

Presbyterians, the United States, and Central America: Background of the 1980s Debate

Debates over the mission of the church in Central America during the 1980s reflected divergent theological tendencies that had developed within U. S. Presbyterianism in the preceding decades.

by Karla Ann Koll

The poor of Central America—widows, orphans, refugees, hungry and homeless—are suffering and dying from the regional implementation of the policies of the United States government and very specifically from its support and encouragement of the use of military force throughout the region. These who are being terrorized and destroyed are Christian brothers and sisters. It is not some “enemy” but the living church that is under terror. We are called by the living God to determine what we will believe and do in our time and place, to ponder what it will mean, in the words of the prophet Amos, to seek good and not evil, that they and we may live.

—*Central America Update: A Report to the 199th General Assembly (1987) of the Presbyterian Church (USA)* (New York and Atlanta: Office of the General Assembly, 1987), 12.

In Central America the dangerous presence is not that of the U.S.A., but that of Russia and Cuba. They destabilize government, enslave peoples, destroy properties, and kill without mercy. We feel sorry for our beloved denomination, as some leaders invest their energies in asking favors for anti-American forces instead of trying to establish new churches, promote evangelistic activities, help minority groups, so that a more complete and favorable image is obtained for our denomination.

—Manuel N. Añorga, *Monday Morning* 49, no. 3 (6 Feb. 1984): 6.

DURING THE 1980S, CENTRAL AMERICA became the focus of intense public debate in the United States as the Reagan administration made the defeat of revolutionary move-

ments in the region a major goal of foreign policy.¹ The Sandinista Front for National Liberation (FSLN) had overthrown the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua in July of 1979 and revolutionary groups, inspired by both Marxism and Christianity, were threatening U.S.-supported military governments in El Salvador and Guatemala.² The administration and its supporters claimed that all of its efforts in the region were aimed at preventing the spread of Soviet/Cuban influence and communism. Critics of the administration maintained that by pushing for military solutions to social conflicts the United States was supporting murderous regimes that were actively repressing their citizens.

Much of the debate over Central America was centered in the religious community. Presbyterians, as individuals and through their corporate bodies, took an active part in these debates. They also debated with one another within the church over U.S. government policy toward Central America, over the appropriate Christian response to the thousands of Central Americans coming to the United States, and over the role of U.S. Presbyterian mission personnel in the region. In addition, thousands of U.S. Presbyterians, including four General Assembly task forces, traveled to Central America under church auspices and contributed their

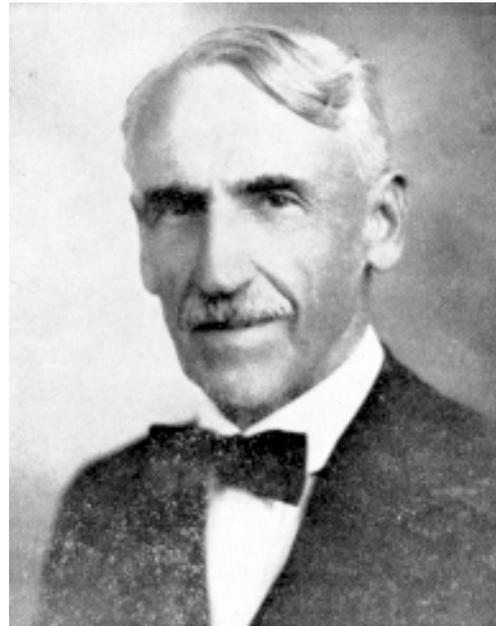
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own eyewitness accounts to the debate.³ Why this interest in a small part of the Americas where U.S. Presbyterians had few historic ties?

As Central America became the focus of public debate, U.S. Presbyterians drew upon their previous experience in both mission and social witness policy to both interpret the situation in the region and to respond. Resolutions condemning U.S. policy toward Central America were passed by every General Assembly held during the 1980s.⁴ Yet many Presbyterians dissented from the official stance of the denomination. The dispute over Central America reveals that different sectors of U.S. Presbyterianism had come to view the world and the church's role in the world through diverse sets of theological lenses. Those who believed that the integrity of the church's witness to Christ resides in its response to those suffering from oppression supported denominational policy. Others who believed that the mission of the church consists of the verbal proclamation of the gospel and the winning of new followers for Christ often criticized the denomination's stance on Central America. To understand how U.S. Presbyterians came to such divergent views on the mission of the church toward Central America, this paper examines the historic ties of U.S. Presbyterianism in the region, shifts in mission policy toward Latin America in the twentieth century, the evolution of social witness policy since World War II, and theological shifts within U.S. Presbyterianism.

U.S. Presbyterians Enter Central America

By 1980, U.S. Presbyterian mission leaders had nearly a century of experience in Central America. The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (PCUSA) sent their first missionary to Guatemala in 1882. The early Presbyterian missionaries in Guatemala followed the typical pattern of historic Protestant missions in Latin America by founding educational institutions at the same time they worked to establish a local Presbyterian church. The students at their first school, where instruc-



Dr. Edward M. Haymaker, PCUSA missionary in Guatemala for over sixty years.

tion was given in English, were the children of the liberal political elite, whom the missionaries hoped to influence with Protestant ideas, even if they failed to win them as members for the Presbyterian Church. The missionaries drew their first converts from the small urban middle class.⁵

Around 1890 the Congregationalist Cyrus I. Scofield, later to be renowned for the system of dispensationalist theology laid out in the reference notes he wrote for the Bible, became convinced that the North American Protestant boards were not doing enough to preach the gospel in those nations nearest to the United States. Together with a group of Dallas businessmen, Scofield founded a faith mission, the Central America Mission (CAM), to evangelize the peoples of the region. In 1891, CAM sent William and Minnie McConnell, Presbyterians from St. Paul, Minnesota, to evangelize the people of Costa Rica.⁶ CAM, inspired by a premillennialist theology which predicted the return of Christ as soon as the gospel had been preached to all people, initially refused to found institutions such as schools and even devoted little effort to establishing churches, lest energy be diverted away from evangelism.

Thus at the beginning of the twentieth century, Presbyterians in the United States were already confronted with two different models of mission in Central America which were vying for their support. Comity agreements reached at the Congress on Christian Work in Latin America, held by North American denominational mission boards in Panama in 1916, restricted the work of the PCUSA Board of Foreign Missions to Guatemala while other denominational boards continued or picked up work in other Central American countries.⁷ CAM, which was not invited to the Panama congress, expanded its work to all five Central American republics. The mission efforts of both CAM and the PCUSA grew slowly in the first decades of this century.

The presence of U.S. Presbyterians in Central America increased in the early 1950s when the Board of Foreign Missions moved its language school for mission personnel from Colombia to the more politically stable republic of Costa Rica. Though many Presbyterian missionaries passed through Costa Rica on their way to other fields in Latin America, Central America beyond Guatemala received little attention from U.S. Presbyterian missions boards until the 1970s. By that time the goal of mission for the denominational boards was no longer the establishment of local Presbyterian churches.

