THE URBAN BISHOPS COALITION
THE CHURCH'S MISSION IN THE CITIES

PUBLIC HEARINGS PROJECT

<u>A DRAFT--NOT FOR CIRCULATION OR PUBLICATION</u>

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THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE URBAN CRISIS: 1978-1988

I.   The Urban Crisis: A Description and Analysis

During the months of November, 1977 through February, 1978, hearing panelists in Chicago, Newark, Birmingham, Seattle, Washington, D. C., and Colon (Panama) listened to and deliberated upon cries of anguish by and on behalf of a multiplicity of persons for whom the cities are not working. Their testimony formed what Bishop Furman Stough of Birmingham described as a "mosaic about God's people who are hurt, suffering and deprived."

Almost 150 persons, reflecting both the specific realities of the cities in which they live and a national perspective, described the manifestations of the crisis which is upon the cities of the United States and the Caribbean--chronic, structural unemployment, hunger, substandard or non-existent housing, blight, an eroded tax base and the resulting shrinkage of revenue available to the cities which cripples their ability to provide basic human services, personal and family income below the standard of poverty and consumed by the exorbitant costs of basic necessities, seemingly ineffective systems of public education, and a dozen other signs and symptoms of the breakdown of the cities.

Heard and reflected upon were the voices of the poor and those who work on their behalf, the unemployed and underemployed, blacks, Hispanics, women, gays, native Americans, Applachian whites, "undocumented" Latino workers, Asiatics, youth, the elderly, and those who are the objects of the criminal justice system. These are the people of the cities. As individuals and as groups they are victimized by the cities and form a vast "under-class" without access to power, caught in a web of discrimination, deprivation and oppression, and often without hope or any reason for it.

Heard and deliberated upon also were the voices of committed and concerned persons who are attempting day-by-day, as church-persons and/or as citizens, to cope with the crisis of the cities and to bind up the wounds of the battered. Their frustration and discouragement, and their sense that they are fighting a losing battle against overwhelming odds, as well as their commitment,

were heard. And their almost wistful plea that the Episcopal
Church will be present in a new way in the cities, less perhaps
with its money, as with its influence and involvement, was
pondered.

Honest words were spoken, candid words were spoken, in
some instances angry words were spoken, often, too, restrained
words were spoken. But in every instance, pleading words were
spoken: be our advocate!

Thoughtful reflection on the voices and words that were heard
in the Urban Bishops Coalition's Public Hearings indicates that
beneath and through the description of the manifestations of the
urban crisis which were presented time and time again, a descrip-
tion of some of the realities which have brought about the crisis
emerged. At least these factors must be noted:

1. <u>A massive exodus of both people and capital from the cities
   to the suburbs has occurred.</u> This problem of "runaway
   capital," of "capital outflow" and of economic disinvestment
   is noted repeatedly in the testimony presented at the Hearings.
   Not only is there a lack of new investment in cities. Revenue
   and income generated there are directed away from the cities.
   In his testimony at the National Hearing, John Collins de-
   scribed this phenomenon in this way: "In recent years there
   has been not only a lack of investment in cities, but an actual
   <u>draining off</u> of existing capital. Banks and savings and loan
   institutions in older communities are investing not in their
   own communities but in the suburbs, in other regions and in
   the third world. (Seventy percent of the assets of the largest
   bank in New York are invested in foreign loans.) Capital has
   also been drained off by corporate relocations and plant
   closings, such as the closing of the steel mill in Youngstown."

   The exodus from the city of persons and capital has been
   aided and abetted by policies related to taxation and to trans-
   portation (the highway system). Not only those cities in
   which Public Hearings were held but literally hundreds of
   cities are in decline demographically and economically.

   The major share of new development is occurring in the
   suburbs at the expense of the cities. This trend contributes
   to a continuing decentralization of urban population, erosion
   of the tax base of the cities and a dissipation of the political
   power of city residents.

   While this exodus of people and capital has been occasioned
   by a number of reasons, it is undeniable that it is related

to the work of white racism. The division between white
and black America still exists, and the prospects of heal-
ing the rift may be less than they were when we were warned
ten years ago that we were approaching two separate and
unequal societies. Nowhere is that rift more clearly visi-
ble than in the massive exodus of middle class whites to the
suburbs and the increasingly evident reality of the cities as
ghettoized enclaves of the black and the poor. Places which
experienced riots during the decade of the '60's have changed
little, and the conditions of poverty have spread in most cities.

2. Cities are the victims of neglect. The most charitable analysis
of the reasons for that neglect would lead to the conclusion that
what efforts and will there have been to stem the tide of accel-
erating deterioration have been confounded by the complexity
of the problems of the city which produces vast managerial
and technical problems and tends to baffle the public's grasp
and reduce its support.

Perhaps an even sharper analysis would indicate, as Lee
Webb stated in testimony at the National Hearing, that while
it is often said that the United States has no national urban
policy, "over the past 10 or 20 years the policies of the
federal government in the areas of housing and transportation
and taxes have amounted to a kind of de facto urban policy."
There has been neglect because there has been a tacit agree-
ment that the problems of the city are a low priority as over
against the demands of the military-defense budget and the
demands for a balanced budget. This neglect has made cities
into the "dumping grounds" for the poor and for blacks which
have not merited the attention of the wider society.

3. A slowdown of growth is occurring nationally with heavier impact,
as noted above, upon the older cities of the northeast and north
central regions. This heavier impact is occasioned, in part at
least, because both government and industry (especially the
defense industry) for political and economic reasons of their
own have favored certain areas as over against others. The
emerging inter-regional debate between the "sunbelt" and the
"snowbelt" is in response to this "tilt" by both government
and industry toward areas of relatively low labor costs.

4. The shift from labor intensive industry to capital intensive
industry has changed the character of employment opportuni-
ties with particularly devastating effects on core cities which
were once the centers of labor intensive industries. The
growth of automation has come to mean that the assumption

that there will be an automatic attainment of full employment
when the economy is sound is no longer valid. Substantial
pockets of structural unemployment, especially among minori-
ties, women and youth in the cities have and will remain despite
a general rise in the economic tide. For years to come the
labor supply in the cities will be more geared to fill the jobs
being lost than the ones now developing. The spectre has be-
come real that there will be those whom the economic/industrial
system simply "does not need."

5. Accompanying the shift from labor intensive industry to capital
intensive technology is an explosive growth in the service in-
dustry and the inevitable development of a certain self-interest
on the part of that industry. The cities have been cordoned off
through discriminatory housing patterns and other practices,
e.g., "redlining by banks and insurance companies," and have
become ghettoes for recipients of services. The growth of the
service industry, which has been a boon to those middle class
persons involved in that industry, has virtually necessitated the
maintenance of a class of persons who are on the receiving end
of services offered--"a deficiency market."

6. Also to be noted is the in-migration to the cities of those, like
Appalachian whites, who are ill-equipped for city living and
whose capacity to develop the necessary equipment is crippled
by patterns of discrimination and neglect.

7. There is an increasing note of pessimism in the public mood
in regard to the inevitability of growth, progress and prosperity,
and in relation to the seeming intractability of urban problems.
Things seem "out of control" with a kind of pervasive skepticism
abroad and a sense that residents of the cities are impotent to
effect their futures and are being manipulated and controlled by
forces which they cannot precisely name.

