

July/August 1987

Charting a Promising New Course: Evangelicals Champion Peace and Freedom

Certain words in our vocabulary suffer the fate of being cheapened and degraded through persistent misuse. Thus, "love" is narrowed to mean only a physical, mechanical act; "peace" sinks into mere survivalism or starry-eyed idealism; "security" is limited to a trigger-happy Ramboism; and "freedom," like a badminton cock, is used by both Right and Left to mean either an individualism immune to concerns for the broader community or a license for an all-powerful state to attempt to ensure liberty from material want to a populace deprived of civil liberties.

To the vast majority of Americans, both secular and religious, the "peace movement" conjures up images of leftist politics, naive idealism, and even

These Guidelines reject those programs that would make religious organizations simply an arm of one or another secular political current. They chart the task of establishing an arena in which competing perspectives can be searchingly explored and improved upon. They recognize the difference between a church and a political organization, and expect the dialogue that takes place in a church to reflect that difference (the NAE Guidelines, p. 5).

anti-Americanism. This is tragic because work for peace in our day ought to be a noble calling — in fact, an indispensable calling for Christians, whose Lord called "peacemakers" blessed. On the other hand, to many "peace" activists, calls for defending freedom are inseparable from fueling a dangerous arms race.

To put the dilemma facing us another way, there are two specters haunting the future of human society: the threat of nuclear holocaust and the threat of totalitarian degradation. Some in the "peace movement" seem able only to hear the ticking of an atomic doomsday clock, while some in the "security movement" are often unable to hear any sound but the steadily advancing thud of totalitarian boots.

Mainline church programs on behalf of peace have too often been fired by the shrill rhetoric of the doomsday prophets of an approaching nuclear nightmare, while many evangelicals and conservative

Christians have shown a disturbing tendency to focus only on the threat of communism.

Work for peace, freedom, and security in such a polarized environment has proven barren, often even counterproductive. It has understandably spawned skepticism, rather than broad support. The 1983 pastoral letter of the American Catholic bishops (The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response), though impressive at several points, reflects many of the deficiencies of the contemporary "peace movement." The statement adopted in 1986 by the United Methodist bishops (In Defense of Creation) is even more enmeshed in the mindset of the Left, going so far as to call deterrence "idolatry." The Presbyterian study document now under consideration (Presbyterians and Peacemaking: Are We Now Called to Resistance?) is so convinced of the imperatives of the "peace movement" perspective that it plunges into advocacy of civil disobedience.

A New Player

Beginning in early 1984, the National Association of Evangelicals set out to develop a practical program which would assist evangelicals in thinking about peace, freedom and security issues. Leadership training and the writing of a handbook to aid in this process were key early objectives. Founded in 1942,

We challenge those religious leaders who claim to speak for peace or the liberation of the oppressed but who, in our view, serve other destructive ends.... Great national church and ecumenical organizations have become the instrument of political activists particularly on the left, but also on the right, whose primary commitment is to an ideological position (the NAE Guidelines, p. 6).

the NAE has a membership of 50,000 local churches from 72 denominations, and serves a constituency of approximately 15 million people.

In the fall of 1986, the NAE's Board of Adminis-

tration approved a 47-page document, the Guidelines: Peace, Freedom and Security Studies. The booklet was the product of very wide consultation from across the evangelical spectrum — from pacifist to "peace through strength."

But the NAE did not just consult with those within the evangelical world. Jewish and Roman Catholic

It is a scandal that American religious leaders provide a significant support system for one of the most repressive governments in Central America. It is shameful when exchange programs which falsify the plight of controlled or persecuted churches in the Soviet Union are celebrated as contributions to progress toward peace. It is a tragedy when the urgent need to aid refugees is distorted, as it has been in some religious branches of the Sanctuary Movement, to serve the political ends of those who are the enemies of democracy (the Guidelines, p. 7).

experts with many years of experience working within the peace and freedom field were consulted. The World Without War Council, through Robert Pickus and George Weigel, provided an experienced and independent perspective which was invaluable. The final product, however, is a remarkable synthesis of diverse perspectives molded together in such a way as to be consistent with broad evangelical concerns and theological assumptions.