The Revolution in Mission

Over the course of the twentieth century the mission policies of historic Protestant denominations, including the Presbyterians, have changed in response to changes in the world context and in theology. At the beginning of the twentieth century few if any U.S. Presbyterians would have questioned the notion that the primary goal of foreign missions was evangelism, the winning of converts for Christ and the gathering of those converts into churches. Already there was some difference of opinion, grounded in theological perspectives and reflected in the rise of the faith missions, as to the best strategies to use for evangelism. Many involved in the Protestant foreign mission en-



Dr. W. Stanley Rycroft, of the staff the Board of Foreign Missions, PCUSA, 1950–1960, and COEMAR, UPCUSA, 1960–1969.

terprise saw social improvement as an important secondary goal of mission efforts, a notion rejected by most faith missions. The early Presbyterian missionaries who went to Guatemala believed the schools they founded were a way to both win over converts and influence the surrounding society. Mission executives such as Robert E. Speer, who served as a secretary of the PCUSA Board of Foreign Missions from 1891 to his retirement in 1937, argued that the presence of Protestant ideas and institutions would reform Latin American societies, thus giving the small Protestant churches an impact far greater than the numbers of converts would indicate. Speer also believed that the presence of Protestant churches would provoke reform in the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America.⁸

By the 1930s, some involved in foreign missions were overtly questioning whether winning converts to Christ should be the primary goal of mission efforts. In the early 1930s, the Laymen's Foreign Mission Inquiry, a group financed by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and made up of delegates from seven Protestant denominations, carried out an evaluation of foreign missions.

The summary of the inquiry's report was titled *Re-Thinking Missions*, but it is often referred to as the Hocking Commission Report after the chair of the Commission of Appraisal, Harvard philosophy professor William Ernest Hocking. Of most relevance for the Latin American context, a mission field the inquiry did not visit, is the call in the report for the social and philanthropic elements of mission work to be clearly separated from the task of evangelism.⁹ The report suggested that the greatest division in the world was not between Christians and non-Christians, but between enlightened people of different religions seeking the moral and social betterment of humankind and those trapped by superstition in oppressive social structures. Therefore the report also urged missions to cooperate with non-Christian groups in efforts aimed at social improvement. Though the mission boards of the PCUSA, the United Presbyterian Church of North America, and the Presbyterian Church in the United States rejected most of the Hocking Commission report and reiterated their commitment to evangelism, over the course of the next few decades U.S. Presbyterian mission policy in Latin America and elsewhere placed more and more emphasis on efforts aimed at improving social conditions.¹⁰

After World War II, the North American mission boards involved in the International Missionary Council (IMC), including the various Presbyterian boards of the United States, found that their relationships with churches around the world had changed. Churches which had been instituted in the mission field, including Latin America, increasingly demanded to have their ministries recognized, as expressed by the slogan which emerged out of the 1947 meeting of the IMC in Whitby, Canada: "Partners in Obedience."¹¹ Churches in the Far East had proven that they could stand on their own during the war and their desire for restructured relationships that would recognize their independence shed light on the problems in relationships with churches elsewhere.¹² Churches from around the world

related to one another as equal members of the nascent World Council of Churches (WCC). The experience of working with European churches during and after the war also contributed to a new understanding of mission relationships between churches. In the post-war European context the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA began to use the term "fraternal worker" to describe mission personnel who were sent to aid in the restoration of the ministries of long-established church bodies.¹³

Ecumenical mission theology was also changing. In the decades prior to World War II, the IMC had begun moving to a new theological understanding of mission which stressed the central role of the church. By the early 1950s, mission came to be understood in ecumenical circles as the participation of the church in the ongoing work of God in the world and as the obligation of the entire church.¹⁴ Presbyterians in the United States had long held a church-centered understanding of mission, at least in terms of the place of missions within church structures at home. The PCUSA Old School General Assembly of 1838 formed a Board of Foreign Missions. The board continued as part of the church structure when the Old and New Schools reunited in 1869.¹⁵ The United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA), formed when the Associate Presbyterian Church and most of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church joined in 1858, also organized a Board of Foreign Missions.¹⁶ The first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) in 1861 formed an Executive Committee on Foreign Missions.¹⁷ On the mission field, however, missionaries from all three U.S. Presbyterian streams formed "Missions," administrative committees made up of all missionaries appointed to that particular field. After a church was founded in a field, the Mission continued to set policy, determine missionary placements, control property, and serve as the channel for funds and communication from the mission board. By the time World War II ended and as nationalism surged in many places around the world, such concentra-

tion of power in the hands of foreign missionaries was no longer acceptable.

Partnership in mission required new organizational forms. On the mission field it demanded the dissolution of the Mission as a separate legal entity and the integration of mission personnel into the work of the national church under the direction of national leaders. Reorganization occurred at the home base as well. As the PCUSA and the UPCNA joined in 1958 to form the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (UPCUSA), the boards of foreign missions and committees on interchurch and ecumenical relations of both churches were merged into the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations (COEMAR), which represented the whole church in mission and in relationships. COEMAR embodied the understanding that mission is to be done ecumenically, in relationship with other churches.¹⁸

Moreover, the move toward partnership meant that Presbyterians in the United States could no longer formulate their mission policy without input from leaders of churches that had been founded through mission work. In 1956 the Board of Foreign Missions of the PCUSA organized a consultation at Lake Mohonk, New York, to which twenty-two leaders from fifteen overseas churches were invited to come and tell the U.S. Presbyterians what they should be doing in mission.¹⁹ The PCUS also invited overseas church bodies to send delegates to the 1962 mission consultation held at Montreat, North Carolina, which became known as Montreat I.²⁰ At both consultations church-mission relationships were a major issue and both consultations, while recognizing that circumstances varied among the national churches, urged that church-mission integration be completed as quickly as possible. Upon integration mission personnel became fraternal workers serving at the invitation of the national church.²¹

The shift from missions boards planning and carrying out missions in foreign lands to churches in different geographical locations engaged in mission together was characterized as "the revolution in missions" by W.



Dr. C. Darby Fulton at his retirement celebration, 101st General Assembly, PCUS, Dallas, Texas, 1962. (Photo: *Presbyterian Survey* 51:6 [June, 1961]:17).