8. Political leadership has demonstrated severely limited capacity
to comprehend and address itself to the crisis of the cities and
to manage constructive change. The problems created by
sharply diminishing resources have been compounded by mis-
management of existing resources. Concentrated efforts to
deal with problems of public finance have been evaded and
deferred. False starts have been made, and programs which
were once seen to be cornerstones and centerpieces for urban
strategy, for example the urban renewal programs of the '50's
and '60's, are now recognized to have contributed to the further
impoverishment, economically, socially and politically, of in-
habitants of the central cities.

The ineptitude of political leadership has, in turn, reinforced a cynicism and withdrawal of confidence in governmental leaders and processes which has spilled over onto other institutions making them the objects of the wariness of persons caught in the agony of the cities.

To list these dynamics which have precipitated and shaped the crisis of the cities must not be interpreted as suggesting that they are separate and unrelated. They are, in fact, deeply inter-twined --each reinforces the other and together, as they act upon one another, they form an overall dynamic which is at the core of the crisis, indeed, feeds it and intensifies it.

Reflection upon the testimony heard in the Public Hearings can lead to the identification of at least two over-arching elements in this overall dynamic:

1. The problems of the urban "underclass" described so vividly and terrifyingly by a multitude of testifiers are related to the persistence of phenomena written deeply into the structure of society: racism, sexism, classism and a domestic kind of colonialism. It is these systemic phenomena which are incarnate in the agony of the cities and cause and maintain the existence of an "underclass" which is the special victim of poverty and deprivation.

2. In addition to these persistent causal phenomena, the urban crisis has been precipitated by the fact that in a very real sense "the cards are stacked against" the cities by the dealer (or dealers).

The overall dynamic is thus an interaction between the systemic phenomena of racism, sexism, classism and urban colonialism on the one hand and, on the other, an economic policy motivated by exploitation for the sake of profit, and political and social policy largely determined by this interaction.

Fundamental Questions and Issues

A description and analysis of the crisis of the cities such as outlined here poses certain fundamental questions and issues which those who may seek to address themselves to that crisis cannot escape. Some of these are:

1. As fatigued as our society may have become of being confronted with the reality of racism, it is clear that no effective response to the cities can occur which does not include a more serious effort to neutralize the effects of white racism than has

ever been undertaken, both by the whole of society and by the church. The crisis of the cities is a crisis wrought by the results of the persistence of this flaw in the American character. Any attempt to escape from or evade this fundamental fact will condemn all responses to the crisis to ineffectuality. Likewise, sexism, classism and domestic colonialism as causal factors in the crisis must be faced and addressed.

2. Those who seek to respond to the crisis described in the Public Hearings must be clear that the issue before them is the crisis of the cities. To say, quite correctly, that what is happening in the central cities is already repeating itself in the suburbs must not obscure the fact that the cities pose a special and unique issue. It is the cities that are repositories of the poor and of the most acutely damaged victims of the systemic economic, political and social malfunctioning of the society. And it is the suburbs which, despite the fact that they are increasingly affli cted by some of the pathologies of the whole society, are a source of the profound illness of the cities.

To put it another way, many of the psychological dimensions of the urban problem have accompanied the shift of population to the suburbs: feelings of alienation, despair, rootlessness and the pathologies such feelings generate among youth, adults and families. All of urban society is beginning to show signs of these strains and stresses. However, the physical, socio-economic and political manifestations of the crisis are of a magnitude and character in the cities not equaled in the suburbs.

3. It follows from this that a basic decision must be made as to whether the issue is one of "cities in distress" or "people in distress." That cities could be rescued and maintained as viable economic and political entities does not mean that the agony and deprivation of their "underclass" would thereby be alleviated. To opt for a future which revives cities as the site for the head-quarters of corporate enterprises, or as the location for cultural and artistic centers, or as the objects of tourism, that is to say, to "bail out" cities as political/economic structures, would not guarantee that they become viable as places of habitation for those who now live in them. The issue is quite simply one of our willingness to commit ourselves to those whose voices were heard in the Hearings, the "wretched of the cities" as they now are and exist, and to commit ourselves to the effort to rescue the cities for the benefit of those who presently inhabit the cities.

4. The question cannot forever be avoided as to whether the dynamics and the dynamic which are/is at once the causal factor

and the source of the aggravation of the crisis of the cities and the distress of their inhabitants is simply the mindless, accidental working of impersonal forces or whether it is too logical, consistent and predictable to be the result of sheer accident. To put the question in another way, are the suspicions of the alienated in the cities true--that there are demons at work which can and must be named and exposed?

5. Clarity is urgently needed in the face of persistent confusion in regard to the question of the extent, if any, to which the victims of the havoc being wrought against human life in the cities are responsible for their victimization. An accurate assessment must be made as to the source of the responsibility for the distress with which the cities and their inhabitants are afflicted. Does that responsibility lie with them or is it to be found in a virtual conspiracy in which all the major economic, political and social institutions are co-conspirators? Is there a concerted effort to shift responsibility for the crisis of the cities onto those who are rather, in fact, the victims of the conspiracy? Is this phenomenon visible not only in very obvious ways by which the structures of urban society have "cordoned off" the city as a "dumping ground" for the underclass, but in more subtle ways, for example, through the manner in which the mass media cover news of the cities? Does the mass media "do right by" the cities or rather present news with a certain bias geared to what it assumes its clients will deem newsworthy and, by so doing, reinforce the myth that the victims of the malfunctioning of the cities are responsible in some way for their own victimization? (This is a conclusion many will be led to draw in response to John Anderson's testimony at the Washington/Virginia Hearing.) Is the black or other minority press the only instrument of communication which tell the truth about the cities in terms of who are the victims and the victimizers?

* * *

II. Leading Issues and Approaches

Out of the multitude of voices heard in the Public Hearings and out of the myriad of issues presented, certain common threads appeared which enable us to specify seven major issues which are prominent in any overview of where our cities are today.

A. Issues related to energy/inflation/ecology

"The church needs," declared John McKnight at the Chicago Hearing, "an energy policy. It needs to be looking very carefully at the impact of the poor in the cities of energy policy."

Among the implications for the inhabitants of the cities of the energy crisis and proposed energy policy are:

1. The energy crisis is one of the factors which is leading a seemingly increasing number of middle class persons to return to the city. For "cities in distress," this in-migration can provide beneficial results. However, it may mean quite another thing to the "people in distress," i.e., to the poor of the city. To them it may mean displacement as city neighborhoods are rehabilitated and housing in them is priced beyond the means of the poor.

The issue was put directly by John E. Jacobs of the Washington Urban League at the Washington/Virginia Hearing when he indicated that "no one can say what is happening to the blacks who are moving out (of the city of Washington)." Mr. Jacobs pointed out that between 1974 and 1976, 20,000 blacks (3.6 percent of the black population) moved out. He went on to point out, "Now if you know the District of Columbia you know that if you are poor and you can't live in the District, you certainly can't live in Montgomery County, you certainly can't move to Northern Virginia, and that Prince George's County put a cap on low-income residents moving into their community so that what we are faced with then are people disappearing. No one knows where they are going and no one can speak with any authority as to what is happening to them. . ."

2. The in-migration of the middle class to the cities and energy proposals which link conservation with pricing will make life more expensive in the city for those already there.

Again, in his testimony in Chicago, John McKnight pointed out in noting a previous testifier's report that the state of Illinois

had declined to provide a five percent increase for welfare
recipients in one year, "the increased cost of energy under
our now controlled energy cost systems was more than five
percent coming out through the increased cost of food, cloth-
ing, shelter and transportation as energy inflates. The most
progressive of the proposals in Washington on energy policy
are going to cost us so much in our poor neighborhoods, that
if we raise welfare twenty-five percent within two years,
energy inflation will eat that all up."