Theological Understandings

The NAE believed it was absolutely essential that its participation in the area of peace, freedom and security studies occur within a context of specific biblical and theological assumptions. The following is a brief and partial presentation of four of the program's central underlying understandings — understandings which the NAE finds firmly rooted in Scripture:

First, for the Church, the spiritual task must remain primary. In its enthusiasm to advance worthwhile earthly goals, the Church must not forget its responsibility to be first and foremost a place where God is worshiped, the Gospel proclaimed, and Christians nurtured. The Church must not politicize its agenda; it must not replace a spiritual agenda with a political one.

Second, the Church has major responsibilities to the world. In its enthusiasm to be faithful to the primacy of the spiritual task, the Church must not pass over its opportunities to promote justice, peace, and freedom for all humankind. There must be no escape into narrow pietism which shuts out the needs of the rest of the world. The Christian walk involves

NAE's PFSS program begins with an affirmation of the value of democracy, an affirmation rooted in the Christian insistence on the dignity of the human person. At its best, democracy is a remarkable system that has demonstrated the possibility for diverse individuals and groups to coexist and deal with their conflicts without resorting to tyranny and violence....

In the PFSS program, we wish to acknowledge the important ways in which law and political community contribute to reconciliation among men. Law and democratic government are institutional means to resolve conflict without parties resorting to personal or mass violence.... Law and political community may promote, in a fallen world, the best means to meet the challenge of peace, freedom and security (the NAE Guidelines, pp. 11,17).

horizontal as well as vertical responsibilities. To neglect either is to distort an evangelical understanding of the Gospel.

Third, the Church must promote reconciliation between human beings. Just as the Church has obligations to bring peace between the Creator and his creatures, so too does the Church bear responsibility for furthering the cause of peace within the human family. Jesus very specifically called his disciples to the task of peacemaking. Evangelicals fully recognize that the reality of sin will prevent any utopian fulfillment of complete peace on this earth by human efforts alone. But there must be acceptance of the responsibility to promote understanding and justice, and to limit wherever possible the recourse to the use of military force. There will remain disagreement among evangelicals and other Christians regarding when, if ever, the use of military force is justified. Most will undoubtedly continue to accept the position of most Christians through the ages, i.e., that there are occasions when force may or should be utilized. Others will feel the call to be faithful to the pacifist tradition. But all are called to be peacemakers to the best of their abilities.

Fourth, evangelicals accept the continuing earthly reality of sin. Though evangelicals work for peace, there is an understanding that such work can never be

We will enter the arms debate, but not to argue for or against particular weapons programs. War has come with weapons buildups; it has also come as a consequence of not matching power in the hands of adversary nations. This program will focus its energies on realistic alternatives to reliance on national military power for security, alternatives capable of confronting and altering present patterns of power in world politics (the NAE Guidelines, p. 28).

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Larry Lettera Photography

In December 1986, the Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs sponsored a discussion on the Guidelines for the National Association of Evangelicals' Peace, Freedom and Security Studies Program. From left, participants included NAE's Brian O'Connell, Harmon Dunathen of Hampshire College, United Methodist Alan Geyer, and Dwain Epps of the National Council of Churches.

absolutely successful prior to the coming of God's final Kingdom. Political strife will thus remain a constant reality in this world. It follows from this that Christians must be extremely cautious that they not be seduced by proposals which promise peace, but deliver only oppression and conflict. Dangerous utopian schemes must be avoided if the advancement of both peace and freedom is to occur. In the words of the Guidelines, "We cannot create the Kingdom; we can nurture a human future more congruent with the Kingdom's values."

The NAE's "evangelical" theological and biblical foundation is fully consistent with those historic "orthodox" Christian understandings which supersede denominational differences. Thus, what the NAE has produced will certainly be appreciated in the Christian world well beyond "evangelical" circles.