Stanley Rycroft, Latin American secretary for the PCUSA.²² Not all U.S. Presbyterians were willing to go along with the revolution. One of the most vocal critics of the new mission policies was C. Darby Fulton, who served as executive secretary of the Board of World Missions of the PCUS from 1932 to 1961. Shortly before he left his post with the board Fulton wrote the following:

Missions is being interpreted more and more as inter-church aid; ecumenism rather than evangelization; fellowship within the Christian community rather than outreach; consolidation rather than pioneering; subsidizing existing churches rather than founding new ones; a church-centered rather than proclamation-centered program; the *Koinonia* rather than the *Kerygma*; hence "fraternal workers" rather than "missionaries."²³

For Fulton and other critics, the changes in mission policy meant that the denominational boards were abandoning the essential task of mission: the preaching of Christ to unevangelized peoples. These shifts, Fulton warned, would erode support for denominational mission work among the home churches.²⁴ In a 1966 article for *Christianity Today* Fulton asserted that the decline in the

emphasis on evangelism reflected the erosion of faith within the denominational churches by such dangerous theological trends as universalism, syncretism, and secularization. Yet he noted that the number of North American Protestant mission personnel abroad had doubled between 1945 and 1960. Mission boards affiliated with the National Council of Churches (NCC) accounted for only thirty-eight percent of the approximately 28,000 missionaries. The rest of the missionaries represented agencies that were either independent or associated with one of three evangelical mission associations. These groups, who were devoting the majority of their personnel resources to the task of evangelism, were increasingly drawing the support of Christians even within mainline denominations.²⁵ By the early 1960s there were fifty-one North American Protestant mission boards working in Central America, only thirteen of which were members of the Division of Foreign Mission of the National Council of Churches.²⁶

According to John Coventry Smith, first the Associate Secretary for Ecumenical Relations and later the General Secretary of COEMAR, the formation of COEMAR raised little or no opposition in the UPCUSA.²⁷ Yet Donald Black, who followed Smith as General Secretary, points out that the meaning of COEMAR and the embrace of Christians overseas as equal partners in mission never permeated the churches.²⁸ Listening to overseas partners would not always be easy. The new mission structures also did not anticipate the disagreements over mission goals that would arise between overseas partners and the U.S. Presbyterian mission agencies in the coming decades.

1960s: Church and Society in Latin America and at Home

As Presbyterian mission executives in the United States looked south in the decades following World War II, they saw a continent poised on the edge of revolution. This revolution was primarily social in nature, though it had political consequences. "The revolution," wrote W. Stanley Rycroft

in 1955, "is the product of historical forces, the spread of technological advance, the dissemination of ideas of freedom, democracy and equality, an awareness of improved standards of living in other countries, and a realization on the part of the down trodden that their misery need not be, that is, it is not in the nature of things."²⁹ Communism, Rycroft insisted, was not the source of the social tensions, but was present on the scene and attempting to take advantage of the revolutionary fervor.³⁰ The refusal to use the Cold War categories of East and West as the primary lens through which to understand the problems of Latin America would continue throughout the next decades and would set those involved in mission policy apart from much of the church constituency.

On a practical level the revolutionary situation in Latin America, carrying the implicit threat of the expulsion of foreign personnel and the confiscation of property owned by foreign bodies, made devolution of control over local churches to local leaders imperative. This was brought home by the decision of the Cuban government to nationalize all private schools, including 14 schools run by the Board of National Missions of the UPCUSA, on May 1, 1961.³¹ The integration of the UPCUSA mission in Guatemala into the Evangelical National Presbyterian Church of Guatemala (IENPG), still the only Presbyterian Church in Central America, was completed in 1962.³² The integration agreement between the IENPG and the UPCUSA expressly allowed the IENPG to look for economic support for its programs from sources other than the UPCUSA and gave both churches the option of engaging in mission with other partners in the Guatemalan context.³³

The new social situation in Latin America led some national leaders and mission personnel to question the older notions that society would be transformed through the conversion of individuals and the spread of Protestant ideas. As missionaries in the 1950s and 1960s came into contact with students, workers, indigenous communities, and victims of political repression, many became



The Rev. Dr. John Coventry Smith, missionary and General Secretary of COEMAR, 1959–1970.

convinced that the needs of the poor majorities in Latin America could not be met through efforts at development, but required revolutionary changes in social structures. For Richard Shaull, his contact with Presbyterian students in Colombia and Brazil who were seeking ways to express their social concern and facing repression for doing so was decisive.³⁴ Ross Kinsler describes himself as being “very naïve” when he arrived in Guatemala in 1963 to teach at the Presbyterian seminary. He began to change his theological and political opinions as he began to study the recent history of that country, including CIA involvement in the coup that overthrew the democratically elected government of Jacobo Arbenz in 1954. He says, “I read history from another perspective. I began to understand that anti-communism is only a mask for imperialism, and that the roots of the problem lie in the socio-economic structure.”³⁵

The new understanding of the Latin American situation and the integration of mission personnel as fraternal workers laboring under the direction of the national

churches demanded a new kind of missionary. Princeton Seminary ecumenics professor Richard Shaull, himself recently returned from his own missionary experience in Latin America, told the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America in 1962,

The need at this moment is for people who are free to live in a situation of almost total insecurity, in which everything is in a state of flux; people who are able to understand why they are disliked as North Americans and live by the forgiveness of their sins in such an atmosphere. The present moment demands men and women who are able to understand the revolution sympathetically, and to deal imaginatively, in terms of Christian faith, with the issues and dilemmas which people face in it...If you have people that meet these requirements, you must provide them with the freedom simply to share the life and concerns of the people and the church to which they go, and in this relationship discover how their efforts can be used in a meaningful way. Through the work of the Holy Spirit they may discover how their participation may be of service at this time; they will almost certainly learn much more than they contribute.³⁶

For Shaull and the mission executives he addressed, the days of the missionaries from the United States serving as pioneer evangelists or benevolent administrators and teachers were over, at least in Latin America.³⁷

The changing perspectives of mission partners and mission personnel were part of and in response to new theological reflection arising in Latin America. During the late 1950s the World Council of Churches, through its Department on Church and Society, was encouraging churches and national councils around the world to engage in a study on “The Common Christian Responsibility Towards Areas of Rapid Social Change.”³⁸ In the mid-1950s a group of Protestant intellectuals came together to work on social issues facing the churches in Brazil and participate in the WCC study. The group eventually organized as the Sector of Social Responsibility of the Church under the Evangelical Confederation of Brazil and held a series of conferences that encouraged the churches to take an active role in finding solutions to the country’s grave social problems, especially economic injustice.³⁹ In the

early 1960s a church and society movement, known by the acronym ISAL (*Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina*) emerged among some sectors of historic Protestants in Latin America. This movement prefigured many of the themes raised later by liberation theology. Some prominent Latin American Presbyterians such as Rubem Alves of Brazil and Gonzalo Castillo Cárdenas of Colombia were involved in the movement, as well as some Presbyterians related to churches in the United States such as Richard Shaull, James E. Goff, and Jorge Lara-Braud. The movement, however, was not well accepted in many Latin American Protestant churches and was not well known in the United States.⁴⁰

