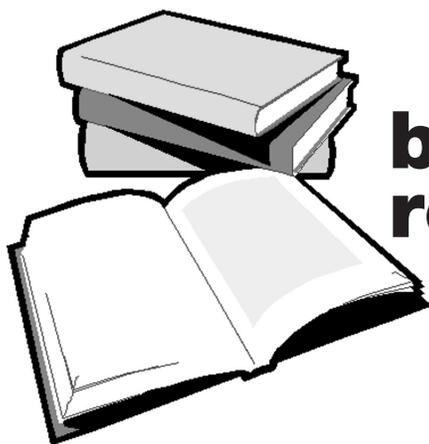
The extent of public or private ownership is not always a reliable test, as the Declaration reminds us. The International's Frankfurt Declaration (1951) provides us with a better test, namely, to what extent is private profit the ruling party's priority as opposed to "the satisfaction of human needs"? And how do you determine that? One good way is to check the opposing parties' concern for tax cuts for the rich against their concern for "the satisfaction of human needs."

In the debates, Gore scored when he charged that Bush's tax cuts would yield more profits for the 1 percent richest Americans than his proposals for health, welfare, education, protection of the environment and other basic human needs, all put together. This was an authentically socialist argument from a candidate, Gore, who has shown a lamentable lack of enthusiasm for such arguments.

Re: Abortion and Gays-- Good people and good socialists, disagree about these subjects. There are legal questions and moral questions. Legally, we have to struggle to work out compromises that protect as many as possible and hurt as few as possible. Morally, we have to struggle to respect the consciences of those who disagree with us. Conscience is the court of last resort, up to a point where serious damage is clearly evident, or, where the moral and the legal clearly overlap, which, unfortunately, is also the point where clarity is most difficult to determine.

What is unacceptable, and even infuriating, is the practice of some pro-choice people and some gays, lesbians, et al, to demand respect for their consciences while shouting no respect for the consciences of those who disagree with them, denouncing all such as reactionaries or homophobes because their religious faith tells them that certain actions are sinful. Sinful for me may not be sinful for you. Okay to that. But have the decency to recognize that I may have some legitimate reasons to think and believe as I do, especially if you want me to recognize that you may have some legitimate reasons to think and believe as you do.

In no way do I mean to imply that comrade Giacobbe is guilty of such disrespect. And I thank him again for his kind words. ▀



book reviews

CROSS-CLASS COALITIONS

ALEX MIKULICH

Reviews of :

When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor
by William Julius Wilson

Vintage Books, reprint edition, 1997, 352 pp.

The Bridge Over the Racial Divide: Rising Inequality and Coalition Politics

by William Julius Wilson

University of California Press, 1999, 149 pp.

The War Against Parents

by Sylvia Ann Hewlett and Cornel West

Houghton Mifflin Co., 1999, 302 pp.

RACE, POVERTY AND COALITION BUILDING

There is no better student of U.S. urban poverty than William Julius Wilson. Wilson's masterful studies of urban poverty provide the most enlightening follow-up to Michael Harrington's 1962 classic *The Other America*.

Wilson details the loss of heavy industry and the attendant loss of mediating institutions, such as small businesses, religious, and voluntary associations as two major historical processes that have contributed to the development of deeply impoverished neighborhoods. He demonstrates how global economic changes over the past fifty years have transformed central city neighborhoods from communities marked by strong mediating institutions to areas ripped apart by joblessness, violence and persistent poverty .

In *When Work Disappears*, Wilson's research team documented hundred of hours of comments from 2500 persons who live in the poorest neighborhoods of Chicago. The voices of people who have struggled to survive in the midst of devastating changes animate the blood, sweat, and tears behind the hard data of Wilson's analysis. An elderly woman living on the south side of Chicago since 1953 tells how:

(w)hen I moved in , the neighborhood was intact. It was intact with homes, beautiful homes, mini mansions,

with stores, Laundromats, with cleaners, with Chinese cleaners. We had drugstores. We had hotels. We had doctors over on Thirty ninth street. We had doctors' offices in the neighborhood. We had the middle class and the upper class. It has gone from affluent to where it is today .