If the church's commitment is to the poor of the cities, it
must stand ready to critique any energy proposals in terms of
their implications for the poor, and stand ready to support
alternatives such as conservation linked to rationing rather
than pricing, and/or public ownership of utilities as a possible
antidote to never-ending rounds of price hikes.

A further dimension of the issue of policies, programs and
structures related to resources was indicated by Stanley Hallett
at the Chicago Hearing's orientation session. Mr. Hallett sug-
gested that there is a relationship between ecological issues and
the power/capacity, yet stifled and untapped, of persons to deal
with meeting their basic needs and restoring a sound ecology at
the neighborhood level. He insisted that individuals, families
and neighborhoods have more capacity to self-govern in relation
to the management of resources than has been taken into account,
and that the ecological threat which is part of the urban crisis
will only be dealt with as a new approach to the issues of clean
air, clean water and energy is taken which will enable persons
and organizations of persons to develop their capacity to control
the resources which are requisite to stable, life-sustaining
communities.

Perhaps the "ultimate" ecological question was posed by
Samuel Day, editor of The Progressive, at the National Hearing.
Mr. Day described the greatest threat to human survival to be
the threat of nuclear weaponry and nuclear power. "Nuclear
weaponry is but one system of a disease," he asserted, "which,
if it does not kill us instantly, will debilitate us eventually.
Massive military budgets provoke inflation and unemployment,
divert scientific and engineering skills, and weaken needed
domestic programs."

Unless this "ultimate" issue is addressed through a re-
ordering of the nation's priorities and, as Day argues, a
"reordering of the means by which economic and political
power are exercised in this country and the radical trans-

formation of an economic system which concentrates power
in the hands of the few," the urban crisis may not only inten-
sify--it may disappear in one cataclysmic event.

A modest and immediate "way into" this dimension of the
urban crisis (which is so staggering in its magnitude) might
well be the support of the use of the "transfer amendment"
which would enable Congress to transfer money from the mili-
tary budget to the urban budget.

B. Jobs

In the Chicago Hearing, Donald Benedict declared, "the
question of unemployment is probably the religious, the eco-
nomic, the social and the political question of the decade, if
not for the rest of the century."

No verification is needed for the staggering proportions
which the unemployment problem has reached in the cities.
The unemployment rate for blacks has doubled over the past
decade, and has been hovering recently at a minimum of four-
teen percent. In the ghettoes, it is much higher--forty to fifty
percent among black youths in many cities. As factories have
moved out of the city and the economy has become more con-
centrated in technology and services, there are fewer oppor-
tunities in the manufacturing jobs that once provided the first
step into the job market for the poor. In the absence of new
and concerted action, chronic high unemployment will persist
into the 1980's with harshest impact upon minorities, women
and youth seeking to enter the labor market.

Not only is unemployment a critical issue and a religious
issue as Donald Benedict testified because, "work is basic to
human existence, to our nature, due to the nurture of God's
world (through work)," but also because gainful employment
and the income it produces is the key to the solution to many of
the other issues which form a web of deprivation for many in-
habitants of the cities.

The cry for jobs is a universal one which must be heeded.

Any response which can begin to relieve this special agony
of the cities must include at least these elements:

1. An increase in the number of jobs where people are
(the cities) and more opportunity for people to live where the

jobs are through an expanded supply of low and moderate income housing available on a non-discriminatory basis and through the development of adequate forms of mass transportation which reduce the isolation of the city from the suburbs.

2. A commitment by the federal government to full employment by acceptance of its role as the employer of last resort and through the creation of public service jobs.

3. Continuation and strengthening of affirmative action programs and other efforts to eliminate discrimination in employment.

In her testimony at the Newark Hearing, Clara Horsely of the Newark Construction Trade Program pointed to the need for such action and to a role of the church when she said, "the church can. . .bring some moral pressure that contractors hire (qualified) persons regardless of race, color or creed. They (the contractors) are many times social peers of church people. And I say if the national church can bring that kind of (pressure) to persons of Firestone and other companies operating in South Africa, we could bring the same type of pressure here in the city of Newark on contractors in this area to hire persons who are trained and qualified."

It is clear that the private sector by itself will neither solve the problem of chronic, structural unemployment nor will it fully address itself to the problems of discrimination in employment. Government action is needed, and since the business community is unlikely to press for government action, agencies such as the church must support and coalesce with others who are pressing for such action.

4. Policies which stop or penalize (through official governmental policy or citizen action such as boycotts) "run-away shops" or create new industries to take their place.

It is to the importance of such action that Roger Hickey of the Exploratory Project for Economic Alternatives pointed in his testimony at the National Hearing, when he cited the work of the Mahoning Valley Ecumenical Coalition in its response to the closing of the Campbell Works (Lykes Corporation--Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company) and the permanent lay-off of 5,000 steelworkers. The Coalition devised a plan (which may provide a model for other communities now threatened by similar erosion of their economic foundations) to keep the mill open under worker/community ownership.

Note: There is much to be learned from the Youngstown experience, as pointed out by Charles Rawlings in his National Hearing testimony--the fact that private dollars applied to public policies can be multiplied many times over, the value of ecumenical cooperation and the importance of a "Washington connection."

5. Recognition that the cities will not (and should not) be "re-industrialized" in the manner they once were.

What may be needed is technologies which are less capital-intensive and more labor-intensive, and more under the control of local communities.

John McKnight in the Chicago Hearing pressed a new approach to the creation of jobs in the cities by urging "more technologies that are appropriate for people in the neighborhoods, to enable them to do those things that allow people to survive, to get near to the process of the production of food, clothing, shelter and the economics upon which they're based."

6. If it can be affirmed, as Donald Benefict did in his testimony at the Chicago Hearing, that "people have both a moral and constitutional right to earn a living" and if the need for a federal full employment policy is a necessity for the sake of the inhabitants of the cities, there is also the need to attend to the issue of "forced work," i.e., the question of the moral right of the poor to be freed of the necessity to accept degrading or ill-paid work as a matter of the human dignity which is theirs as well as others'. There is, likewise, need to keep open the question of the relationship between work (as understood in our society) and access to the basic necessities of life.

C. Housing

As in the case of unemployment, little documentation is needed to defend the assertion that housing is a key and critical issue of the cities.

As simply one illustration of that reality, testimony was presented at the Washington/Virginia Hearing which indicated that there is a present need for 132,765 units of housing for lower-income families in the Washington area. The goals set for 1978 by the metropolitan Washington jurisdictions provide for 5,178 units, less than four percent of the immediate need.

Since the Nixon administration halted in 1973 federal support of the efforts of not-for-profit groups to develop housing for particular lower-income markets where private profit-motivated organizations were not building (a program participated in heavily by the churches), and put a moratorium on all subsidized housing programs, there has been no national policy or action on behalf of the construction of low-income housing.

Multi-level action is needed to tackle the housing needs of the cities.

First, certain issues of public policy must be addressed, among which are:

1. The strengthening of programs such as community development corporations which target attention on housing needs as well as jobs, education and other local needs, and neighborhood housing services, programs which have made an impact as suggested at the Birmingham Hearing.

2. A federal policy in support of housing rehabilitation and for the "urban homesteading movement" and against relocation. Strong safeguards are needed, however, to prevent the possibility that urban homesteading will benefit only the middle class and price housing behond the reach of the poor, and that relocation will exacerbate both the needs of the poor and racial tension. While the return of the middle class to the city through urban homesteading programs may have beneficial effects, it must not mean the displacement of those already there.