Ecumenical mission theology continued to stress the world as the locus for God's action and the church's mission. In his plenary address to the 1966 World Conference on Church and Society, held by the WCC in Geneva, Richard Shaull called for an ethic of "revolutionary Christian humanism" aimed at humanizing the secular social order.⁴¹ The 1968 Uppsala Assembly of the WCC called on the churches to develop mission priorities that would place the churches alongside the poor in working for the coming of the new humanity within history.⁴²

Those who identified themselves as conservative evangelicals inside and outside of U.S. Presbyterianism were highly critical of any understanding of mission theology that stressed the transformation of society. C. Darby Fulton charged that such a mission theology was drawing its inspiration not from the gospel of Jesus Christ, but from political and intellectual liberalism. "Soteriology gives way to sociology; what God had done yields to what society must do; good news is replaced by good intentions; and evangelism disappears in favor of reform."⁴³ William McElwee Miller, a retired missionary who had served in Iran, stated the evangelical position clearly in a 1969 letter reprinted in *The Presbyterian Layman*:

The center of our attention must not be impersonal society but individual persons. As the shep-

herd sought the one lost sheep so God seeks the one sinner. As Jesus devoted much of His time to individuals like Zacchaeus and the woman at the well, so we must ever be more concerned about persons than about crowds or causes. Society will be truly reformed only as the individuals who compose society are transformed.⁴⁴

The relationship of church and society increasingly became a focus of denominational activities at home as well. By the 1950s in the Department of Social Education and Action of the PCUSA there was a growing emphasis on the Lordship of Jesus Christ over all areas of life, including economic systems and race relations, which paralleled developments in ecumenical mission theology.⁴⁵ By the beginning of the 1960s race relations in the United States became the major moral issue facing Presbyterians. From the early 1950s on, general assemblies of both the PCUSA (UPCUSA after 1958) and the PCUS adopted strong statements on race relations.⁴⁶ The moral urgency of the struggle for civil rights by the African American community led many within mainline Protestantism to believe that the churches could no longer expect society to change in response to the preaching of Christian values and appeals to individual conscience. Instead, the churches and church people needed to act on their beliefs. Mission executives and mission personnel of the UPCUSA and PCUS, who insisted that racial discrimination in church and society at home damaged the integrity of the witness overseas, were among those urging their denominations to take a more activist stance on civil rights.⁴⁷

In the struggle for civil rights a new activist style of church engagement with the broader society emerged.⁴⁸ The UPCUSA formed a Council on Religion and Race in May of 1963. UPCUSA leaders were very active in the formation of the NCC's Council on Church and Race one month later.⁴⁹ Northern white church people, with active support from their denominational networks and the NCC, went to the South to work on voter registration campaigns and provide other forms of support for the movement.⁵⁰ The struggle to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964 involved

church leaders in coalition with other churches as well as secular groups to both educate people at the grassroots and to lobby on Capitol Hill.⁵¹ Some Presbyterian leaders, notably UPCUSA Stated Clerk Eugene Carson Blake, chose to engage in civil disobedience against segregationist laws. Leaders of the PCUS were much more reluctant to commit their denomination to a more activist stance, as seen by their unwillingness to go along with the other members of the NCC in supporting the August 28, 1963 March on Washington.⁵² Clergy and laity within the PCUS organized "A Fellowship of Concern" to push the denomination to assert moral leadership, particularly on racial matters.⁵³

The dominant theological theme of the 1960s, especially in the UPCUSA, was reconciliation. The report on church-state relations adopted by the 1963 General Assembly pointed to the reconciliation offered by Christ, which places the church in a unique position within society. The church must be relevant to its time, having a clear knowledge of the state and a complete as possible understanding of contemporary social problems. The church should not simply endorse government policy or dominant cultural values, but be a community that offers alternatives.⁵⁴ This same understanding of work of the church for reconciliation within society as the appropriate and necessary response to God's reconciling work toward humanity in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is central to the new confession of faith adopted by the UPCUSA in 1967.

Clergy and lay activism on civil rights and the theology behind it stirred controversy within the UPCUSA and the PCUS. In 1964 several Presbyterian businessmen of the UPCUSA founded the Presbyterian Lay Committee and soon began publishing *The Presbyterian Layman*. One of the purposes of the new organization was to discourage church pronouncements on social, economic, and political matters.⁵⁵ The Confession of 1967 (C67), according to the Presbyterian Lay Committee, moved the denomination away from

what they considered to be historic Presbyterian doctrinal standards on issues such as the inerrancy of Scripture and Christ's substitutionary atonement.⁵⁶ Moreover, the conservatives claimed that C67 and the type of social action to which it called the church represented a distortion of the nature of the church. The writers of *The Presbyterian Layman* repeatedly insisted, in tones reminiscent of the doctrine of the spirituality of the church used by southern church leaders at the time of the Civil War to justify their stand on slavery, that the church as a corporate body has no Biblical mandate and no competence for getting involved in political, economic, or social affairs.⁵⁷ In the PCUS, conservatives who argued for a "strictly spiritual" mission of the church organized in a group known as "Concerned Presbyterians" in 1964.⁵⁸

By the late 1960s, social movements inside and outside of the church, such as the black power movement and the women's movement, were making even more radical demands on the churches. As these groups developed their own liberation theologies, they saw C67's call for reconciliation as diverting attention away from their demands for justice. Officials of the UPCUSA decided not to give in to demands such as those in the Black Manifesto of 1969, which asked the churches to pay reparations to the African American community for the churches' complicity in slavery in the past and ongoing racial discrimination. But denominational leaders did work, both within the structures of each denomination and ecumenically, to create channels to direct economic resources to local groups struggling for justice.⁵⁹ These channels, such as the NCC-related Interreligious Foundation for Community Organizing (IFCO) and the UPCUSA's Self Development of Peoples program were continually attacked by conservatives who believed that church mission funds should be used for evangelism.

1970s: One Mission? One World?

The ecumenical mission theology which Presbyterian mission executives both helped

to form and were in turn shaped by insisted that God's mission in which the church participates is one mission on six continents. In 1973, the UPCUSA sought to embody this theological understanding in its structure by placing all programmatic aspects of the church's work under a single agency known as the Program Agency.⁶⁰ The PCUS also restructured following the "one mission concept," but they retained a programmatic Division of International Mission under the new General Assembly Mission Board (GAMB).⁶¹ Critics charged that the focus on one mission everywhere led to a rapid decay of mission efforts overseas as presbyteries and synods directed their mission funding to projects close at hand.⁶² The stress on one mission also meant that the foreign mission program could not be isolated from controversy surrounding domestic issues, such as the grant made by the Council on Church and Race of the UPCUSA to the legal defense fund for radical Angela Davis in 1971. Denominational leaders might insist on God's mission as one, yet no consensus existed, either within U.S. Presbyterianism or among overseas mission partners, as to what the mission of the church should be.