Where the neighborhood is today is described by this 35-year old man:

I'm a cocaine dealer cause I can't get a decent-ass job. So, what other choices do I have? I have to feed my family...do I work? I work. See, don't bring me that bullshit. I been working since I was fifteen years old. I had to work to take care of my mother and father and sisters. See, so... nobody bring that bullshit that I ain't looking for no job.

A 28-year old welfare mother who lives in a large public housing project explains what people do without money and jobs:

Shit, turn tricks, sell drugs, anything-- and everything. Mind you, everyone is not a stick-up man, you know, but any and everything. Me myself I have sold marijuana, I'm not a drug pusher, but I'm just tryin' to make ends-- I'm tryin' to keep bread on the table. I have two babies.

Wilson documents how most individuals in impoverished neighborhoods struggle against nearly impossible odds to live up to mainstream work habits and notions of acceptability. Many work at two or more minimum-wage paying jobs that often will not pay for rent much less food, health care, and child care. Yet the global economic changes that Wilson details have changed more than central city neighborhoods.

a shared worry exists across lower and middle class income groups that may... provide the basis for a cross-class, multi-racial political coalition for economic justice

In his latest work, *The Bridge Over the Racial Divide: Rising Inequality and Coalition Politics*, Wilson demonstrates how the median wage for all Americans has dipped 10 per cent since 1979, and that the hardest hit by low wages are workers who lack a college degree-- three-fourths of the labor force. Nearly eight million workers held two or more jobs in 1996, an increase of 65 percent since 1980. Furthermore, "since the 1970s, while the income ...of the top one percent of households doubled, family and household incomes have stagnated or declined for eighty percent of the population."

cont'd on next page

Wilson contends that a shared worry exists across lower-and middle income groups that may also provide the basis for a cross-class, multiracial political coalition for economic justice. He argues convincingly for the development of a national multiracial coalition based on the grassroots example of the Industrial Area Foundation (IAF) inspired by Saul Alinsky. (IAF, a network of more than forty communities across the United States.)

In Texas, for example, the IAF does three things to promote an interracial coalition that religious socialists would do well to emulate. First, IAF relies on member's shared commitment to broad religious principles that generate trust and a sense of common identity. Second, the issues addressed are developed out of local consensus and are not framed in a race-specific manner. Third, Hispanic, African American, and other leaders are united in a local IAF organization but retain significant autonomy to address racial and specific neighborhood issues that are not a part of IAF's state agenda. Wilson, like the IAF, wants to stress how issues of a living wage, jobs, health care, education, and decent child care can unite many Americans across racial and class boundaries.

PARENTS IN COALITION

In *The War Against Parents*, the authors share Wilson's vision of a national political effort that can bridge divides of gender race and class. As Cornell West and Sylvia Ann Hewlett stress, perhaps the greatest evidence of the lack of "family values" in the U.S. is our 20 percent poverty rate for children----the highest among all over-developed nations. Moreover, in the midst of an unprecedented economic "boom" in the richest nation on earth, child-poverty rates run as high as 50 percent in African-American , where life-expectancy rates for men rival those of the poorest nation, Bangladesh.

West and Hewlett offer a comprehensive and specific "Parent's Bill of Rights" that addresses issues of paid parental leave, a living wage, job opportunities, pro-family electoral and legal structures, improved public education, and national health care legislation.

Although *The War Against Parents* is a useful examination of conservative and governmental attacks upon poor and working families, the exhaustive detail provided on groups like the Promise Keepers becomes a needless detour.

Nonetheless, these three volumes define a 21st century agenda for all people who struggle to build a more deeply human society. Wilson, West and Hewlett not only diagnose the illnesses, they offer policy prescriptions that a broad-based constituency can gather behind to build a common and enduring cross-class and multiracial vision of freedom, justice and equality. ▀

Alex Mikulich is a member of the RS Commission and a newly appointed co-editor of RS. He completed a doctorate in Christian social ethics at Loyola University in Chicago and is now teaching social ethics at that institution.