Political Understandings

Before focusing on two of the central political distinctives of the program, a word needs to be said about the deliberately narrow definition of peace which the program has established as its objective. In this, the NAE's efforts differ markedly from many other religious activists who have frequently failed properly to connect diverse definitions of peace with means appropriate to their achievement. In the words of the Guidelines: "The peace we are seeking to encourage in this program is a limited peace: it is not the inner peace of a relationship with God, nor the absence of all conflict because of the fulfillment of God's Kingdom, but the peace which is possible between organized political communities, achieved as law and political processes provide alternatives to the violent resolution of conflict."

The first major political distinctive of the program is its strong endorsement of democracy. In contrast to the typical religious peace document, the NAE program directly connects work for democracy with work for peace and security. "While the Bible does not teach democratic theory," comments the Guidelines, "democratic theory rests on Biblical insights about the inalienable dignity of the human person." Democracies have historically provided conditions conducive to human dignity, the preservation of religious liberty, and the non-violent resolution of

conflicts. Democracies have been and are anything but perfect, but the alternatives thus far have often been much worse.

A second important political distinction in the program is a refusal to focus on specific policy prescriptions. The NAE program seeks to establish a framework for debate, rather than provide a definitive judgment on every complex question involving every new weapons program or peace proposal. However, it must be made clear that the NAE is not simply promoting a set of parliamentary rules for the civil exchange of views.

The NAE begins with judgments that a nuclear holocaust is a real possibility; that totalitarianism, presently most often in the form of communism, is a threat to democracy, social justice, and religious freedom; and that democracy as a way of organizing society politically is the most likely means available to advance the cause of social justice, religious freedom, and a non-violent resolution of conflicts.

Participants in the program, who accept the basic theological and political framework of the discussion, will thus be able to dialogue and even differ with each other about specific contemporary issues

Church groups which consider that America can do no wrong often make no effort to supply their members with intelligent critical commentary on U.S. foreign policy. On the other hand...the assumption that U.S. foreign policy is usually wrong has been so strong in many activist churches in recent years, that literature available to participants rarely includes the official positions and rationale of the Administration. The tendency of some to not believe anything American officials state, while accepting at face value the allegations made by almost any foreign or domestic critic of U.S. foreign policy, is irresponsible (the NAE Guidelines, pp. 20-21).

without the minority position on a given issue being driven out of the program. The NAE assumes that the diversity will be stimulating and healthy. That

is why the participation and critique of both pacifists and "peace through strength" advocates was solicited and formative in the development of the PFSS program.

Not surprisingly, some present religious participants in the public debate have been quick to criticize the NAE's Peace, Freedom and Security Studies program. To the extent other church programs have been predicated on a fixation with only one of the twin dangers of the modern era (usually the threat of nuclear annihilation rather than the threat of totalitarianism), it was inevitable that an insistence on

A peace which sacrifices human freedom — particularly religious liberty — is morally bankrupt and not an option for Christians to consider. The PFSS program will work to reconnect the goals of peace and freedom, and will seek, in ways that concurrently promote the prospects of peace and security, to aid those whose basic human rights are now systematically violated. We will refuse to silently acquiesce in human rights violations for the sake of a spurious "peace." We will also refuse to abandon work for a genuine peace as we defend human rights, human freedom and religious liberty (the NAE Guidelines, p. 29).

broadening the analysis would be resisted and condemned. (See page 5 for an analysis of religious and secular reactions to the new program.)

The sharpness of the "peace movement" reaction to a peace and security program which frankly accepts the reality of a totalitarian threat underscores

For Further Study

There are a wide variety of resources available to Christians who want to study the war/peace issue, while maintaining a balanced concern for the values of peace, liberty, justice, and security.

The Institute on Religion and Democracy has released a new edition of George Weigel's **Peace and Freedom** (\$6.00), a 100-page survey of Christian teaching on the problem of war, the just war and pacifist positions, and realistic suggestions for peacemaking. This makes an excellent study book for a Sunday school class or discussion group. (IRD, 729 15th St., NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20005.)