In reference to Latin America, denominational leaders increasingly used social justice criteria for evaluating and planning mission involvement. In 1969 the General Assembly of the UPCUSA adopted a paper entitled "Illusion and Reality in Inter-American Relations" which served as a framework for subsequent mission policy. The report was highly critical of the role played by U.S. military and economic power in Latin America and called upon church people to work for justice in inter-American relationships. The report drew its theological inspiration from Latin American theology and the Confession of 1967. "We believe," wrote the task force which drafted the statement, "that there is also a positive sign of God's reconciling work in our present time, a sign of awesome power and significance. It is found in the struggle of the dispossessed and dependent groups and nations to find freedom and justice, to enter history as shapers

of destiny rather than tools of fate and objects of exploitation."⁶³ The document also noted with approval that the 1968 meeting of the Latin American Episcopal Conference in Medellín, Colombia, had committed the Roman Catholic Church to participate in movements for social change and urged Latin American and North American Protestants to work together with Roman Catholics in efforts to bring more justice to Latin American societies.⁶⁴

Up until the early 1970s Latin American liberation theology was not widely known within the U.S. churches. With the publication of Gustavo Gutierrez's seminal work, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation*, in English in 1973, Latin American liberation theology became one of the currents of contemporary theology being taught and critiqued in seminaries in the United States. Presbyterian theologians Robert McAfee Brown and Richard Shaull, among others, interpreted this theological movement in categories familiar to a North American Protestant audience in numerous books and articles.⁶⁵ Liberation theology provided seminary-trained clergy and interested lay people with an analysis of the social tensions caused by the extremes of wealth and poverty in the continent and stressed the centrality of God's concern for the poor in the biblical narrative. It also generated the expectation among many North American church folk that Christians and churches in Latin America would play a major role in social transformation.

Latin American liberation theology came to the attention of the General Assemblies of both the UPCUSA and PCUS in the mid 1970s. In 1973 the General Assembly of the UPCUSA asked the Program Agency, in neutral language, to report "concerning the implications for the future of the Theology of Liberation worldwide."⁶⁶ The report presented to the next General Assembly by the Program Agency described the various theologies emerging as Christians around the world sought to reflect on their experiences of oppression as necessary restatements of the Christian faith. The report recommended



“No Minds Were Changed”: Eight Presbyterians meeting with President Reagan at the White House after a 1987 Presbyterian Church (USA) General Assembly called for an end to aid to the Nicaraguan *contras*. The unofficial delegation included Rev. Donn Moomaw (facing Reagan), minister of the Bel Air Presbyterian Church, Los Angeles, and Harriet Nelson (first from left), moderator of the 1984 General Assembly. (Photo: *Presbyterian Survey* 77:8 (October, 1987):35. Used by permission.

that the Program Agency continue to dialogue about liberation theology with groups inside and outside of the church.⁶⁷ The situation in the PCUS was more contentious. In 1976 the General Assembly asked the Council on Theology and Culture to carry out a careful study on “liberation theology,” including its Latin American and North American expressions, in light of the Reformed heritage.⁶⁸ The council appointed a task force that presented a report to the 1978 General Assembly, in which the council declined to issue a judgment on this theology as requested by the General Assembly. The Assembly rejected the report and asked the council instead to “issue to the Church a study regarding ‘Liberation Theology,’” though the General Assembly failed to provide funding for the printing of the study.⁶⁹ The study, written by Jorge Lara-Braud of the Council on Theology and Culture and entitled *What is Liberation Theology? Answers from within the Reformed Tradition*, was published by the GAMB in 1980. Lara-Braud is generally positive about liberation theology, though he ends by pointing to six areas in which liberation theology could be tempered by insights from the Reformed tradition.⁷⁰

In the early 1970s overseas mission partners became more vocal in their criticism of U.S. Presbyterian mission policies. Some African and Asian church leaders, most notably John Gatu, General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, began to call for a moratorium on Western mission involvement in order for the churches of the Third World to develop their own identities as authentic churches of Jesus Christ within their own contexts.⁷¹ Some Latin American Presbyterian leaders joined the call for a moratorium, but for reasons others than those expressed by leaders such as Gatu. The Brazilian church was suspicious of the theological changes in Presbyterianism in the United States, especially the adoption of the Confession of '67 by the UPCUSA. The leadership also resented the involvement of mission personnel from the United States with progressive sectors in the church and with ecumenical efforts. The leadership, who supported the military government and its efforts to protect Brazilian society from a perceived Communist threat, did not share the UPCUSA's concern about human rights violations being reported in Brazil.⁷² In 1973, the Presbyterian Church of Brazil unilaterally broke off relations with the UPCUSA.⁷³ The leadership of the Pres-

byterian Church of Mexico was also upset that fraternal workers from both U.S. Presbyterian churches were participating in ecumenical meetings with Roman Catholics. The Mexican church chose to mark its centennial in 1972 by entering into an agreement with the UPCUSA, the PCUS, and the Reformed Church in America (RCA) to place a five-year moratorium on the receiving of both mission personnel and funds from the United States. PCUS and UPCUSA mission personnel in Mexico were reassigned to other organizations within Mexico or to other countries.⁷⁴

Mission leaders in the PCUS chose to interpret the moratorium in Mexico not as a cessation of mission involvement, but as an opportunity to redirect mission to new areas in Latin America and the Caribbean.⁷⁵ In 1971 Benjamin Gutierrez, at the time a PCUS missionary serving as field secretary for the PCUS, UPCUSA, and RCA in Mexico, and Charles R. "Buddy" Hughes of the Board of World Missions of the PCUS traveled together through Latin America in search of new mission partnerships and placements for mission personnel who would no longer be working in Mexico.⁷⁶ In terms of Central America, the trip resulted in the sending of mission personnel, one couple from each church, to work with the Moravian Church of Nicaragua.⁷⁷ The PCUS also placed a missionary couple to work with the Moravian Church of Honduras in community development.⁷⁸ New opportunities for mission partnerships in Costa Rica opened up as institutions such as the Latin American Biblical Seminary and the Latin American Center for Pastoral Studies (CELEP) became independent of the Latin America Mission and incorporated a concern for the poor and marginalized into their evangelical theological outlook.⁷⁹

Ecumenical disaster relief efforts in Central America also created more opportunities for mission partnerships. Prior to 1970 Church World Service (CWS), the relief arm of the National Council of Churches, had no work in Central America. As natural disasters hit one Central American republic after

the other in the 1970s, CWS mobilized to respond. Relief efforts brought denominational officials from NCC member churches, including the UPCUSA and PCUS, into relationships with leaders of churches and institutions in the respective countries. In December of 1972, a severe earthquake destroyed much of Managua, Nicaragua. CWS decided to work through CEPAD, then known as the Evangelical Committee for Aid to Victims, an organization that had been set up by local pastors to respond to the needs of those left homeless. In February of 1976, an earthquake hit central Guatemala. In response, CWS ran an office in Guatemala for three years to aid the churches in reconstruction work.⁸⁰ CWS was also instrumental in setting up CONCAD, the Christian Council of Development Agencies, in Guatemala, which acquainted denominational mission executives with Christian leaders outside of the Presbyterian Church. Relief efforts quickly evolved into ongoing development work requiring ongoing support.

