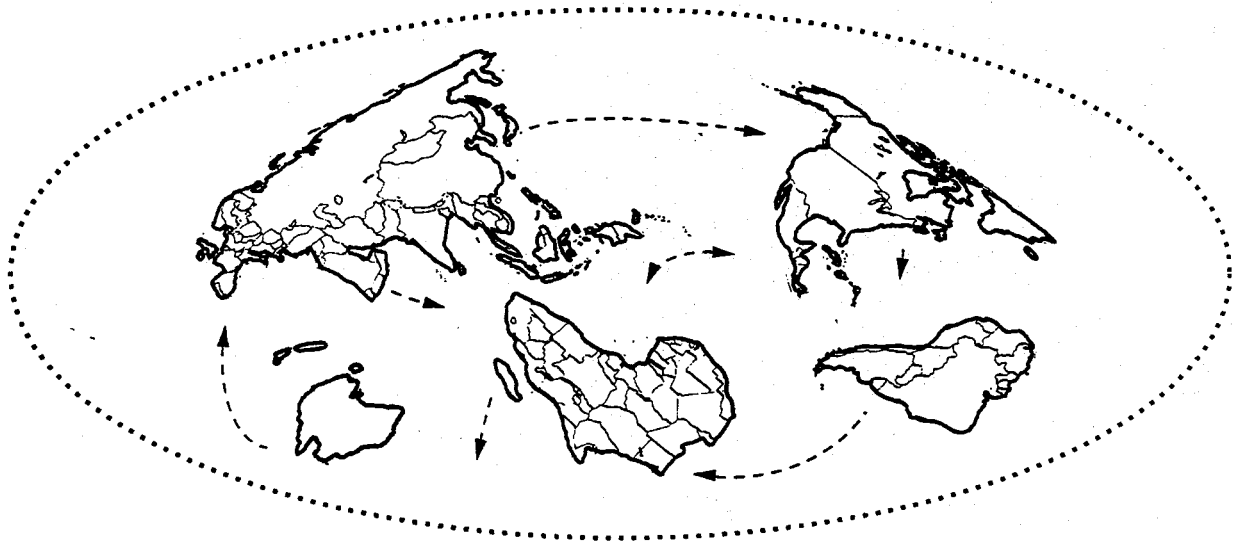


RELIGION & DEMOCRACY



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What to Make of this New World Order?

NCC conference ponders meaning of 'a world made new'

By Alan Wisdom

The long-troubled National Council of Churches has a new general secretary who speaks of change. The Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, installed last spring, has said that she is "very concerned about the ineffectiveness of our public witness." She looks toward a kinder, gentler NCC, in closer touch with its constituency and its audience. "I am trying very hard as general secretary to bring a more balanced tone to our statements," Campbell asserts. "I want them to be more pastoral, more rooted in theology."

Campbell points to "unity" as the focus for NCC theology. This stress on unity would appear to run counter to the council's habit of "prophetic" social witness. To be prophetic, by current NCC standards, means to begin with the premise that social and class conflicts are fundamental and pervasive in American culture and international affairs -- a "structural" problem that requires a radical response on behalf of "oppressed" groups. This requires taking clear sides in all social and political issues, which necessarily

makes a shambles of unity.

Hence, the dilemma: Will Campbell maintain "unity" as solidarity with "the oppressed" in the customary divisive, "prophetic" style? Or will she seek a broader unity of the Church, a true ecumenism -- but at the cost of antagonizing the "prophets," the self-proclaimed champions of "the oppressed," who hold powerful positions in her organization?

There may be no better test for the new general secretary than her special project, a series of NCC consultations entitled "Toward a World Made New: The Public Witness of the Churches and a New World Order." The project made its debut last November with a conference in Indianapolis. Significantly, the first paper presented was entitled "Renewing Ecumenical Protestant Social Teaching." The author, Yale Divinity School Dean Thomas W. Ogletree, offered a challenging re-evaluation of the last 30 years of ecumenical social activism.

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Ogletree expressed his sympathy with "the central themes of the ecumenical Protestant witness" since the 1960s: "racial justice, advocacy for the poor, resistance to an unjust war, and opposition to the nuclear arms race." Nevertheless, he observed, there was a high price to be paid for adopting that agenda: intensified conflicts within NCC member denominations.

