



Perspective

By JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

Stones For The Prophet

Rosalynn Carter has done very well in the shallow water of traveling across the nation promoting volunteer projects and trying to stir up welfare agencies to help poor people. But when she took on Alexander Solzhenitsyn and disagreed with his conclusions that America is in a spiritual decline and is mired in materialism — she stepped into a pit where only giants can keep their heads above water.

The President's wife should paddle quickly toward shore, for she is, indeed, over her head.

The great Russian Christian martyr, who spent those terrible years in the Gulag prisons, delivered the commencement address at Harvard. Solzhenitsyn is one of the few prophets of the millenium, and to dispute his claims — backed by his experiences — almost casts Mrs. Carter in the role of the wife of Ahab who criticized the prophet Elijah.

The Russian exile charged Americans saying "One almost

never sees voluntary self-restraint. Everybody operates at the extreme limit of that legal framework . . . The fight for our planet has already started. The forces of evil have begun their offensive; you can feel their pressure, and yet your screens and publications are full of prescribed smiles and raised glasses. What is the joy about?"

To refute that Mrs. Carter addressed the National Press Club and with smiling face and raised glass said, "Solzhenitsyn says he can feel the pressure of evil across our land. Well, I do not sense that pressure of evil at all."

Yet in last week's issue of U.S. News and World Report the editors state that more than half all the black infants last year were born out of wedlock. Fifty-two percent of all black children and 14 percent of whites live in fatherless households. And, according to reports from HEW "by 19 half of all white unmarried girls and four fifths of their black counterparts have had intercourse." One out of

every 10 girls between 15 and 19 get pregnant out of wedlock. Within a year one out of four is pregnant again. And, HEW sadly concludes, 90 percent are on public-assistance rolls.

Mrs. Carter, it seems, doesn't even listen to HEW Secretary Califano, much less Solzhenitsyn.

The Russian concluded his address at Harvard saying, "We have lost the concept of a Supreme Complete Entity which used to restrain our passions . . . We have placed too much hope in political and social reforms, only to find that we were being deprived of our most precious possession: our spiritual life."

Rosalyn says Solzhenitsyn doesn't know what he's talking about. But like all prophets, Alexander is not listening to the politicians — he has his ear tuned to a different spirit.

And the fact that our President has sent his wife out to throw stones at the rugged man of the mountains is but one indication of how right he actually is.