Peace Be With You by Eileen Egan

(Orbis Books)

JOHN CORT

On August 6, 1945 an American bomber dropped a nuclear bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. This one bomb killed 130,000 men, women and children instantly and another 60,000 more slowly by the deadly after-effects. We can safely assume that most of these victims were innocent non-combatants. Three days later a second, less powerful bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, killing 35,000.

As result of those raids, the Japanese surrendered a few days sooner than they would have surrendered anyway, a fact that we already had solid evidence to believe.

Regarding those events, Dorothy Day wrote in *The Catholic Worker*: (President) Truman was jubilant. He went from table to table on the cruiser that was bringing him home from the Big Three Conference, telling the great news. "Jubilant", newspapers said. *Jubilate deo*. Regarding the number of Japanese dead, the Herald Tribune stated that the figure was not known for certain. The effect is hoped for, not known. It is hoped they are vaporized, our Japanese brothers, scattered, men, women and babies, to the four winds, over the seven seas. Perhaps we will breathe their dust into our nostrils, feel them in the fog of New York, feel them in the rain on the hills of Easton.

Did ever a Christian conscience speak more powerfully to power than did Dorothy Day in the holy sarcasm of that paragraph? I don't think so.

I read this in a new book, *Peace Be With You*, by Eileen Egan, one of Dorothy Day's closest friends, disciples and confidantes. Eileen, who is still an associate editor of *The Catholic Worker*, is herself an admirable character and a tireless fighter for the propositions that the Gospel of Jesus Christ makes just-war theory untenable, no matter what Augustine, Thomas Aquinas and hundreds of other theologians may have written.

Just war theory holds that the use of force, violence, killing, may be justified if (a) the cause is just, (as in the case of an aggressor invading another country for no good reason); (b) all other means of resolving the conflict have been exhausted; (c) the conduct of the war is consistent with certain minimum standards, such as the principle that no innocent non-combatant may intentionally be killed, and (d) the good to be obtained outweighs the evil that will most probably result.

The opposition to this theory, exhaustively reported in Eileen Egan's book from the earliest Fathers of the Church, through the Middle Ages to modern times, can best be summarized in the vision statement of Pax Christi International, a Roman

Catholic organization headed by Cardinal Gottfried Daneels, Archbishop of Malines-Brussels. The Cardinal read the statement at the 50th anniversary of the International in Assisi in 1995. It includes these words:

....Based on Christ's gospel of peace, Pax Christi International....will uphold the belief that waging war, aggression and destruction can never be acceptable. (It seeks to be a leaven within the Catholic Church and to help transform it into a church which gives unambiguous witness to the non-violent Jesus.

"The non-violent Jesus'? There is the rub. Early in his active ministry, as related in John 2:13-16--and a few days before his crucifixion--as reported in all three synoptic Gospels--Jesus used force to drive the moneychangers out of the temple in Jerusalem!

Eileen Egan nowhere mentions these incidents except by quoting an Essay of Peter Maurin, Dorothy's mentor, to illustrate his critique of the moneylenders.

True, Jesus did speak very forcefully about the duty to forgive, to love our enemies, not to resist evil, but to overcome evil with good, to turn the other cheek, etc. But he did not say that we had any obligation, or right, to turn our neighbor's cheek. And it is a perfectly reasonable interpretation of the Gospel of Love that if our neighbor calls to us for help against an unjust aggressor, love requires that we must go to his/her aid and use effective measures to repel that aggression.

Consider this scenario. A man is at home with his wife. Another man breaks in with intent to rape his wife. She cries to her husband for protection. Does Jesus' Gospel of Love require that the husband do nothing to resist the rapist? I think not. I think it requires him to resist.

A national government is in exactly the same position as the husband wherever there is a threat of unjust aggression. The people appeal for protection. The government is obliged to respond, just as it must respond to individual appeals with police protection.