3. A critical examination of the role of the city itself as slum lord. Such examination would follow the lead of testimony at the Newark Hearing by Julie Concepcion of Project Encounter and the St. Columba Neighborhood Club which suggests that the city is burning and bulldozing people out of their homes and businesses, cheating them out of relocation money, tolerating shabby rehabilitation work, and holding on to property in order to sell it to investors and developers. "It's like," she declared, "they're burning you out."

4. Alteration of policies of banks and lending institutions which have "redlined" areas of the city, denying mortgage credit to homes in so-called declining neighborhoods, and engaged in disinvestment in the cities. At the same time, vigilance must be maintained to see to it that an end to redlining policies does not simply result in the availability of mortgages and loans which will have the effect of pricing housing beyond the means of the poor.

Additionally, an immediate and direct role for the church emerged from data presented at the Hearings.

The church is a potential investor in relation to the housing crisis, as urged by George Quiggle at the Birmingham Hearing and David Bloom at the Seattle Hearing, among others. At the Newark Hearing, Cole Lewis of the Prudential Life Insurance Company declared, "proposals for rehabilitating housing and thus preserving neighborhoods--an activity that seems particularly appropriate for church support--often fail for lack of initial funds." Church endowment funds can become the source of such "seed money" with the risk involved reduced to a reasonable level, according to Mr. Lewis, through the establishment of a loan guarantee fund.

It should be noted that issues related to housing raised most frequently by the testimony of community organizations were: (1) the quality of housing rehabilitation; (2) code enforcement; and (3) the need to prevent the "recycling" of the cities. This may suggest both that these are primary issues to be addressed and that neighborhood organizations have already identified these issues. The role of the church might well then be to work as a partner with neighborhood organizations in their involvement in these dimensions of the housing problem.

D. Education

Surfacing most strongly at the Seattle Hearing because of issues immediate there in relation to public school desegregation in that city, but present in other Hearings, was testimony which indicates that education is a critical component in the urban crisis.

Almost 25 years following the Supreme Court's decision of 1954, the public schools of the cities, by intent and/or as the result of the exodus of whites to the suburbs, remain segregated on the basis of race, ethnicity and class. And the debate rages on in respect to the appropriate steps to be taken in response to the persistence of separate (an unequal) educational opportunities for the children and youth of the cities: continued emphasis on desegregation, perhaps on a metropolitan basis with all the anxieties and hostility that suggestion raises, versus emphasis on the improvement of education in the public schools with their present constituency.

This debate goes on with no indication of subsiding or no emerging consensus. Yet, the noise of this debate often drowns

out the voices of those who in the Hearings raised other questions in regard to the educational crisis in the cities. Those questions have to do with the low to mediocre educational performance which characterizes the children of the cities and promises to handicap them severely in terms of their ability to survive in the future as anything but wards of society, the need for multicultural educational opportunities and programs which recognize the cultural and ethnic pluralism of the cities, and the intrinsic value and worth of the diverse cultures present in the city, the persistence of programs of education which prepare persons for forms of employment and livelihood which will be increasingly in short supply, and the need for a closer relationship between and control of the schools by those whom they purport to serve.

For some, as indicated in the Newark Hearing, the answer to the inadequacies of public education in the cities has been the creation of alternative schools with some limited success in getting the public schools to exercise ownership of these alternate forms and structures of education. Whether alternative schools can or could serve the needs of the poor of the cities adequately by becoming a model for the reformation of the public school system is the basis for evaluation of the phenomenon of their existence.

It is clear that in addition to dealing with the several issues related to education in the cities as presented in the Hearings, some decision in regard to the desegregation question will have to be reached soon.

Since desegregation of the schools within the confines of the city has become all but impossible because of the exodus of whites from the cities, a decision about desegregation on a metropolitan basis will be unavoidable. That decision must take into account whether plans for metropolitan desegregation will dissipate what control the people of the cities do have over the schools in which their children are enrolled, will enhance the possibilities of multicultural education or maintain the predominance of education best suited to meet the needs of the white middle class, and will promote the design of educational programs which equip the children of the cities to survive.

As important as it is that this issue be faced, it cannot, however, be allowed to divert attention completely away from the other persistent problems: the "educational/cultural genocide" being committed on the children of the poor, of blacks and other minorities in the cities, the futility of education and manpower training systems in face of continuing high

unemployment, and the diminishing base of economic support
and revenue for public education in the city.

E. Income Security

Dr. Patricia Kutzner placed before the Washington/Virginia
Hearing the observation that there is a "Third World of Depriva-
tion within our own borders, including the borders of the capital
city of the wealthiest nation in the world," citing the grossly
inequitable distribution of income as a major factor in the pres-
ence of chronic or sporadic hunger and malnutrition among
District residents.

In the same manner, at the Seattle Hearing, Ms. Kay Thode
of that city's Urban League indicated that the purpose of her
testimony was to point out "the extent of the grossly unequal
income distribution which is characteristic of Seattle as it is
of the rest of the nation." She went on to say that "for those who
experience utility shut-offs, chronically inadequate diets, shabby
clothes and the shame that accompanies poverty in a society
where poverty is regarded as a badge of failure, the quality of
life in Seattle leaves much to be desired."

"Unless a sizeable constituency can be developed," she
declared, "who recognize that poverty and inequality are inimi-
cal to the best interests of all persons and that poverty and
inequality are intrinsic to an economic system based on maxi-
mizing the profits of the few who own the majority of the wealth,
it is unlikely that any significant reduction in poverty will be
accomplished, let alone the elimination of inequality. Since
1968, in spite of all the poverty programs, the reduction in the
rich-poor income gap in America has come to an end and the
rich are getting richer, largely at the expense of those in the
middle-income range."

Because of inflation in the price of basic necessities--
food, housing, health care and energy--and because of a fal-
tering economy, pressures for income redistribution will
continue to build in the decade ahead, requiring some form of
reform of welfare and income maintenance programs. Such
pressure will build, however, at the very time when cutbacks
are required in the budget of municipalities, excluding an ever
larger number of persons from jobs and services. Change on
the national level will become an increasingly obvious need.

The church may well find that it has an inescapable
obligation to ally itself with the pressure which is already

building by: (1) lobbying for necessary increases in the stand-
ard of living for welfare recipients and, as suggested by Ms.
Thode, opposition to welfare "reform" geared to maintaining
poverty by providing an income floor at only 65 percent of the
poverty level; and (2) by advocating for economic policies aimed
directly at stabilizing the prices of basic everyday needs, as
urged by Roger Hickey of the Exploratory Project for Economic
Alternatives in his testimony at the National Hearing.

Additionally, there is the need to respond to the phenomenon
described in the Seattle Hearing's deliberative session: the
"short grass syndrome," i.e., the need to defuse inter-ethnic
conflict and jockeying over the allocation of increasingly sparse
resources.

F. Organizing Issues

The present reality of the cities which has produced the
feeling that "things are out of control" has understandably pro-
duced a search to rediscover ethnic and neighborhood roots.
Localism, another name for the neighborhood movement, is a
"thrust to recapture the small community; to exercise control
over what happens closest to where one experiences most deeply
what is occurring in his or her world." (Graham S. Finney)

A common thread clearly and strongly present in the Hear-
ings is the description of this organizing movement at the
neighborhood level--whether it is the efforts in Colon to bring
together women to discover and respond to their special prob-
lems in the life of that city/culture, or the multiplicity of
neighborhood organizations described at the Newark Hearing
and elsewhere.

What is to be made of this activity and what response is
called for?