Presbyterians (and others) will want to order **Peacemaking? Or Resistance? Presbyterian Perspectives** (\$4.00), published by Presbyterians for Democracy and Religious Freedom. This collection of essays critiques a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) study document which suggests the church undertake "resistance" to U.S. defense policies. (PDRF, 20th Floor, First American Center, Nashville, TN 37238.)

The debate continues in the United Methodist Church over the UM bishops' pastoral letter "In Defense of Creation." The one bishop who publicly abstained from endorsing the letter, Louis Schowengerdt of New Mexico, established a committee which produced a critical analysis of the letter,

an important shift in how political labels are assigned in our day. In the 1950s liberalism's expressed concern for human rights and social justice translated into an unembarrassed anti-communism. Nor was this liberal position in any way an endorsement of the excesses of McCarthyism. It is one of the tragic ironies of our time that what was once called liberal is now frequently dismissed as conservative.

Religious pronouncements for peace have all too often assumed or expressed a kind of "moral equivalency" between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. The failure of religious peace activists to be able to distinguish the failings of democratic systems from the abuses produced by totalitarian ones is shameful.

On the other side of the political spectrum, the NAE's new program is critiqued for urging work for evolutionary change within the Soviet Union. Some view this as a total waste of time, but the NAE insists that it is necessary to seek vigorously, though soberly, opportunities to encourage such a transition.

If the PFSS program can accomplish even some of its goals, perhaps we will have an opportunity to recapture and restore some of the depth and meaning of such precious words as peace, freedom, and security. Understood narrowly and in an isolated context, they represent but a faint shadow of a reality to which they ought to bear witness. For ultimately there can be no real peace apart from meaningful freedom, no complete freedom apart from justice, and no security apart from peace and justice.

— Kent R. Hill

In 1984-85, before accepting his present position as Executive Director of the IRD, Dr. Hill was commissioned to assist the NAE in writing the first three drafts of the Guidelines.

The Nuclear Crisis: An Issue of Justice and Peace (\$3.00). (New Mexico Conference Office, Attn. Ms. Lou Van Meter, 8100 Mountain Road, NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110. They also have available a 32-minute VHS video of a discussion with Bishop Schowengerdt and two scientists, \$10.00.)

The IRD also has a **Packet on the UM Bishops' Letter** (\$3.00 contribution requested). In addition to several articles by IRD board members such as Richard John Neuhaus, George Weigel, and Ed Robb, the packet contains insightful and stimulating analyses by three United Methodist theologians and ethicists: Paul Ramsey, Stanley Hauerwas, and William Willimon. Ramsey will have a new book out in early 1988 entitled **Speak Up for Just War and Pacifism** (price not yet determined). This critique of the UM bishops' pastoral letter by Methodism's pre-eminent just-war theorist includes an epilogue by pacifist Hauerwas. (Penn State Press, 215 Wagner Bldg., University Park, PA 16802.)

The IRD recommends two peace organizations which offer materials which eschew utopian or simplistic solutions to the problem of war. The **James Madison Foundation** publishes **American Purpose**

Peace Resources, Cont'd on page 5

Entering the Fray. . . .

The Debate over the Evangelical Peace Program

The NAE's Peace, Freedom and Security Studies (PFSS) program has generated considerably more praise than criticism. The NAE solicited widespread reaction and response throughout the entire religious community, specifically inviting comment by those least likely to agree with the program's approach. To that end consultations were held with mainline Protestants, Catholics, Jews, conservative fundamentalists, and mainstream evangelicals.

Over the past three years, the NAE has held a dozen regional meetings to hear from its own diverse community. Evangelical traditions across the spectrum — from Anabaptists to Liberty Baptists — brought their distinct perspectives to bear on the Guidelines. Reaction to these consultations was varied. Some were fearful that a "peace" program would only serve the ends of the Soviet Union or those who advocated unilateral disarmament. Others doubted the sincerity of the statement's call for objective and balanced discussion. Still others thought that the NAE had a hidden agenda, one that was merely trying to advance a supposed conservative political philosophy. However, even those who were skeptical — on both the right and left — displayed great enthusiasm at the potential leadership role evangelicals could play in helping to shape the debate on foreign policy and defense questions.