There is still a legitimate case to be made against the "just war" on the grounds that the weapons of modern warfare, and the governments' proven tendency to use them against non-combatants (as in World War II and many succeeding wars) make it practically impossible to fulfill the conditions required by just-war theory.-- But that is not the case made by Eileen Egan in her otherwise excellent book. The book would have been strengthened if she had addressed those issues. I wish I did not have to say that, because the book is an excellent historical summary of the problem and Eileen Egan herself is a most excellent witness for her cause. ▀

John Cort is a member of the RS Commission, and until recently, a co-editor of RS. This article appeared in a slightly different form in Our Sunday Visitor, (a Catholic newspaper) on August 6, 2000, the 55th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima.

Egalitarian Economic Thought

cont'd from page 9

maintain his or her place in the community. The power which has been lost is to be restored.

....The preceding material on the Jubilee in Leviticus 25 well illustrates the principle of v 35. Those who are lacking in power because of the loss of land are made strong by receiving the productive power of the land.

....Similarly, there were restrictions on the processes which tear people down so that their 'hand wavers'. Interest on loans was prohibited; food to the poor was not to be provided for profit (Lev. 25:35f) A means of production like a millstone was not to be taken as collateral on a loan because that would be 'taking a life in pledge' (Deut. 24:6) The Law did, of course, support rights of control and gain by the possessors of property, but economic arrangements were restricted which threatened the basic needs of the other party.

...In this and other provisions of the law there is no sympathy for the Social Darwinistic perspective that elevating the weak encourages unfitness or that interfering with the causes of their weakness undercuts the economy. ▀

Stephen Mott is Methodist minister in W. Bridgewater, MA, and a social ethicist (formerly Professor of Christian Social Ethics at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary). This article was excerpted by Steve from a longer article published in June--Dec.1987 issue of Transformation, entitled "The Contribution of the Bible to Economic Thought", and the ideas are still timely and relevant.

Letters

cont'd from page 3

What motivates Cort to be so non-catholic, so exclusionary and sectarian? Fifteen years ago I grudgingly renewed my subscription to RS with a letter to Cort. In it I expressed the hope that DSA and the R&S Commission would become more open to diverse views of religious socialists. Subsequent exchanges indicated that Cort was not interested in serious dialogue with my kind. However, his criterion did not prevail (See RS XII, 1 to 3).

Cort writes that since Michael Harrington and Irving Howe died, "it is difficult to see anyone in the socialist movement in this country who has their intellectual and moral authority, and also the gift of common sense." It is apparent that Cort's prejudices limit his studies. But who needs new insights when all the answers are known?

*Gordon A. Chapman,
Yellow Springs, OH*

Interview with Harvey Cox

cont'd from page 5

concern. There are many people in America who say; "I am not religious, but I'm spiritual", meaning I think a lot, or might even have a mantra.. Maybe this is an opening to say there are religious traditions which do more than manicure your own soul. Still there is a temptation for the Churches to respond to that "spiritual" market over-enthusiastically.

RS: I remember a response to a presentation I made where the person noted- "the problem with you, Harvey Cox and that whole gang is that you are still stuck in the 60's". Harvey, are you still stuck in the 60s?

HC: I'm a defender of the 60s. I do not think it was a deviation from American social, religious and political life. Remember that, in addition to the Hippies and flower children, the 60s was the Peace Corps, where thousands of young people reached out to help others. The 60s was the freedom movement, now called the civil rights movement, which galvanized the churches and synagogues in one of the most significant American political and cultural reforms of the century. The 60s was the beginning of a successful effort to stop the Vietnam War. Furthermore, it was not without spirituality. I reject the idea that those of us involved in the 60s forgot about prayer. When I was marching down South in the 60s I was praying all the time, and we had just spent three hours in a Black Baptist Church praying, singing and clapping. I felt very close to God.