Back in the United States public attention was focused not on Central America, but on Southeast Asia. Like the society at large, the churches were increasingly divided over U.S. military involvement in Indochina. With the Vietnam War, foreign policy, long the prerogative of the executive branch, became the subject of public debate in which church leaders took active part. Whereas church leaders had been on the same side as the Johnson administration in the civil rights struggle, over policy in Indochina they found themselves shut out of the White House and increasingly out of the State Department. They directed their objections to the war into activist channels through denominational and ecumenical structures and through ad hoc organizations like Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam (CALCAV). U.S. Presbyterians, particularly from the UPCUSA, were prominent leaders in ecumenical circles such as the NCC and the WCC and took an active part in developing the stances of those organizations against continuing U.S. military action in Southeast Asia.⁸¹ Mission leaders who had

ties to church leaders throughout Asia were particularly outspoken in criticizing U.S. involvement.⁸² Denominational policy evolved from cautious calls against escalating or ending U.S. military involvement at the UPCUSA 1966 General Assembly to calls for total withdrawal of U.S. forces by 1971.⁸³ In the debate over the Vietnam War church leaders developed principles which would be important in future debates over U.S. foreign policy: a preference for negotiated rather than military solutions to international conflicts and support for the self-determination of peoples.

The debate over the war in Vietnam shows that U.S. Presbyterians understood the world around them in very different ways at the beginning of the 1970s. Many Presbyterians, including many of those in leadership positions, saw Vietnam as a small country struggling for independence from colonial forces. For example, John Coventry Smith of COEMAR, who served as one of the presidents of the WCC from 1968–1972, considered Ho Chi Minh to be “the George Washington of Vietnam.”⁸⁴ These Presbyterians believed the United States government’s support of an unpopular, tyrannical regime through military aggression to be a blatant contradiction of the nation’s professed support for democracy. Other U.S. Presbyterians believed that the people of South Vietnam were being threatened with a takeover by Communist forces, a takeover that the United States had an obligation to stop as the leader of the free world. Christian duty, for these Presbyterians, meant supporting the government in its fight against atheistic forces.

The specter of the United States’ loss in Southeast Asia weighed heavily on the public imagination. As Gaspar Langella of the General Assembly Mission Board of the PCUS pointed out in 1981, judgments about events in Central America were likely to be filtered through one’s interpretation of the struggle over Vietnam.⁸⁵ Those who had opposed U.S. military involvement in Indochina saw the United States once again supporting oppressive regimes. Those who believed that clergy and lay activism had undermined

the U.S. war effort and contributed to the victory of the Vietcong saw church leadership once again working against the interests of the nation. Unlike the war in Indochina, in which denominational leaders had to rely on tenuous connections through the ecumenical movement for information from Vietnam and Paris, the conflict in Central America involved a region of the world in which U.S. Presbyterians had many years of direct experience. There were also U.S. Presbyterian mission personnel on the ground in the region. In addition, many U.S. Presbyterians also had connections with missionaries working for non-denominational mission agencies in Central America, particularly in Guatemala, where Wycliffe Bible Translators had a large contingent of personnel. Information coming from these groups in some cases corroborated and in other cases contradicted the analysis of the social and religious needs in the region offered by denominational sources. The debate over Central America would be, as the 1983 UPCUSA Task Force on Central America Report recognized, a debate over interpretation of the situation there.⁸⁶

1979: The Stage is Set

By the end of the 1970s, as the Sandinistas seized power in Nicaragua and revolutionary movements in El Salvador and Guatemala gained strength, Presbyterians in the U.S. looked south through different sets of theological lenses. One group of Presbyterians had come to see the world around them as divided fundamentally between the rich and the poor. In the words of the Confession of 1967, “The reconciliation of humankind through Jesus Christ makes it plain that enslaving poverty in a world of abundance is an intolerable violation of God’s good creation. Because Jesus identified himself with the needy and exploited, the cause of the world’s poor is the cause of his disciples.” (9.46) This group tended to see non-Christians, even revolutionaries inspired by Marxism, as allies in the struggle against the causes of poverty. They evaluated U.S. government policy at home and abroad by what

they perceived to be its effects on the poor. Another group of Presbyterians believed that the basic division in the world is between those who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and those who do not. These Presbyterians tended to see communism as the greatest threat to Christianity, a threat that must be resisted and defeated. This group tended to stress the spiritual ministry of the church as the calling of individuals into relationship with Jesus Christ.

These theological frameworks predisposed U.S. Presbyterians to see Central Americans in certain ways during the 1980s. Those task forces charged with articulating policy on Central America for the denomination saw many Central Americans as brothers and sisters in Christ who have much to teach Christians in the U.S. about faithfulness to God. Others saw Central Americans as peoples in need of evangelization. The first group encountered many Central Americans as people struggling for basic human rights. Critics of denominational policy saw these same Central Americans as people who were being manipulated and used by Marxists. One group saw the United States government as intervening in the region on the side of repressive forces; others saw the actions of the United States as supporting the cause of freedom. Over the voices of the critics General Assembly after General Assembly in the 1980s voted to condemn U.S. policy in Central America. Mission involvement in the region increased over the course of the decade.

Much of the debate over mission policy in Central America focused not on the underlying theological frameworks, but on specific aspects of policy. Critics questioned the goal of mission involvement in the region. They attacked the choice of mission partners in the various countries, particularly in Nicaragua. They challenged the roles assigned to mission personnel.

By the early 1990s Central America had disappeared from the headlines. The Sandinistas were voted out of power in Nicaragua. In El Salvador and Guatemala guerrilla movements transformed themselves into

political parties through negotiations. Central America was no longer a foreign policy priority for the United States government. Consequently controversy over denominational mission policy in the region faded as well, though it did not disappear completely. The underlying theological tensions among U.S. Presbyterians remain.

NOTES

¹On U.S. foreign policy toward Central America during the Reagan era, see William M. LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard: The United States in Central America, 1977–1992* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998). On the history of Central America see Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984).

²On the relationship between Christianity and revolutionary movements in Central America, see Phillip Berryman, *The Religious Roots of Rebellion: Christians in Central American Revolutions* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1984).

³The reports of the General Assembly task forces on Central America were published in book form as follows: *Adventure and Hope: Christians and the Crisis in Central America*, Reports adopted by the 195th General Assembly of the PC(USA) (Atlanta/New York: General Assembly of the PC(USA), 1983); *Central America Update*, Report to the 199th General Assembly of the PC(USA) (New York/Atlanta: Office of the General Assembly, PC(USA), 1987); and *Our Response to the Crisis in Central America*, Report and Recommendations of the 200th General Assembly (Louisville: Office of the General Assembly, PC(USA), 1988).