First, it is clear that any overview of the cities today leads
to the conclusion that neighborhoods are "where the action is,"
and their organization is, in some instances, the source of hope
that ethnic, sectional and racial differences in the community can
be transcended.

This neighborhood organizing effort stands as evidence of
the conviction of some at least that the cities can have a future
related to their present and become functional for those pre-
sently living in them.

This reality should be one which "makes sense" to the church since that movement has most often received its impetus from the church, as indicated in testimony at the Newark Hearing: we are a part of it.

The church should also be able to understand (and to respond to) this movement because it is a contemporary expression of the notion of parish. Likewise, there is, as asserted at the Chicago Hearing by John McKnight, a point at which the church should be able to easily "buy into" and relate to this movement since virtually no one in the church would deny that it is in the business of building community, of relating persons to one another on both a global and local scale, and of including in its definition of personhood the notion of interdependency.

The well-nigh universality of the neighborhood organization movement does, however, pose certain choices for the church. Those questions have to do with what kind of style of organizing should the church give primary support to in the decade ahead.

More specifically, these questions need to be addressed:

1. What are the values and the dangers involved in the growth of organizations which have an ethnic base and constituency? Are such organizations a way of lessening the anxieties of those who often have reacted in a destructive way to what has appeared to them to be their forgotten status in the life of the cities, or are they a thinly-veiled form of ethno-centrism which can become vehicles for racism and classism?

It may be that a kind of vigilance must be maintained in respect to this form and style of urban organizing.

2. Some neighborhood organizations such as the United Vailsburg Service Organization in Newark appear to have as their objective the preservation and stabilization of existing neighborhoods. Others clearly are committed to the reconstruction of neighborhoods and of the city itself.

Can the church, which has been and is involved in both of these kinds of organizations, keep them in dialogue and help them see that the existence of both is in the self-interest of each? Can neighborhood preservation/stabilization groups with the prodding of the church be enabled to avoid the danger that they become expressive only of the needs of the stable, middle class and, thereby, tighten the noose around the necks of the poor? Does, for example, the stabilization of a neighborhood mean the exclusion from it of the poor?

3. Recognizing that most neighborhood organizations both provide services and educate their constituencies in regard to the issues which affect their lives, should the church give **primary** support to those organizations which, in the words of Victor DeLuca at the Newark Hearing, "talk about the issues"?

4. Are single-issue coalitions more effective and, therefore, to be supported more fully by the church than multi-issue coalitions? There is evidence that the cutting edge seems to lie with single-issue groups. The further question remains, however, of how a choice is made among the multitude of issues around which persons are organizing: Grand Jury abuse? Prison reform? Unemployment? There is need for selectivity in terms of these issues on the basis of those which seem to have major impact on the maintenance of the viability of the cities as places of residence for those who now inhabit them, i.e., there is a need to "major" in certain things.

What is suggested here is a tentative answer to these questions based on the evidence presented in the Hearings.

The methodology (strategy and tactics) of a particular neighborhood organization is a secondary issue. Whether that organization adopts a stance of confrontation or conciliation is a matter which must be responded to situationally. Indeed, the question of the constituency of an organization is a secondary matter.

The critical judgment to be made in regard to the allocation of the resources of the church should flow from and be related to its overall analysis of the nature of the urban crisis and its hypothesis about "what is wrong." Its judgment should be based on assessment of what will, in any given circumstance, contribute to the goal that cities not be just "dumping grounds" and the need for reinvestment in the cities.

Three additional considerations are posed by the strength of the reality of localism in the cities.

1. It may be that the future form of the cities which can overcome their present crisis will be a "federation" of neighborhoods. The church may be able to facilitate that response to the crisis by facilitating federation through the support of coalitions between the constituent parts of that federation.

2. A whole new and exciting form of the diaconal ministry might be found in the training and deployment of clergy as professional community organizers. If the Episcopal Church is

experiencing an over supply of clergy in terms of traditional
parish ministry, could this be a new way to respond to the
fact that men and women continue to offer themselves for
ministry and that there are needs to be met? Indeed, could
the "parish" of the future in the cities be less defined in terms
of a church building set in a certain location and more defined
in terms of organization and processes related to certain
issues? Do we, in fact, have need of many more such "parish"
clergy?

3. There is a seeming limit to the extent to which neigh-
borhood-based self-help can overcome the results of depriva-
tion. Some communities, perhaps more than we assume,
retain the resources to address themselves to the problems
which afflict them. Others do not, and exhortations to self-
help ring with a kind of hollowness--massive help is needed
from sources external to these neighborhoods.

In both instances, however, there is a need to maximize
self-determination. Even those who live in neighborhoods
which require the transfusion of external resources retain the
ability to participate in decisions about what resources are
needed, and how they are to be used.

G. <u>Partners and Coalitions</u>

The need for the Episcopal Church to relate itself to at
least four potential "partners" in response to the urban crisis
became clear as a result of the Hearings.

1. The absence of testimony at the Hearings from organized
labor should be noted and pondered. The performance of the
Episcopal Church or any other middle class, Establishment in-
stitution in relation to those issues with which the labor move-
ment has traditionally identified itself may have made organized
labor reluctant to take seriously this effort to gather testimony
about the crisis of the cities.

Yet, organized labor is a natural ally of the church, if the
church decides to address itself to issues of the cities such as
unemployment. Such a possible coalition and partnership must
be pursued.

At the same time, the church will find itself sometimes in
a critical stance toward organized labor since the policies and
practices of trade unions continue to reinforce patterns of dis-
crimination in employment.

2. There are abundant signs that despite a waning of
interest in the urban crisis by the business community since
the days of the urban insurrections of the late '60's, such
interest persists as evidenced by testimony at the Newark,
Birmingham and Colon Hearings.

There are some who assert that the business/industrial
complex is committed to solving the crisis of the cities and
that all that the church need do is to support the best instincts
of that complex to act, for example, by facilitating conversa-
tion amongst business leaders about their contribution to the
resolution of the crisis. Over against that view of the business
community's willingness and commitment to dealing with the
problems of the city is testimony presented at the Hearings to
the effect that business cannot be counted on to solve the prob-
lems of black unemployment.

While such skepticism seems entirely warranted, it is
clear nonetheless that those who do wish to deal with the crisis
need to remain in discussion with the leaders of business and
industry because they control so many of the forces which can
either perpetuate or alleviate that crisis. Their policies and
decisions do have an effect on jobs, housing and many other
needs of the cities.

Certain "ground rules" need to be established for this
discussion.

First, that discussion must press those who control busi-
ness and industry to identify their interests. A judgment then
must be made in regard to whether their interests coincide with
the interests of those persons to whom the church is committed.

Second, those who enter into such discussion from the per-
spective of the interests of the church (and those to whom it is
committed) must be willing to run the risk of the temporary
breakdown in the rapproachement between the church and business
when they press questions or take action which is offensive to the
business community. The dialogue and rapproachement should
not be an end in itself, but a means to an end.

Two additional words of caution about this particular
"partnership" seem to be in order.

The business community has not demonstrated consistently
outstanding wisdom in regard to its diagnosis of the nature of
the urban crisis. To identify teenage pregnancies as a primary
issue to which the church should address itself, as community

relations officers of the Prudential Life Insurance Company, New Jersey Bell Telephone and Mutual Benefit Life did at the Newark Hearing is not to encourage confidence that the business community has a much better handle on the problems of the cities than does the church. Perhaps we need to be less impressed by the supposed expertise of the business/industrial complex than some would have us be.