One of the clearest indications of broad-based support for the program is the diverse and highly qualified advisory board. The list includes prominent

pacifists, military experts, academics, and theologians, as well as Senator William Armstrong (R-CO) and Congressman Tony Hall (D-OH).

The most vocal critique came from those who charge that the statement rejects justice as a criterion for peace. Dr. Ron Sider, professor of theology at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, best represents this view. He has stated that "the NAE document specifically rejects justice as a major concern," which is "a slap in the face to Third World Christians."

Those who framed the NAE program, however, argue that Dr. Sider's critique misunderstands the position of the Guidelines on the question of justice. According to the Guidelines, "We believe that peace and justice are...related, but, understanding that there are competing views of justice, we will give priority to the discovery of processes by which competing views of justice may conduct and resolve this conflict without violence." In other words, work to end injustice does help build a base for peace, and Christians ought to be fully engaged in such efforts. Nevertheless, in the explosive world in which we live, if we don't develop means to encourage those who disagree (often about what constitutes justice) not to resolve their differences through force of arms, there will be no justice to achieve because there will be no people. Dr. Sider also neglects a key objective of the

Debate, Cont'd on page 6

Peace Resources, Cont'd from page 4

(\$18.00 per year), a newsletter edited by George Weigel which reports ten times a year on the peace, freedom, and security debate among U.S. opinion leaders. Weigel focuses on the "moral argument" over peace within the American religious community. (American Purpose, 4000 Albermarle Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016.)

For 28 years, the **World Without War Council** has challenged peace organization stereotypes while assisting a wide variety of groups in building responsible peace programs. The council has served as a consultant for a variety of religious and secular groups, including most recently the National Association of Evangelicals. The Council has offices in Chicago, Berkeley, and Seattle. (Robert Pickus, President, WWWC, 1730 Martin Luther King, Jr., Way, Berkeley, CA 94709.)

In addition, the NAE is putting together a **Leadership Network** for its **Peace, Freedom, and Security Studies Program**. For information write NAE Public Affairs Office, Attn. Brian O'Connell, PFSS Program Coordinator, 1430 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. The PFSS Guidelines are available from NAE for \$1.00.

Finally, we recommend several outstanding books for your study:

- * Deun C. Curry, ed., **Evangelicals and the Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter**, 1984 (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 225 Jefferson Ave., S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49503), \$10.95.
- * Zbigniew Brzezinski, ed., **Promise or Peril: The Strategic Defense Initiative**, 1986 (The Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1030 15th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20005), \$14.95.
- * James Turner Johnson, **The Quest for Peace: Three Moral Traditions in Western Cultural History**, 1987 (Princeton University Press, 41 Williams Street, Princeton, NJ 08540).
- * Michael Novak, **Moral Clarity in the Nuclear Age**, 1983 (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Box 141000, Nashville, TN 37214), \$3.95.
- * Michael Walzer, **Just and Unjust Wars**, 1977 (Basic Books, 10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022), \$8.95.
- * George Weigel, **Tranquillitas Ordinis: The Present Failure and Future Promise of American Catholic Thought on War and Peace**, 1987 (Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016), \$27.50.

program — the promotion of democracy. The Guidelines contend that democracy has proven to be the most effective way of advancing both the cause of justice and peace.

Reactions from peace activists in the mainline churches have been predictable. Those who have helped develop and implement policies that the Guidelines criticize have belittled as simplistic, or ignored, the new NAE initiative. Alternately, many of those within the mainline church world who are profoundly disturbed by the "peace" work done in their name, have praised the NAE for developing a sensible religious and political framework for discussing difficult foreign policy questions within a Christian context.