The problem, according to the Yale dean, was that the social witness repeatedly "went beyond -- and in some respects, counter to -- well-founded traditions of social thought in American Christianity." For example, most U.S. Protestants have believed that our economy, if managed wisely and justly, could provide for all Americans. Likewise, they have "supported American wars out of a basic confidence in America's positive role in God's purposes in this world." But, Ogletree said, increasingly sharp ecumenical criticisms of U.S. capitalism and U.S. military involvements "placed in question the Protestant presumption of America's basic goodness."

Ogletree argued for relinking the churches' social witness to their peoples' traditions. He asserted that an effective Christian witness must come to grips with "the reigning civilizational ethic of society." In the U.S. case, that means our churches must draw critically on American ideals such as liberal democracy and a mixed capitalist economy in order to expand their Christian vision of peace and justice. Ogletree was not suggesting a blind blessing upon "Christian America." He was affirming that "patriotism has by no means lost all legitimacy within a Protestant

New World Order?**USSR Becomes Commonwealth of Independent States**

The Soviet Union is gone. Republics now must chart their own paths. What will they choose? How will they cooperate? Are the old weapons safely controlled? Is the U.S. now free to scale down its military? What kind of assistance do these states need to make the transition from communism?

social witness, nor has it become improper to celebrate the social and political accomplishments of the American people."

The Yale dean called for change not only in the churches' message, but also in their ways of advancing it. He described the clergy activists, starting in the 1960s, who "had a tendency to identify ourselves as individual prophets." Their goal, he said, "was to gain control of ecclesiastical structures, if we could, and use them in order to promote our own views." These ecumenical leaders have not listened well to other religious voices, according to

Ogletree, and they have the greatest difficulty in communicating with evangelicals in their own churches. They pass resolutions on all sorts of topics, presuming that the numbers (in decline) and prestige of their own "mainline" denominations would guarantee them a wide hearing.

Ogletree recommended some revised assumptions. First, he stated, "There can be no effective Protestant social witness without healthy congregations capable of sustaining that witness." For social change to occur, congregations must "embody in their own lives the saving promise of the gospel." It is that gospel which "awakens in human beings moral commitments which go beyond interests associated with their particular place in society." Finally, Ogletree proposes that churches restrict themselves to a few paramount issues, to be studied carefully in all their aspects. The impact of the churches' witness would then come from the depth of their engagement with the issues.

Taking the Advice

At the end of his paper, Ogletree pointed to the NCC's New World Order Project as a possible example of the new approach he was discussing. Subsequent presentations indicated, however, that powerful sectors of the ecumenical world were not prepared to accept the Yale dean's advice. Those in attendance -- primarily NCC staff and General Board members, as well as denominational staff -- received much more enthusiastically the arguments made by the subsequent parade of speakers who claimed to represent oppressed peoples around the world. These speakers stood fast in their deep suspicion of liberal democracy, capitalism and the entire "reigning civilizational ethic" of this country. The victimizer, of course, is and was the evil West.

Dr. Carol Hampton, national field officer for Native American Ministry in the Episcopal Church, introduced herself as "the oldest daughter of the oldest daughter of the oldest daughter of the last matriarch of the Caddo people." She then informed the audience, acidly, "I come as the survivor of all your good works." Hampton told of Spanish priests "evangelizing" by destroying Indian religious objects and killing religious leaders. She blamed even "liberal" Protestant missionaries for "imposing their own values, ceremonies, and beliefs on Indian people, and taking away all that gave us our identity and enabled us to live." Self-respecting Indians, she said, "perceived that Christianity was not for them."

Dr. Ninan Koshy, former director of the World Council of Churches' Commission on International Affairs, made no direct mention of his origins in India. He instead identified himself more generally with "the Third World" and "the South." From that perspective, he viewed President Bush's announcement of a new world order as a threat: "The message is heard as one of domination, of unipolar hegemony, of increasing dependency of the Third World on the West. It signals that the U.S. is unashamedly laying

down the rules of the world order and is being prepared to enforce them." Koshy warned against possible "false hopes" in "the wonders of the free market economy and even democratization."

Amidst all these lamentations, there was surprisingly little delving into the question posed by the conference title: What is the shape of the "world made new" toward which the NCC aspires? All kinds of related queries begged to be answered: What should be the relative roles of the United States and international institutions? What place is there for military force in preserving global order? How important is liberal democracy in our vision of a new world order? Do we seek universal human rights? What form should the economy take?

But none of the speakers got beyond glittering generalities. Professor Thomas Hoyt of Hartford Seminary

New World Order?