It should be noted also that the testimony presented in the Hearings leads to questions, not only about the wisdom of the business community, but also about its bias, and suggests that it is able to deal with peripheral questions which makes no significant demands upon itself but is reluctant to entertain questions about the systems which control the lives of persons in the cities.

3. Response to the urban crisis will demand a radical commitment to ecumenicity which has not heretofore characterized the Episcopal Church. Much of the wisdom spoken in the Hearings was voiced by representatives of other churches and synagogues who are engaged in a significant way in urban mission.

Such ecumenical openness which is needed must be directed toward the Roman Church, mainline Protestant denominations and the Black Church. As suggested at the Colon Hearing, it is not necessary that issues of Faith and Order be resolved before common cause can be made in joining with others to address the problems of the cities. And, as noted at the deliberative session following the Seattle Hearing, "there was no issue raised for which there did not already exist a mechanism for response if the broader ecumenical church network was activated."

4. It is self-evident, on the basis of the testimony presented at the Hearings, that the church must coalesce with, enter into partnership with those who are engaged in urban mission under "secular" auspices.

* * *

III. Description/Analysis/Issues

It may be appropriate to close the circle--to relate the critical issues noted in Section II (energy/inflation/ecology; jobs; housing; education; income security; organizing issues; partnerships and coalitions) to the description and analysis set forth in Section I.

A reminder, then, that the issues noted have reached proportions catastrophic for the inhabitants of the cities because the political, economic and social "cards" are stacked against the cities and their people by the "dealers," those who control political, economic and social policy.

A reminder that the issue is one of jobs for the poor, housing for the poor, education of the poor, income security for the poor, and a policy in relation to energy, inflation and ecology which will not victimize the poor. And a reminder that, by design, cities have become the enclaves of the poor.

A reminder that the problems of the poor in the cities as outlined in Section II are the manifestation of the functioning of racism, sexism, classism, domestic colonialism, ageism and other institutional, structural, systemic "demons." A reminder that cities as they now exist are the creations of those demons.

A reminder that there is evidence pointing to the existence of an underclass defined by race or economic status, language and culture, or age, which is the result of the functioning of the system, indeed, may be necessary to it.

The "link" between the description/analysis advanced and the critical problems noted here can also be made by inviting reflection on this question:

How does the society deal with those who are no longer needed, needed only as recipients of services, or whose existence constitutes, at best, an annoyance or, at worst, a threat?

In this social context, who needs those whose skills (or lack of skills) ill suit them for a capital-intensive industrial system? Who needs those not prepared for participation in a work force dominated by clerical, service and office functions? Who needs welfare mothers? Who needs the young or the aged as anything but the recipients of services? Who needs and is not threatened by women who are bidding to be competitors for equal status in society? Who needs the threat to the sexual phobias written

deep in the psyche of contemporary society by gays who are
insisting that the acceptance of their sexual preferences and
alternate life styles are a matter which has to do with the
liberation of homosexual and heterosexual persons alike? Who
needs, in this consumption oriented society, those whose pov-
erty limits their ability to buy and to consume? Who needs the
mentally and/or physically handicapped or the ill? Who needs
those who differences in language or culture put special demands
and stresses on the equilibrium of white, Anglo-Saxon culture?

A response to those questions has clearly been reached by
this society. Its unneeded, under-valued, threatening minorities
are to be contained. A "throw-away" culture has decided that
the unneeded and threatening should be confined and labeled dis-
pensable except to the extent they fulfill a necessary function as
the underclass.

The circle is indeed complete: cities are the centers of
residence of those who have been declared obsolete, unneeded
and of no value by institutional, systemic principalities and
powers. Cities have been consigned to the scrap heap, to be
maintained only as colonies for the unneeded without adequate
housing, health care, jobs and security, or as presently con-
venient locations for certain business and commercial activities.

IV. The Episcopal Church in the Urban Crisis: The Intersection
Between the Church's Mission and the Crisis of the Cities

A. The Present Reality

The testimony presented in the Hearings indicates that the
church is at one and the same time a victim of the crisis of the
cities and guilty of complicity in the dynamic which has brought
that crisis into being.

That the church itself is a victim is suggested in the testi-
mony of Dr. Gibson Winter at the National Hearing who declared,
"We know that these institutions (the churches) themselves are
being wiped out by this degenerative disease. These hearings on
the church's mission in the cities developed in part because that
mission in foundering."

The reality of the church as guilty of complicity was presented
first by the absence of testimony that would indicate that the church
has identified itself with issues of justice in the cities in any sus-
tained way or has any record of investing in the neighborhoods of
the city.

More direct testimony was presented by (among others) representatives of the Union of Black Episcopalians at the National Hearing who persuasively argued that racism continues as a prevalent reality in the life of the church.

There was, additionally, abundant evidence that the church faces a crucial "credibility gap" in relation to the "wretched of the cities:"

-- testimony presented in several hearings by Integrity and by other representatives of the gay community indicated that the actions of the House of Bishops at Port Ste. Lucie call into question the ability of the church to speak and act with authentic concern for gays, whose feelings of a lack of "citizenship" in the church are strong.

-- testimony presented in the Newark Hearing and elsewhere questions, in the same manner, the authenticity of the church's commitment to the equality of women and to support of new styles and forms of ministry in light of its decision to legitimize dissent, at even the highest level of its leadership, from the General Convention's approval of the ordination of women.

-- testimony presented by Hispanics indicates lack of con-fidence about the church's commitment to them both by its failure to develop strategies of ministry in the His-panic community and by its insensitivity to ways in which legal processes and agencies are used to harass the church's ministry to minority communities' quest for self-determina-tion. The church has, in their eyes, sold them out and be-come an arm of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and a partner to Grand Jury abuse.

-- testimony was presented at the Chicago Hearing by Mattie Hopkins which indicates that the church has practiced its own form of "redlining" the cities and disinvestment in them. Ms. Hopkins indicated that, "Racism in the church displays the same bruising elements that it does outside the church--exploitation, denigration and neglect. Dioceses that include urban areas (and through them the National Church) collect assessments from parishes in the inner city, send a pittance back, then decry the burden of the poverty-stricken black parishes to the diocese. What in fact happens is that our money goes to support and develop suburban churches where the former city congregations have fled.

A case in point: in Chicago in 1976, diocesan assess-
ments brought in from the affluent north side--$137,000;
from the predominantly black south side--$55,730; and
from the poorest west side--$22,000; a total of $215,642.
The south side received $13,800 during the same year,
less than one-fourth the amount it had given. During the
same year, when a total of $80,425 was spent on urban
mission work, $202,154 was spent on missions in the
suburbs. Other years show equally dismal records."

-- testimony presented at the Newark Hearing by Maso Ryan
of the Tri-City Citizens' Union for Progress and by those
who reviewed the history of the General Convention Special
Program, while expressing gratitude for the church's in-
volvement in the struggles of the '60's, raises questions
about the "staying power" of the church and presses upon
us the need to ask ourselves: how did we perform the last
time we got interested in the cities?

It is clear, therefore, from the voices heard at the Hearings
that the members of the Urban Bishops Coalition would, because
of their action or inaction in the past, enter into renewed interest
in the cities handicapped by a lack of credibility.

B.   Where are we headed?

In his statements at the National Hearing, Dr. Gibson Winter
presented the starkest, sharpest analysis of the present and future
reality. He declared, "My own view is that we are not facing a
crisis in the sense that we are dealing with an immediate problem
which can be resolved through sufficient effort. I believe we are
dealing with a degenerative disease that is approaching a critical
stage. . .