⁴For a summary of General Assembly actions on Central America from 1980 to 1986 see "Appendix A: The Witness of Recent General Assemblies on Central America," *Central America Update*, 93–99.

⁵Iglesia Evangélica Nacional Presbiteriana de Guatemala, *Apuntes para la historia*, (Guatemala: IENPG, 1982), 66–85.

⁶Mildred W. Spain, *And in Samaria: A Story of Fifty Years' Missionary Witness in Central America 1890–1940* (Dallas: Central American Mission, 1940), 13, 15, 25. Wilton Nelson, *Historia del protestantismo en Costa Rica* (San José: IINDEF, 1983), 137–38.

⁷*Christian Work in Latin America*, v. 1, reports of Commissions I–III presented to the Congress on Christian Work in Latin America held in Panama, February 1916 (New York: Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, 1917).

⁸For an example of Speer's argument see Robert E. Speer, *South American Problems* (New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1912).

⁹Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, Commission of Appraisal, William Ernest Hocking, Chairman, *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry after One Hundred Years* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1932), 70.

¹⁰John R. Fitzmier and Randall Balmer have argued that though the findings of the Hocking Commission were initially rejected by U.S. Presbyterian mission

boards, the report proved predictive of changes that would take place in mission board policy over the coming decades. "A Poulitice of the Bite of the Cobra: The Hocking Report and Presbyterian Missions in the Middle Decades of the Twentieth Century," in *The Diversity of Discipleship: Presbyterians and Twentieth-Century Christian Witness*, ed. Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder and Louis B. Weeks (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991), 105–25.

¹¹International Missionary Council, *The Witness of a Revolutionary Church*, statements issued by the Committee of the International Missionary Council, meeting in Whitby, Ontario, 5–24 July 1947 (New York, International Missionary Council, [1947]), 23–34.

¹²John Coventry Smith, *From Colonialism to World Community* (Philadelphia: Geneva Press, 1982), 143–44.

¹³W. Stanley Rycroft, *The Ecumenical Witness of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.* (New York: Board of Christian Education of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1986), 171–72.

¹⁴International Missionary Council, *The Missionary Obligation of the Church*, report of the meeting held in Willingen, Germany, 5–17 July 1952 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1952).

¹⁵John C. B. Webster, "American Presbyterian Global Mission Policy: An Overview of 150 Years," *American Presbyterians: Journal of Presbyterian History* 65 (Summer 1997): 71–72.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 76.

¹⁷G. Thompson Brown, "Overseas Mission Program and Policies of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., 1861–1983," *American Presbyterians: Journal of Presbyterian History* 65 (Summer 1997): 157.

¹⁸See COEMAR's statement of purpose in Donald Black, *Merging Mission and Unity: A History of the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations* (Philadelphia: Geneva Press, 1986), 8–9.

¹⁹William Richey Hogg, *New Day Dawning* (New York: World Horizons Press, 1957).

²⁰Brown, "Overseas Mission Program," 166.

²¹Rycroft, *The Ecumenical Witness*, 166. Brown, "Overseas Mission Program," 166.

²²W. Stanley Rycroft, "A Strategy for Christian Mission," Paper given at the Conference on Latin America, Hartford Seminary Foundation, 26–28 May 1955, mimeograph, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, 4–6. Rycroft takes the term from Willis Church LaMott, *Revolution in Missions: From Foreign Missions to the World Mission of the Church* (New York: Macmillan, 1954).

²³C. Darby Fulton, "Toward a True Autonomy," (1961, mimeographed), 3. Author's copy.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 6.

²⁵C. Darby Fulton, "Evangelism: The Heart of Missions," *Christianity Today*, 29 April 1966, 9–12.

²⁶The number of mission boards working in Central America is taken from lists compiled from the following sources: *Directory of North American Protestant Missionary Agencies*, 4th ed. (New York: Missionary Research Library, 1960) and Clyde W. Taylor and Wade T. Coggins, *Protestant Missions in Latin America: A Statistical Survey* (Washington, D.C.: Evangelical Foreign Missions Association, 1961).

²⁷Smith, *From Colonialism*, 171.

²⁸Black, *Merging Mission and Unity*, 28–29.

²⁹Rycroft, "A Strategy for Christian Mission," 2–3.

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹"Cuba Takes Over Presbyterian Schools," *Presbyterian Life*, 1 June 1961, 31. This news item contains a statement issued by Dr. Kenneth G. Neigh, General Secretary of the National Board of Missions. For a Cuban Presbyterian perspective, see Rafael Cepeda, *Apuntes para una historia del Presbiterianismo en Cuba* (Havana: Su Voz, 1986), 258–59.

³²"La integración," Iglesia Evangélica Nacional Presbiteriana de Guatemala, *Apuntes para la historia*, 306–44.

³³*Ibid.*, 330.

³⁴Richard Shaull, "A Personnel Reflection," *Church and Society* 77 (Nov./Dec. 1986–Jan./Feb. 1987): 51–53; Richard Shaull, "The Death and Resurrection of the American Dream," in Gustavo Gutierrez and Richard Shaull, *Liberation and Change* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1977), 99.

³⁵Cited in Heinrich Schäfer, *Church Identity between Repression and Liberation: The Presbyterian Church in Guatemala*, trans. Craig Koslofsky (Geneva: World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 1991), 63.

³⁶Richard Shaull, *The New Revolutionary Mood in Latin America*. (New York: Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, 1962), 19–20.

³⁷For more on changing missionary roles in Latin America, see Thomas J. Liggett, *The Role of the Missionary in Latin America Today* (New York: Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, 1963).

³⁸For a summary of the findings of this study, see Paul Abrecht, *The Churches and Rapid Social Change* (London: SCM, 1961).

³⁹Waldo Cesar, "Church and Society—Or Society and Church?" in Nantawan Boonprasat Lewis, *Revolution of Spirit: Ecumenical Theology in Global Context* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998), 133–43.

⁴⁰See Alan Preston Neely, "Protestant Antecedents of the Latin American Liberation Theology" (Ph.D. diss., American University, 1977), 165–208. For an example of the social and theological analysis offered by the movement, see Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina (ISAL), *Social Justice and the Latin Churches*, trans. Jorge Lara-Braud (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1969).

⁴¹Excerpts and a summary of Shaull's address can be found in *Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of Our Time: Official Report of the World Conference on Church and Society Held in Geneva 12–26 July 1966* (Geneva: WCC, 1967), 24–27.