Asia & the Middle East:

Prosperity without Democracy

Living standards improve, but solid foundations for human rights are rare. The drive for nuclear capabilities continues. Can Pacific Rim countries trust an economically powerful Japan? Who will replace China's aging leaders? Will Islam tolerate free consciences?

sketched a vague vision of the ecumenical movement as "a rainbow coalition which surpasses that of Jesse [Jackson]." It would join "women, blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, persons with disabilities," and others. These would "learn new values of love and sharing" which "may call for a critique and challenge to the economic systems which privilege some and oppress others."

The Rev. William Sloane Coffin -- the epitome of the unreconstructed '60s clergy activist -- delivered the closing summary in fine utopian style. Coffin did not try to focus the NCC's concern on a few key issues. Instead he extended Hoyt's rainbow to include yet another, a trendier oppressed being: "Mother Earth." He suggested that schoolchildren should "pledge allegiance also 'to the earth, and to all the flora and fauna and human life it supports; one planet indivisible, with clean air, soil and water, economic justice, liberty and peace for all.'"

In addition, Coffin put in a pitch for two revolutionary changes: a redistribution of wealth and an end to all wars. He gave few clues to how these utopian goals might be achieved, except to claim that distinctive Christian doctrines might have to be jettisoned. "What the churches need most to ponder is less their many and differing creeds, more a single ethic of global responsibility" common to all major religions, Coffin contended. He warned against absorption

in "the pygmy world of private piety." This "prophet's" impatience seemed at odds with the disciplined study process -- grounded in the gospel, nourished by congregational life, and connected to the "civilizational ethic" -- that Ogletree had in mind.

The NCC's speakers knew much better what kind of world order they opposed than the kind of world order they favored. They raged -- again and again, often with almost the same words -- against President Bush, the United States, and capitalism. The Rev. Dr. Charles Adams of the Progressive National Baptist Convention set the tone at the opening worship service: "The President's New World Order is nothing but the perpetuation of Old World racism, selfishness, hatred, and greed."

Most of the time, there was nobody -- at the podium or from the floor -- who questioned the repetition of these angry attacks on America. Nobody would directly challenge the anointed spokespersons for oppressed peoples. Nobody asked whether Christian missions were really a curse upon the Indians, as Carol Hampton alleged. (Many Native American Christians might not agree.) Nobody asked whether democratization was really a delusion, as Ninan Koshy implied. (Many in the Third World have experienced the opposite.) Nobody asked whether U.S. foreign policy was really determined by "racism, selfishness, hatred, and greed," as Charles Adams charged. (Many African-Americans serve proudly in our military because they believe differently.)

Dissent from within

The lone voices of dissent came from the Eastern Orthodox. Most prominent was the Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky of the Orthodox Church in America. He had just ended his term as NCC president, and his own church, with four other Orthodox communions, had suspended its participation in the council. At the closing worship service, Kishkovsky spoke directly: "There were at this conference gaps and absences in our consciousness of human suffering of injustice." The litany of suffering by oppressed peoples seemed selective, limited to the victims of western capitalism and Christianity. "Why is it that 20 million dead under Lenin and Stalin are not part of the litany?" Kishkovsky asked.

The Orthodox leader also made two points in apparent rebuttal of William Sloane Coffin. First, he urged that the churches' ideal of community be more strongly grounded in a transcendent theology. In particular, he proposed the divine community of the Trinity as a model for our understanding of human community. Second, Kishkovsky insisted that the council clarify that "the Christian vision of justice and God's Kingdom is not the same thing as a political and economic utopia." He remarked grimly, "The examples of political utopia from our time are images of hell and genocide." Kishkovsky's call "to find a way to make the

policies of our government, especially our American government, more obedient to the cause of justice" appeared quite modest in comparison to Coffin's agenda.

When the former NCC president finished speaking, only about one-quarter of the audience clapped vigorously. Another quarter clapped half-heartedly. And fully half of those attending the conference sat stony-faced with hands folded. They hadn't liked what they'd heard. They were, after all, some of the very people whom Kishkovsky was criticizing for their selective solidarity, their weak theological grounding, and their embrace of false utopias. These were among the activists who, according to Ogletree, had damaged the ecumenical movement by their radical break with the traditions of their churches.

While it is not clear what Ogletree means by his "civilizational ethic," it was clearly intended to be a fresh discussion starter. The speakers that followed, by rendering an exclusive account of what it means to serve the poor, seemed to be a discussion closer. It was very clear that the NCC elite assembled in Indianapolis was not ready to change its tune. Too many ecumenical leaders have too much moral capital invested in the "prophetic" mode of social witness to give it up easily. Joan Campbell and others are to be commended for including voices, like Ogletree's, suggesting healthier ways for the council to make its witness. But if she wants those voices to be heeded, and the NCC truly to get back in touch with its roots in the churches, she and others like her will have to put up more of a fight. At present, neither Joan Campbell nor any other NCC leader has shown a taste for such confrontation.