That those representing the organizations and policies that are rejected by the NAE document find it deficient is not surprising. For them to accept the presuppositions of PFSS would be to confess that their approach is flawed and has failed. In December 1986, the New York-based Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs sponsored a major forum for a mainline religious discussion of the NAE Guidelines. Two participants, each crucially responsible for his respective tradition's recent treatment of the ethical problems in the nuclear age, illustrate well much of the reaction.

The Rev. J. Bryan Hehir, of the U.S. Catholic Conference, contended that NAE "is clearer about what it doesn't like than how it will carry out the task." The Guidelines statement, he said, "is stronger on its theory of ends than it is on its ethic of means." He pointed to what he calls a contradictory tone that "combines political innocence with a view that would be worthy of Dean Acheson." Father Hehir would clearly have preferred for the Guidelines to have included (as did the Catholic bishops' statement) specific political judgments and prescriptive policy proposals. However, NAE deliberately chose not to do this on the basis of its belief that the Church ought to be a moral teacher helping to frame

issues, rather than a political or military strategist determining specific policies.

Dr. Alan Geyer, principal drafter of the United Methodist bishops' letter, "In Defense of Creation," took offense at the NAE document's frank criticism of current "peace" efforts. The Guidelines assert that "great national church and ecumenical organizations have become the instrument of political activists particularly on the left, though also on the right, whose primary commitment is to an ideological position." Responding to this, Dr. Geyer bristled, "Religious leaders and organizations are referred to in uniformly negative terms," which "tends to breed more hostility against fellow Christians than a positive spirit of ecumenism and peacemaking." Geyer's apparent assumption is that the only way to promote ecumenism and peacemaking is to refrain from vigorously expressing other points of view. The NAE respectfully, but firmly, disagrees. The NAE is attempting to model an approach towards complex foreign policy issues which enables the church to avoid becoming imprisoned in a particular political ideology. This does not mean that the NAE program makes no judgments which have political implications. It does mean that the number of such positions is quite modest, and that the focus is upon general principles and judgments which can garner broad support.

The more positive response has focused on the process by which the Guidelines were developed and on the principles they espouse. Richard John Neuhaus, director of the Center on Religion and Society, has described the document as having "potentially watershed importance" because the program is wrestling with the hard questions about war and peace "in a manner that is generally missing from religious engagements in this field." Dr. Joseph Nye, director of the Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, has commended the statement for the way in which "it has set up a broad framework for dialogue."

Virtually all of the participants at the NAE consultation meetings exhibited great appreciation for the fundamental political understandings that the Guidelines seek to advance. Pacifists focused on the program's goal of seeking nonviolent alternatives to conflict. Others were pleased to note the program's linkage of peace with human rights, and the recognition that concern for national security was consistent with biblical teachings of human dignity and the civic duty to the state. Virtually all agreed that the specific endorsement of democracy and democratic political institutions is a major strength of the program.

The reason why the program has attracted considerable across-the-board support is that it was designed to promote dialogue and discussion among those whose viewpoints have often precluded interaction, but who are excited about a new possibility of working together towards common ends. The NAE intends to continue to revise the Guidelines on the basis of suggestions and criticisms which are expressed.

— Brian O'Connell
Program Coordinator for PFSS



Photo courtesy of United Evangelical Action

IRD's Kent Hill speaks at a Peace, Freedom, and Security Studies consultation in Wheaton, IL. NAE's Executive Director, Billy Melvin, is seated at right.

Religious Liberty Alert

Just before Christmas 1986, Father Jean-Baptiste Ndikuriyo was imprisoned by the military government of Burundi. His crime? He read a group of students a letter from Pope John Paul II to Burundi's Catholic bishops expressing concern about government measures against the church. Father Ndikuriyo was designated a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International — and he was released in March 1987. His freedom was shortlived. Two weeks later he was rearrested because, during a worship service just after his release, he had thanked his congregation for their prayers during his detention. He remains in prison today.