⁴²*The Uppsala Report 1968: Official Report of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches Held in Uppsala 4–20 July 1968* (Geneva: WCC, 1968), 32. For more on the development of ecumenical mission theology during this period see Rodger C. Bassham, *Mission Theology, 1948–1975: Years of Worldwide Creative Tension, Ecumenical, Evangelical and Roman Catholic* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1979), 60–121.

⁴³Fulton, "Evangelism," 11.

⁴⁴William McElwee Miller, "A Message from a Leading Missionary," *Presbyterian Layman*, Feb. 1969, 2.

⁴⁵Dale T. Irvin, "Social Witness Policies—An Historical Overview" *Journal of Presbyterian History* 57 (Fall 1979): 382–84.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 383; James H. Smylie, "A Conflict of Concerns," *Christian Century* 82 (29 Dec. 1965): 1603.

⁴⁷G. Thompson Brown, "Window to the World:

Montreat and Missions," *American Presbyterians: Journal of Presbyterian History* 74 (Summer 1996): 114. Brown, "Overseas Mission Program," 166–67. Smith, *From Colonialism*, 261–80.

⁴⁸For a discussion of this new style of church engagement see Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 142–53.

⁴⁹James F. Findlay, Jr. *Church People in the Struggle: The National Council of Churches and the Black Freedom Movement, 1950–1970* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993), 33–35.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, 81, 141.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 53–63.

⁵²Aubrey N. Brown, Jr. "Presbyterians, US: Enroute to Broader Concerns," *Christian Century* 80 (18 Dec. 1963): 1577.

⁵³Smylie, "A Conflict of Concerns," 1603.

⁵⁴Irvin, "Social Witness Policies," 389–90.

⁵⁵Dean R. Hoge, *Division in the Protestant House: The Basic Reasons Behind Intra-Church Conflicts* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 36–38.

⁵⁶For an example of the conservative criticism of the Confession of '67, see Donald A. Dunkerley, "New Dowey Commentary Reveals Gap Between Historic Presbyterianism and C-'67," *Presbyterian Layman*, Jan. 1969, 1–2, 6.

⁵⁷For an example of this argument, see Malcolm Nygren, "The Church and Political Action," *Presbyterian Layman*, May 1969, 6. On the Southern Presbyterian doctrine of the spirituality of the church, see Ernest Trice Thompson, *The Spirituality of the Church: A Distinctive Doctrine of the Presbyterian Church in the United States* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1961).

⁵⁸Smylie, "A Conflict of Concerns," 1604.

⁵⁹See the report of the Standing Committee on Church and Race, *Minutes of the 181st General Assembly of the UPCUSA*, Part 1 (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1969), 678–81.

⁶⁰Webster, "American Presbyterian," 79–80.

⁶¹Brown, "Overseas Mission Program," 167–69.

⁶²For an example of this criticism from late in the decade, see Samuel Moffett, "The Structure and Strategy of World Mission," *The Presbyterian Layman*, Dec. 1979/Jan. 1980, 5.

⁶³"Illusion and Reality in Inter-American Relations," *Minutes of the 181st General Assembly of the UPCUSA*, Part 1 (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1969), 728. Jorge Lara-Braud also participated in the elaboration of this document.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 726 and 747–48.

⁶⁵For instance, for Robert McAfee Brown, see his *Theology in a New Key: Responding to Liberation Themes* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978); *Gustavo Gutierrez* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980); and *Unexpected News: Reading the Bible with Third World Eyes* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984). For Richard Shaull, see *Heralds of a New Reformation: The Poor of North and South America* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1984).

⁶⁶*Minutes of the 185th General Assembly*, Part 1 (New York: UPCUSA, 1973), 158.

⁶⁷*Minutes of the 186th General Assembly*, Part 1

(New York: UPCUSA, 1974), 736–38.

⁶⁸*Minutes of the 116th General Assembly*, Part 1 (Atlanta: PCUS, 1976), 215.

⁶⁹*Minutes of the 118th General Assembly*, Part 1 (Atlanta: PCUS, 1978), 232. Jorge Lara-Braud, *What is Liberation Theology? Answers from within the Reformed Tradition* (Atlanta: GAMB/PCUS, 1980), 3.

⁷⁰Lara-Braud, *What is Liberation Theology?* 36–38.

⁷¹John Gatu, "Missionary Go Home," *The Church Herald*, 5 Nov. 1971, 4–5, 20–21. Reprinted in *IDOC/International Documentation*, no. 63 (July 1974): 70–72. For a discussion of the call for a moratorium in mission from various perspectives, see *IDOC/International Documentation*, no. 63 (July 1974): 49–86; and *International Review of Mission* 64 (April 1975).

⁷²Black, *Merging Mission and Unity*, 162.

⁷³João Dias de Araújo, *Inquisition without Burnings*, trans. James N. Wright (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Superior de Estudos da Religião, 1982), 101–2.

⁷⁴J. Gary Campbell, "Mexican Presbyterians' Adventure of Faith: A Case of Moratorium—Two Interviews," *International Review of Mission* 64 (April 1975), 200–209.

⁷⁵See comments by G. Thompson Brown in "The Moratorium Debate: Responses to a Questionnaire," *International Review of Mission* 64 (April 1975): 161–62.

⁷⁶Charles R. "Buddy" Hughes, letter to author, 28 Jan. 1999, 5–6. In 1973 Ben Gutierrez became the Latin America Secretary for the Program Agency of the UPCUSA.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*; Norman Bent, interview by author, tape recording, Managua, Nicaragua, 17 July 1997.

⁷⁸Ronald Preston, letter to author, 12 May 1999.

⁷⁹For a history of this period in the life of the Latin American Biblical Seminary see Karla Ann Koll, "'Por Cristo y América Latina', Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano: A Case Study of Ideological Constraints Operating on Theological Practice," (M.Div. thesis, Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1985), 35–40. On CELEP see Guillermo Cook, "El CELEP en Perspectiva Histórica," *Pastoralia* 6 (Jul.–Dec. 1984), 11–17.

⁸⁰Robert Stenning, *Church World Service: Fifty Years of Help and Hope* (New York: Friendship Press, 1996), 58–61.

⁸¹For a history of actions by the NCC on the Vietnam War, see Jill Kristine Gill, "'Peace is not the Absence of War but the Presence of Justice': The National Council of Churches' Reaction and Response to the Vietnam War 1965–1972" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Pennsylvania, 1996).

⁸²For example, see Smith, *From Colonialism*, 280–84.

⁸³Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, *Social Policy Compilation: PCUSA and Its Antecedents PCUS and UPCUSA* (Louisville: ACSWP, 1991), sec. 3.14.1. Also see Irvin, "Social Witness Policies," 390–94.

⁸⁴Smith, *From Colonialism*, 280.

⁸⁵Gaspar Langella, "Salvadoran Poor: God's 'Sacrament?'" *Presbyterian Survey*, Sept. 1981: 15.

⁸⁶*Adventure and Hope*, 31–33.