One to the things that made a big difference is when Thich Nhat Hanh- a simple, credible Buddhist monk- came here and traveled under the auspices of Churches--Baptist, Catholic, Episcopal Churches and said-- "look folks, you are doing the wrong thing. We appreciate the motivation that got you into it, but you are destroying my country". And he spoke as deeply spiritual man. Thich Nhat Hanh is one of the great spiritual teachers of our time. There was a kind of spirituality that was grounded in the love of neighbor and a sense of justice. The 60s was not a simply a period of fervent activism and mindless running around. There were some excesses to be sure, but there are always some excesses in a good movement. Despite that, the 60s was a golden moment in American life. We are all deeply sorry that some of the figures who gave it its shape-- John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X were all assassinated That what is bad about the 60's. The people who gave it its spiritual resonance were murdered. That is what is to be regretted about the 60s.

RS: Harvey, in RS we have often asked the question, what is specifically religious about religious socialism?

There are a couple of things . First, historically, the vision of socialism, at its best, is a society where we care for each other, where each contributes according to his/her abilities and receives according to needs, where there is, equity and compassion, not just on an individual basis, but built into the social fabric and supported by public institutions. That

is undeniably grounded in the Bible. It is inconceivable that socialism could have emerged over history without that core vision that comes from the Bible--the Hebrew prophets and Jesus and other parts of the Scriptures. Where do the values underpinning socialism come from? Historically, the early socialists were Christian Socialists. They were shoved of the stage by Karl Marx., but none the less, that is where it came from. That is the historical reason.

The second reason is theological. I think of a statement that Martin Luther King, Jr. used to make when asked: "why do you keep doing this? why do you continue to struggle when things look so discouraging?" He would reply: "because we have cosmic allies. He believed "the universe is on the side of peace and non-violence", and what he called the "blessed community". You are not out there simply working on your own energies, because that can be quite discouraging. If you really feel there is theologically and philosophically a movement or an energy within history that is moving toward this community, that belief can keep you going. When other ideologies fall by the way side, there is a staying power to a religious vision of socialism that other movements do not have. Where is Marxist atheistic socialism now?. Or where is atheistic or anti-clerical socialism today? It is not very much in evidence. I don't think that the core vision was there. Now there are useful things about Marxist analysis, but the inner vision of what human beings are, how they should live together, how they could live together, and how they can be empowered to live together, was not part of it. And when it hit tough times, it fragmented and it imploded.

RS: Some have made the observation that one of the problems that socialism has had in this country is that a lot of its leadership-particularly of the Marxist variety-- was anti-religious while the proletariat that it was engaging held deep religious convictions. Do you agree?

HC: I think that is true. That is an accurate historical picture. There was often a bad match between the leadership and the people. But that was not true in all cases. I think fondly of Norman Thomas, the Presbyterian minister turned socialist, and for many years a candidate for President of the American Socialist Party. I recall an incident that occurred in 1936 when I was seven year old when I attended a rally in Malvern, Pennsylvania with my Republican grandmother. They had a sample ballot with the names of Roosevelt, Landon, the Vegetarian Party, the Prohibitionist Party and there was Norman Thomas of the Socialist Party. I asked my grandmother, "who is Norman Thomas?" She said gravely, "Well, he is very fine man, a wonderful man, and he is for people, ordinary people, like us" I said; "Then why aren't we voting for him?" "Because", she said, " he can't possibly win; so we'll vote for Landon".

RS: Thank you Harvey. As always, you offer many keen insights, and we are most appreciative. ▀

In addition to his many other accomplishments, Harvey Cox

Membership has its rewards...

