• CESJ’s October gathering was addressed by the father of the Zimbabwe independence movement, Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole. Rev. Sithole, now living in exile in the U.S., suggested that the ESOP principle could play a major role in revitalizing his country’s economy — giving a participatory stake to workers and serving as “an effective answer to Marxism/Leninism in Zimbabwe.”...In late October, the U.S. government reversed a disastrous decision by the Immigration Service denying asylum for Rev. Sithole, whose opposition to the leftist Mugabe government has made him the target of several assassination attempts. Our grateful thanks to attorney David Rivkin for his effective phone calls to the State Dept. and to CESJ member Angie Whitehurst who worked relentlessly through church and media channels to reverse the deportation order. Thanks also to Anne Orleans who arranged for Rev. Sithole to speak at the National Press Club Oct. 29.

• An article in the Oct. 24 Human Events reports on the success of Britain’s privatization program, where state-owned businesses have been sold through stock to millions of citizens: “[T]he changes thus achieved are very largely institutionalized. It is one thing to nationalize or re-nationalize an industry owned by a few fat-cats; it is quite another to take away...the holdings of some nine million people.”

• An important development in the Philippines: Raul Manglapus, a long-time advocate of expanded ownership, has been elevated from newly elected Senator to Foreign Minister. Raul continues to be concerned with development of the rural economy and has expressed interest in the employee-owned La Perla plantation in Guatemala as a model for promoting economic justice in the countryside. Norm Kurland is working with Manglapus’ son-in-law, Ben Maynigo, on arranging a trip to speak with officials in the Philippines about how the government might apply CESJ’s Industrial Homestead strategy and the recommendations of the Presidential Task Force on Project Economic Justice.

• Gov. Michael Dukakis proclaimed Oct. 7, 1987 as Employee Involvement and Ownership Day, noting that a number of Massachusetts firms have already greatly benefited from employee ownership and participation.

• Project Economic Justice Task Force Chmn. J. William Middendorf spoke Oct. 1 at the National Press Club and Oct. 6 at the Heritage Foundation. He outlined the task force proposals, focusing on the ESOP-linked debt-for-equity swap for reviving third world economies. A number of scholars at Heritage have been studying the task force report, and the Foundation’s Edward Hudgins recently produced a paper advocating that the White House and Congress move quickly to find ways of linking ESOPs to American foreign aid initiatives.

• On Sep. 30 Norm Kurland spoke at the International Law Institute to a group of senior public and private executives from developing countries. He described the powerful economic and social advantages of privatization through expanded capital ownership, mentioning the ESOP debt-for-equity swap as a potential vehicle. On Oct. 21 Norm delivered a 3-hour seminar at the AFL-CIO’s George Meany Center to an enthusiastic group of Latin American labor officials. He presented the concept of “a new labor deal” based on expanded ownership, and discussed the current efforts to implement the recommendations of the PEJ Task Force.

Other CESJ News

• CESJ member and economist Carmine Gorga will be giving a seminar on Nov. 21 at Salem State College (Mass.) on “The Promises of Four Marginal Changes in Economic Policy.” Two of the major marginal changes are expanded ownership implemented on a national basis and a monetary system with expanded ownership as an integral part.

• CESJ director Fr. Joe McDonald has been working through the Maristian network to complete the editing and publication of Forty Years After, the last major work of CESJ’s co-founder, the late Fr. William Ferree. In his book, Fr. Ferree integrates the ESOP concept within his examination of social justice, of which he was considered a major scholar.

• CESJ’s dinner honoring businessman Peter Grace, which was scheduled for mid-November, has been postponed in order to combine the testimonial with the celebration of Mr. Grace’s 75th birthday in May.

** Closing Thoughts **

“Property ownership in America has enabled the people to keep their government under control, a thing that cannot be said of the socialist order....Africa needs to help her workers to acquire more property through ESOP which is being seriously tried in this and other countries with open societies.”

Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole,
Speech at the National Press Club, Oct. 29, 1987