New World Order: One Christian's Reflection on Sweeping Global Changes

By Lawrence E. Adams

In January 1991 President Bush evoked the emergence of a "new world order" in his State of the Union address. One wonders if he could imagine any better than the rest of us what would transpire in the course of a year. He spoke of the new global commitment to democracy and self-determination -- unleashed by the revolutions in Eastern Europe against the Soviet Empire -- which was, in his estimation, being threatened by Iraq.

Does a New World Order really exist? The President built much of his case in 1991 for the future of his NWO on the centrality of the new U.S.-USSR partnership as the key to global stability. One year later, the USSR does not exist.

President Bush did appeal to two developments which have remained: (1) the expansion of democracy, which has

continued in Africa, Europe, Asia, Latin America; and (2) the global leadership of democratic governments -- the U.S., the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, and the European Community collectively now dominate the global economy and much of the world's politics. These developments could portend an international society less prone to war. Liberal democracies rarely attack, as their leaders are likely to be restrained by electoral accountability, and these states

New World Order?



North American Free Trade
Negotiations are underway to deepen economic links between Mexico, the United States and Canada. Will this affect the world trading system? Will democratic reforms in Mexico continue? Will disparities between the U.S. and Mexico prevent this from being a fair deal? Will it help create new jobs on both sides of the border?

are more practiced in resolving conflicts through political means. Consensus over democratic identity could be one source of international solidarity.

Of course, to claim the triumph of a democratic NWO may be premature. The world still contains China, North Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, wobbling democracies and chaos in the successor states to the Soviet Union, and the absolutist regimes of many Islamic states. Movements abound in many countries and regions which would stifle the rights or even existence of others in the name of nation or ideology. Extensive weapons proliferation adds to the possibility of violence in those areas.

Many in the academic community, journalism, politics, business, and the religious world have begun charting their maps for the new world order. Some of these are crackpot apocalyptic evocations; some suggest that the NWO is the same old power game with new actors. It is apparently the time to look ahead in preparation and vision, and to look back to discern the prevailing factors leading to this point. Church leaders, from the National Council of Churches General Board to Pat Robertson, have not been reticent in offering contributions.

Concrete Realities

What are the necessary issues and factors a Christian institution must face if it undertakes a consideration of the shape and meaning of a NWO? The endeavor must include clear-eyed analysis of concrete realities and principled reflection on the order or meaning of these developments. As ethicist Max Stackhouse has written, "every profound faith" inevitably must consider how its "relationships and insights sustain possibilities for genuine civilization. Religion must interact with changing patterns of law, economics, science, technology, and international policy."

New concrete realities include sweeping changes in the international system, dominated by the demise of the Soviet Union and its empire, and the end of the bipolar Cold War era. It seems that no one or two powers can dominate global politics or economics, and multiple power variables -- such as economic power in Asia, religious and cultural power in the Islamic world, political power in European regional organizations -- are now as important as military power to international influence. Beyond that, a more differentiated system may be emerging: one of multiple and often non-political actors, such as international organizations, economic institutions, churches, cultural and educational organizations. These erode the monopoly of states as the chief actors in international affairs. States are more porous, no longer to be considered monoliths; in some regions, such as Western Europe and Central America, nations are coordinating policy and action in unprecedented ways.

International leadership more than ever before requires management of negotiated international cooperation among this multitude of actors, rather than pursuing a mode of operating which seeks dominance.

Another reality is renewed recognition of the centrality of civil society, which is made up of entities that do not depend upon nor derive their legitimacy from the state. Religious and cultural institutions, the family, ethnic/regional groupings, and the overall diversity of the human community are emerging from under state domination. Legitimate government has come to mean in part the coordination, protection and advancement of civil society. Development no longer is centrally driven by government policy or action, but by the other aspects of civil society. Along with this recognition goes the growing body of international standards of human rights which has a central place in perceptions of national sovereignty and international law. Participation in civil society extends to all humans, and can no longer be confined to race or class.

What perspectives does the Christian ethos bring for structured ethical reflection on these developments? What does it say about what ought to be? Many would argue that it brings nothing; that the spiritual realm is a separate matter from the order of this world. Yet the form of "Realism" which separates morality from sound policy judgment belies both the nature of the Christian faith and the interactive character of all human endeavors.