"To say this is a degenerative disease suggests that crisis
measures will be of little help. We are dealing with fundamental
structures and values of the society--structures which we can
only change through generations of effort."

Dr. Winter went on to comment that significant response,
reversal of this degenerative disease will involve "challenging
the organization of work, restructuring the relation between
communities and habitat, and rethinking the organization of
political competence. It means regaining control over our lives
and communities. In this process the churches could be an
essential factor."

While there may be some variation in the degree to which the outward symptoms of the degenerative disease have advanced--ranging from Colon, a city which has, in a sense, discovered itself to be obsolete, to Seattle and Birmingham, cities which believe themselves capable of solving their problems--there is acknowledgement of a fear that all are headed in the same direction, and that the illness is, indeed, terminal.

C. Steps to be taken: Identifying the church's self-interest

Throughout the testimony presented at the Hearings there are calls for the church to demonstrate obedience to its Gospel, with the clear implication that such obedience would renew the church's life and its commitment to the cities.

"The church should. . .the church could. . ." are familiar themes sounded in all seven of the Hearings.

Any realistic appraisal of the history of the church and of its present performance as documented in the Hearings would suggest that it has acted in obedience to the Gospel and has done what it "should do" only in isolated instances and in a limited way.

It is unlikely, therefore, that the latest round of calls to obedience will produce the needed response. It is far more likely that the church will respond to the urban crisis for the same reasons it has always responded to the cultural and social realities that surround it, and that the first step in increasing its response to the cultural/social reality which is the urban crisis is to help the church identify its "stake" in the cities.

That stake or self-interest appears and can be apprehended at several different levels:

-- the church still possesses land, buildings, endowments and congregations in the cities. Stanley Hallett indicated in his statement at the orientation session at the Chicago Hearing that the churches in America will lose something in the order of $150 million worth of capital investment over the next two or three years just in the process of neighborhoods going through change. Indeed, the value of real estate is increasing in certain districts in the city, and the church's assets in the cities need to be protected and maintained both

for their present value and future worth. It is in
the church's self-interest to preserve its "holdings."

-- there are those who are attracted to the notion of the
   city as a mission field. They will be led to concern
   for the cities for essentially the same reasons the
   church was led to the suburbs in the post-war years,
   i.e., the cities constitute a new "market" for the
   churches.

-- there are some whose self-understanding as Chris-
   tians and notion of the church as servant church will
   not allow them to see city churches falter and close,
   or the city itself collapse.

-- there are others whose self-understanding as citizens
   leads them to a love for the city itself, for whom life
   in the city, despite its present blight, is a matter of
   preference and who see in the cities a potential for
   society which comes closest to their notions of genuine
   human community.

Realistically speaking, renewed interest and action in the
cities on the part of the church will probably come about by a
mix of these motives as they, indeed, co-exist in most persons.
What is critically important, however, is the fact that the church
is unlikely to act until its self-interest, its stake, is clearly
identified.

An absolutely pivotal issue in relation to the church's stake
in the city is the question of the extent to which the Episcopal
Church does or does not come to identify the people of the cities
as its people. The church was led to the suburbs in the '50's and
'60's because that was where "its people" were moving. This
exodus left the cities inhabited by people whom the Episcopal
Church has never identified as "our people."

There are signs that the Roman Catholic Church, because of
its sense of catholicity, has maintained an understanding of the
people of the city as its people and has, therefore, to an extent
not true of mainline, white Protestant denominations, maintained
a sense of urban mission and the city as its own.

It is unlikely that the Episcopal Church will address itself
to the urban crisis unless it comes to a radically new under-
standing of catholicity and identifies blacks, the poor, Hispanics,
ethnic groups, gays and all the other present inhabitants of the
city as our people, if not in the sense of potential members then

in the sense of those who have a claim upon its concerns
and resources.

D. **Steps to be taken: The development of a theological
    and ideological framework**

Analysis, itself a form of action, is prerequisite to
informed, effective action.

The development of an ideological and theological perspec-
on the urban crisis is that which can deliver the church from
false starts, ineffective action, discouragement, and all those
other related phenomena which can cripple and destroy its
response to the crisis.

Fundamental is a clear understanding of the issue--the
nature of the causes of the crisis, the naming and identification
of the principalities and powers against which the people of the
cities are wrestling.

Such an understanding proceeds from whatever response is
made to the question of whether the neglect, the brutalization of
the people of the cities, the phenomena of disinvestment and of
"recycling," etc., are the accidental results of a system which
is simply not being reflective enough, caring enough, responsive
enough, or whether there is something intentionally built into
the system which is producing these results.

Conspiracy may be too strong a word for some. However,
John Collin's observation at the National Hearing should be
pondered: "The people in these communities tend to view them-
selves as the victims of economic forces beyond their control.
Church and government leaders tend to share that assumption."

"No so," said Collins. He expressed the belief that "these
processes of disinvestment. . .are the result of conscious
decisions made by identifiable persons in pursuit of narrow
goals," and that "different decisions might produce different
results--even healthy neighborhoods and vital regional and
local economies."

The ideological framework which the church must develop
must run the risk of "naming the demons" and must accept
what institutional consequences there may be to the church.
For, as Collins pointed out, it is only as people and commu-
nities begin to understand and realize the nature of the princi-

palities and powers which are arrayed against them that
"they experience a new sense of power over their own lives
and economies, and a new sense of hope and determination."

Any suggestion that the church's response to the urban
crisis must also occur within a theological framework should,
at one and the same time, include the caution that the church
has often been paralyzed in respect to what are, in fact, self-
evident imperatives of its mission by endless theological
debate. It is suggested, therefore, that a minimum of time
and attention be paid to fashioning such a theological frame-
work lest the energies of the church be dissipated and diverted
from the self-evident task which lies before it.

A theological framework is, however, needed to deliver
us from the twin sins of despair and paralysis, and of hubris.
The cities as they are and even as they may become are not
to be identified with the Kingdom hopes of the People of God.
But the cities as they are and as they may become are the
places where our redemption will or will not be wrought.

A starting point in the development of an appropriate
theological stance may be found in the life and work of the
prophet Jeremiah who, at the very time when Jerusalem was
under siege and he himself was in prison, showed unmis-
takably and dramatically his belief that the land had a future
and would not be completely destroyed through the act of
purchasing a field in Anathoth. His message to the Episcopal
Church in the midst of the signs of great blight and ruin is
evidence of an ultimate faith and optimism in the future based
on the knowledge that God acts to redeem His people and His
earth. What shape the redemption of the cities and their peo-
ple will take, when and how it will come, what further cata-
strophes lie ahead, we do not yet know. But we do know that
when the hour comes, we will be held in account as to how
we have used the time and how we have tended the garden.

Finally, a theology of urban mission will emerge through
engagement, action, involvement. The nature of God's call
to the church in the decade ahead will come clear to us only
as we are present at those places and among those people
whose hunger, thirst, oppression and imprisonment are the
words which He is using to form that call.

E. Steps to be taken: Discovery of a future for city churches

The question of the future of city parish churches is one
that cannot be ignored. While the institutional presence of the
Episcopal Church in the cities is a rapidly disappearing reality,
city churches remain, some of which have become entirely
peripheral to urban mission and are centers of ecclesiastical
nostalgia, others of which are engaged in valiant efforts to
undertake ministry to the people of the cities.

Parishes engaged in urban mission cannot and must not
be abandoned. Increasingly they must be encouraged, by tangible
forms of support, to become centers in which individuals may be
equipped to be spokespersons whose voices are raised in defense
of and advocacy for cities and their inhabitants.