Burundi is a tiny, desperately crowded central African nation; it is ranked the world's 11th poorest nation. Religious persecution in Burundi stems from ethnic conflicts, rooted in what the Washington Post has called a "rigid brand of tribal apartheid." The Tutsi, who comprise 15% of the population, control the political and military institutions and dominate the 80% majority Hutu tribe. The present government under Jean-Baptiste Bagaza has attempted some tribal réconciliation. Nevertheless, it remains highly insecure (in part fearing retribution by the Hutus who remember the systematic extermination of over 80,000 Hutus in 1972 by the previous Tutsi-controlled government).

Since 1984 the persecution of the Hutu and of the Catholic Church has been on the increase. Sixty percent of the population of Burundi is Christian, predominantly Roman Catholic, making the church a primary influence among the Hutu. The increasingly authoritarian Bagaza regime sees the Catholic Church as an institutional threat to the government's aspirations to pre-eminent authority in national life.

In its latest step of restrictions on the church, the Burundi government has banned the celebration of Mass on weekdays. (In 1985 the government sharply curtailed the celebration of Mass by limiting it to weekdays evenings, after noon on Saturdays, and all day on Sundays.) The government claims that the restrictions on religious activities are necessary in order to increase economic production and to reduce the time spent on "unproductive" activities.

In April of this year the government of Burundi abolished Roman Catholic parish councils and banned catechists from preaching and recruiting new church members. All religious associations must receive the approval of the government in order to operate. The government must be informed in advance of religious gatherings, which are limited to certain recognized places of worship. Thus, prayer meetings in private homes are illegal. Certain religious symbols must be removed from public places, including crucifixes on the outside of churches. Except for priests called to administer the Last Rites, clergy are prohibited from visiting the sick at home during the work week.

Church schools and most seminaries were placed under state control in 1986, and clergy were generally removed from teaching positions. Church-run rural literacy classes were suspended, depriving approximately 300,000 Burundi children and adults of one of few means of bettering themselves. Church

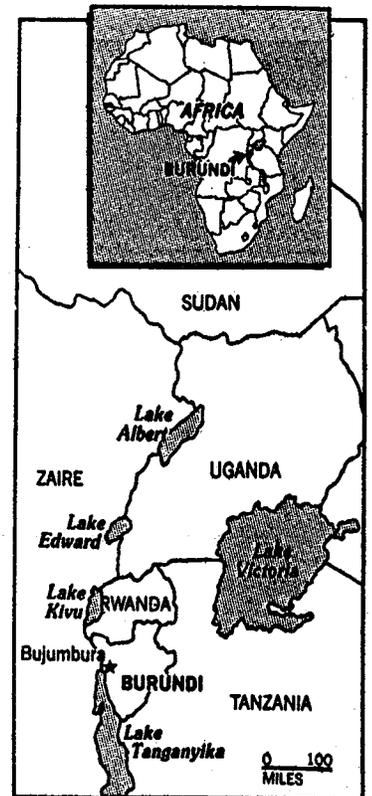
access to the media is curtailed by the long-standing suspension of the Catholic newspaper and of religious broadcasts. (Radio Burundi denounces the Catholic Church daily, frequenting associating the church unflatteringly, although not always inaccurately, with Belgian colonial rule.)

Over 140 missionaries were expelled in 1985 and another 70 in 1986. Some 70 others, convinced that they could no longer freely engage in mission work, left by the end of 1986 voluntarily, leaving some 200 missionaries in Burundi today.

Both Catholic and Protestant clergy and lay people have been imprisoned, held for long periods of time without charges and in many cases subjected to harsh treatment, including starvation diets and beatings by guards.