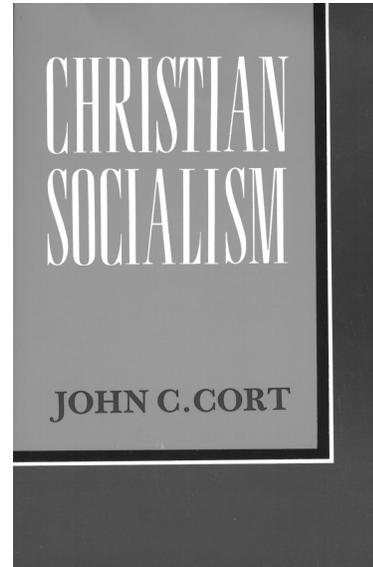
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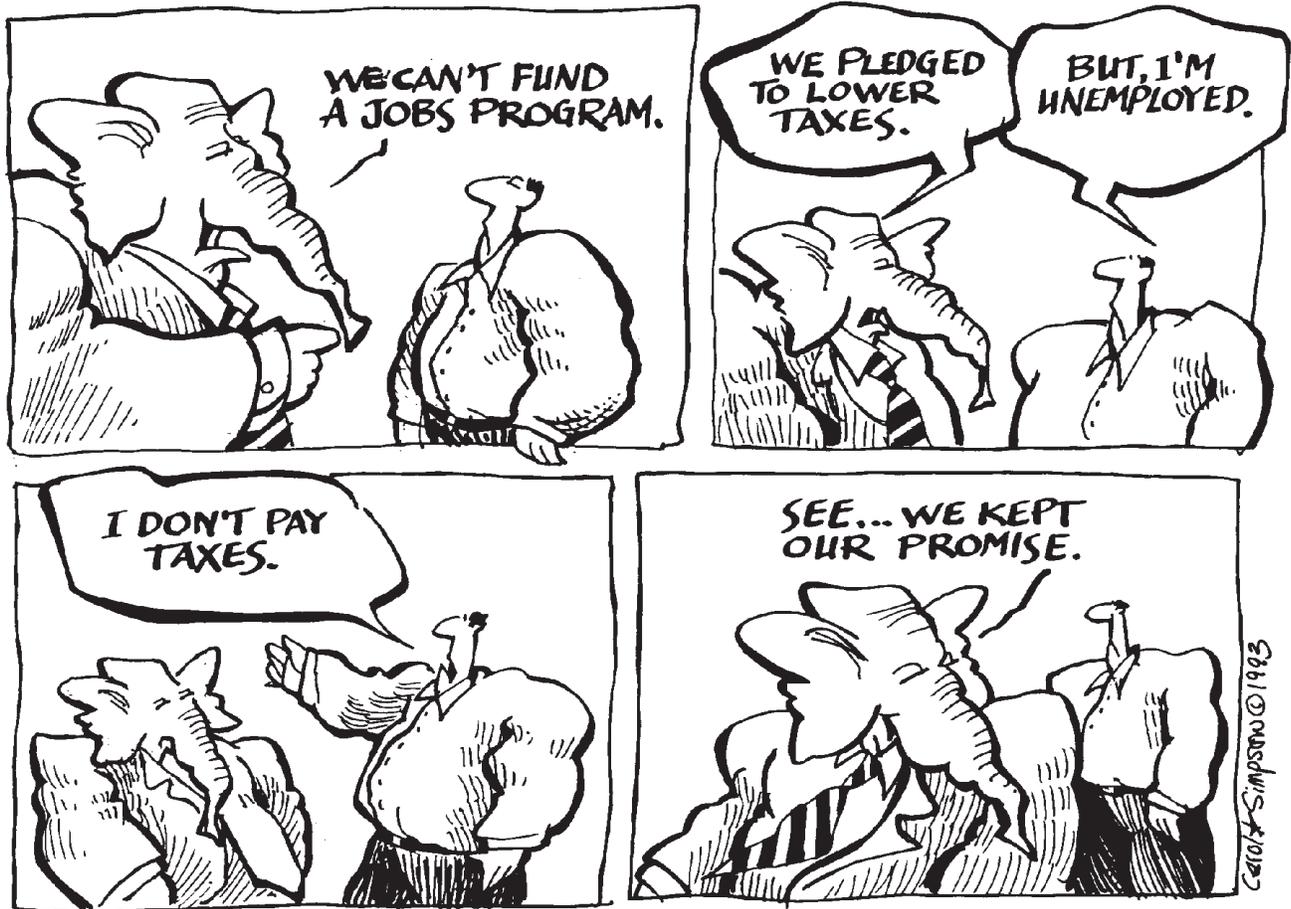
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I am a member of DSA.

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Religious Socialism
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