At the same time, more imaginative use of resources
possessed by city churches, e.g., physical plants, is demanded.
City churches continue to be the most under-utilized physical
resource within the central cities.

In some instances, consolidation and the jettisoning of
buildings suited to another era but unneeded and exorbitant in
cost of upkeep now must be undertaken, with a commitment to
return any resources made available in this way to the program
of the churches in the cities. In other instances more imagina-
tive use of the space and facilities afforded by church structures
must be undertaken.

Any subsidization of city churches should be related to
criteria which demand strict accountability in terms of service
to the city and to its neighborhoods.

The Episcopal Church needs an institutional base within the
cities. That base is presently vanishing. It must be maintained
but with the recognition that even with the most imaginative
adaptation of liturgy and church life, and the most creative
ministries of which it is capable, that base will for the fore-
seeable future remain limited.

Finally, a psychological and institutional reality needs to be
created in which urban mission is felt not as a burden upon the
church by those engaged in it or those who support it, but as the
reality determinative of the survival of the church with any
integrity and authenticity in the decade ahead.

F. Steps to be taken: The church as a maker of paradigms

In his presentation at the orientation session of the Chicago Hearing, Stanley Hallett suggested the need for the church to fulfill the role of paradigm-making, to model and exhibit approaches to the solution of the urban crisis which are consistent with its analysis of the causes of that crisis. For example, if the conclusion is that a major factor in the crisis is the phenomenon of disinvestment, the church may well search for and implement models of reinvestment in the cities in the use of its own resources.

Directions for such reinvestment were suggested by John Collins in testimony at the National Hearing. Mr. Collins listed several ways in which the church can promote community reinvestment and neighborhood empowerment, among them: individual churches can support neighborhood organizations with their funds, people and resources; can support alternative projects aimed at neighborhood self-reliance such as community development banks. And they can provide a paradigm or model by seeing that their own investments and deposits are put to just and responsible uses. Should, for example, church funds be invested in insurance firms which refuse to insure urban neighborhoods, asked Mr. Collins.

Again, Mr. Hallett pointed to the crucial role which pension funds will occupy in the decade ahead, owning as they do now one-third of the stock in corporate America, with the amount to rise to fifty percent by 1985. The church could well provide another paradigm and model by the way in which it manages its own pension funds in relation to the urban policies of those enterprises in which those funds are invested.

G. Steps to be taken: The discovery of new wine-skins

At several points in the testimony presented at the Hearings, the need for the discovery and development of institutions, structures and systems which will meet the needs of the present and of the future were pressed.

For example, at the Colon Hearing a dominant theme in the testimony was the collapse of old patterns of family life as a part of the crisis of that city. Nostalgia for the past is only one possible response to the dissolution of former patterns, systems and institutions. Another response would be to give the fullest kind of attention to the discovery, in the face

of the world as it is, of forms and patterns of life in families which will build that human community in which the lives of individuals--young and old--can receive the support and guidance, the nurture and the freedom they need.

In testimony at the Chicago Hearing, John McKnight suggested the need (indicated also in other testimony) for the development of new technologies and for the development of new forms of industry which can create productive work for the people of the cities.

Over and over again, the need was pointed to for the discovery and development of new political structures in the cities which will expand the ability of the people to exercise control over their own lives.

New wine-skins are needed, and a task of the church in the decade ahead may be to be less reactive and more pro-active than it has been in the past. Perhaps an "Office for the Future" is needed or perhaps, at least, the church needs to be related to research and imagination about the future which is occurring, to prod others into engagement in such thinking, and to critique, from the standpoint of the needs of people in the city, the conclusions about the future being reached.

H. Steps to be taken: Choices and directions for the future

Without certain choices (hard and painful in most instances, and a new experience for the Episcopal Church), without new commitments regarding styles of operation, and without the decision to adopt certain new directions, the Urban Bishops Coalition will be unable to undertake any significant response to the urban crisis in the decade of the 1980's. Specific reference is made here to the Coalition itself rather than the church as a whole because these are matters of choice and decision for each bishop.

At least these choices and decisions are made inescapable from the testimony gathered in the Hearings:

1. A decision to cease the attempt to be all things to all people. A decision to abandon the role of chaplains to the Establishment. A choice to be for the poor.

2. A commitment to a struggle which has no foreseeable end. A decision for staying power and against faddism. A

decision to stay in the cities and to engage in what Dr. Gibson
Winter referred to in his testimony at the National Hearing as
a "pilgrimage" rather than a "crusade."

3. A choice for a new kind of <u>presence</u> in the cities
which calls less for money than for personal involvement in
the struggles of the poor of the cities.

4. A decision to be present in the cities, not just in dis-
crete "church programs and operations," but wherever the
poor are struggling to be free.

5. A decision to be <u>present</u> in a new way which is con-
sistent with the incarnational principle: to (quite literally)
visit prisons, sit down with prison reform groups, spend time
in an unemployment office, try to live on a welfare subsist-
ence budget for a certain number of weeks, etc., so that the
taste, the touch, the feel and the smell of poverty and oppres-
sion can take on some reality, and so that the presence of
bishops can cease to be only with the middle class.

6. A decision to be involved in a way which accepts the
fact that the notion of a servant church implies that the clien-
tele (the poor) are, in fact, the boss.

7. A decision to ignore the debate about "the sacred
versus the secular," to recognize that the church is already
engaged in the secular (through pension funds, endowments,
properties, etc.), and to admit that the only question is
<u>where</u> and <u>for what ends</u> will the church be involved in the
secular.

8. A decision to recognize that without a consistency
between the church's own life and the ends and purposes of
its mission, that mission will be fraudulent and impotent.
Racism and sexism in the church itself are contradictions
pointed up repeatedly by those who are victims of and strug-
gle against them in the wider society. It is doubtful that
those who themselves suffer the result of oppression of gays
in the cities or the community itself will take seriously any
attempt by bishops to support the civil rights of persons
without regard to their sexual/affectional preferences if
those bishops continue to equivocate about the status of gays
in the church.

9. A decision to engage in on-going dialogue with the
Establishment in a new tough-minded and public way to test

out (and, if need be, expose) its interests, its stake in the
anguish of the cities, and a decision to cease to let our heads
be turned or to be flattered by personal association with the
captains of industry or politics.

10. A decision to renew a sense of stewardship by ceasing
to squander the resources which are available to us on reme-
dial programs. A decision to engage in a new sense of steward-
ship which would mean that the church's resources would be
used _primarily_ to find out why people are hungry, to help the
hungry understand why they are hungry, and to mobilize them
to attack the causes of their hunger, and only secondarily in the
maintenance of soup-kitchen ministries.

11. A decision to practice a new style of stewardship which
leads to the sharing of the resources which are available in a
way that empowers persons as over against fostering and main-
taining their dependency.

12. A decision to shape the liturgical and educational life
of the church in such a way that the urban crisis is held con-
stantly before the People of God and they are provided guid-
ance and help in responding to the crisis. A decision to embody,
through the liturgical life of the church, the Gospel and give it
some substance.

13. A decision to use power and influence in ways (such as
lobbying) which stop pretending that we do not know or in some
way ought to stand above the process by which decisions are
made and change is really brought about in the cities. A deci-
sion to stop being ineffectual.

Perhaps the appropriate context for consideration of these
choices and decision is George Quiggle's comment to the Birm-
ingham Hearing: "After you deliberate and identify priorities,
we'll be here and expecting to hear from you."

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