Letters protesting religious persecution in Burundi can be sent to the President of Burundi (with copies recommended to your congressional representatives and to the IRD):

Son Excellence le Colonel
Jean-Baptiste BAGAZA
President de la République
B.P. 1870
Bujumbura, République du Burundi
— Maria H. Thomas



BY DAVE COOK—THE WASHINGTON POST
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This is the last regular Religious Liberty Alert which Maria Thomas will be writing for Religion and Democracy. In mid-August, Mrs. Thomas assumed a new position working with IRD Board member David Jessup at the American Institute for Free Labor Development. In a luncheon in her honor on August 17 a plaque was presented to Maria Thomas noting her outstanding service to the IRD. She was specifically commended for her splendid work on behalf of democracy and religious liberty. Mrs. Thomas's work with the IRD began in 1980 when the idea for this new organization was born. She has played a critical role in helping the IRD to expand and develop from a one-typewriter operation to a staff of ten. The entire IRD staff, board, and the many IRD members with a special interest in religious freedom join in a sincere expression of appreciation and best wishes to Maria Thomas.

Weigel Pushes Debate Forward on American Catholic Thought on War and Peace

Tranquillitas Ordinis: The Present Failure and Future Promise of American Catholic Thought on War and Peace by George Weigel (Oxford University Press, 1987, 489 pp., \$27.50). Reviewed by The Rev. James V. Schall, S.J., Professor of Government, Georgetown University, and, like Mr. Weigel, a member of the IRD Board of Advisors.

Tranquillitas Ordinis (the title is based on St. Augustine's definition of peace) is a massive, detailed and dispassionate history. It is also an indictment of American Catholic intellectual leadership -- clergy and academic -- for abandoning the central line of Christian and philosophical thinking about war and peace and, in a broader sense, about metaphysics itself. This abandonment took place precisely at a time when such thought was most needed by the public order. Weigel writes very clearly. He does not obscure any issue, and refuses to accept shoddy or ideological reasoning from whatever source.

The central theme in this book concerns the work of John Courtney Murray and, more broadly, the tradition of reasoned public order for which he argued. Weigel's thesis is that the Murray position was simply abandoned in the arguments over war and peace and development that have taken place in recent years.

Weigel's sense of balance is evident throughout. With deadly accuracy the author reveals where mere enthusiasm can lead. He knows pacifism is inadequate. He notes who does and who does not talk about the concentration camps in the Soviet Union or the real condition of the Church in Nicaragua. He can tell what produces genuine development and what does not. He understands that saving our lives at all costs is a heresy, not worthy of civilized men. He knows that war must be thought about and, if necessary, prepared for within a political community, not just in abstract terms of weapons.

There is a kind of unalloyed poignancy when Weigel asks himself again and again, "Why?" Why did the central line of Catholic thinking disappear so

rapidly? Why did the schools and the churches and the religious media suddenly accept the arguments that arose from sources quite antagonistic to traditional Catholic thought and American interests? He shows how each step of this alienation was fundamentally not in the interests of Catholics, of the country, of those living under totalitarian systems, nor of peoples in the Third World.

Near the end of his book, Weigel asks, "If the fault did not lie with the aristocrats, then where did it lie?" And of course, after he examines the alternatives, he comes back to the "aristocrats" -- the academic and ecclesiastical intelligensia and authorities. The changes in the church, including its doctrines on war and peace, and its assessment of the value of democracy and freedom, clearly did not arise from "the people"; they arose with disaffected clerics and academics.

Weigel asks the right question when he queries why the intellectual core of the tradition so suddenly disintegrated within Catholicism -- it had already largely collapsed in the mainline Protestant churches. But I wonder if the issue does not lie deeper than Murray, deeper than the American tradition, in fact. The enthusiasts who wanted to reconcile Catholicism to "modernity" have not sufficiently questioned modernity itself. I suspect that in almost every case the architects of this "aristocratic" shift were those educated in modernity and not in the central Catholic tradition, even though they may have gone to Catholic universities.

The politicization of religion is also a loss of faith. Weigel no doubt would agree with this, but he does not argue it here. What he does argue, however, gives us support for an abiding suspicion that the failure of Christianity to preach to itself has origins in its own faith, the substitute for which has been "modernity" among many intellectual aristocrats. George Weigel's Tranquillitas Ordinis is not to be missed if we wish to make sense of the turmoil in the Catholic Church and how it influences public order.

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