The Christian moral tradition brings particular themes to the NWO discussion. Primary is the conviction that the world already has an intrinsic order as a designed, purposeful creation called into being for certain ends. This is the 'nature of things' which resiliently holds sway over all human activity. The fact of creation gives order and shape to all that is. This theme helps explain the continuity of human community, even in the face of evil, and the failure

of radical human efforts to alter the condition of persons and society. It also gives foundation points for considering responsible social engagement.

Further, the ongoing redemptive process, which will lead to a full consummation, explains both historical failure (by God's judgment) and progress (by the ongoing renewal of creation). The continual operation of sin is both understood and dealt with in this view. This perspective is contrary to other basic worldviews which appeal to "worldly" causes, such as class conflict, dialectical material process, national integrity, technological development, to explain comprehensively why things are.

Moral Obligations

This perspective insists that intrinsic moral obligations are built into the structure of human existence. They are exemplified in the biblical theme of God's covenant, which creates community, demands justice, establishes a peaceful order, and requires responses to injustice and evil. Many Christian traditions speak of natural law or creation norms as broadly fixed points to guide all human choice. Christians have an obligation to explore these depths of Christian tradition for guidance and truth, rather than discarding them for the latest ideological fad.

Christian reflection can accept change, and think about the world system in new ways since it is anchored in God-revealed norms such as justice and not in earthly entities such as nation or ideology. As human community flourishes, the international system can have more flexible categories than those requiring rigid state sovereignty, power politics, etc., and appropriate new forms of international interaction. Yet Christian reflection also can uphold

New World Order?



Democracy in Africa, Latin America

Most of Latin America now holds fair and competitive elections, and pressure is building in Africa for the same. Leaders are trying markets instead of mercantilism or socialism. Can these countries continue their domestic restructuring and overcome their debt burdens? Will the Northern countries open their markets further to Southern exports?

the positive results of recent history, such as the demise of repressive empires and the new commitment to democracy. International affairs can be about more than survival and security; they can also be about pursuing justice.

Democracy can be a priority, therefore, as the limitations on power become clear. Consent of the governed is a necessary corollary to intrinsic human dignity. Democratic aspirations and human rights can be primary objectives of international politics through the promotion of both democratic regimes and transnational mechanisms for the

promotion of civil society. Yet the rise of democracy also brings new challenges, as new and old democracies learn to interact, and as inevitable conflicts demand to be resolved. There are no absolute guarantees that democracies will not fight each other, even with the inherent restraints; nor is it inevitable that the fledging democracies can develop the necessary institutions to maintain a decentralized form of society and government.

Christians should therefore promote a principled, purposeful and comprehensive approach for reforming (rather than razing) the international system. Such a model of reform recognizes the proclivity of humans and their institutions to seek dominance or to oppress. Yet it avoids the destructive, revolutionary consequences of an approach that assumes intrinsic dialectical conflict or structural "hierarchies of oppression" by one class/race/sex/nation over others. This approach will lead to development and promotion of principled policy prescriptions, rather than power- and interest-based policies or those based on deterministic assumptions about history.

Some specific principles for Christian institutions to support in developing a new international order:

- Support the maturing spheres of civil society and its institutions, and promote "wholistic development" in all these spheres.
- Support the participation of the poor and powerless, not only in achieving economic needs, but in all spheres.
- Recognize legitimate limitations on state sovereignty and power, especially in the question of international demo-

New World Order?



Europe Strengthens Community

The EC has advanced its plans for economic integration, and now is working more closely on foreign policy and defense matters. Can the community expand to include Central Europe? How should the United States be involved? Will Europe grow economically within but build walls to keep competition out?

cratic accountability. Promote non-military means of conflict resolution.

- Support the participation of legitimate non-state actors in the international system: transnational institutions, regional organizations, churches, and others which promote international civil society.
- Promote progressing international standards of human rights, democratic accountability, and limited intervention when these are violated.
- Encourage democratic accountability in new power centers, such as the UN, the European Community, the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

Can the churches rise to the challenge and contribute responsibly to "sustaining possibilities for genuine civilization?" These challenges require reflection on creation on the hand of God in history, and on the meaning of justice. Some may say this starting point is naive or unrealistic. Yet we assert that the principles of order known from the Christian tradition do actually guide the restructuring of international interactions. God ultimately is the order of all things. He makes all things new. But it is to be remembered that only He can completely renew all things, and will do so completely. NWO talk will be brash, hubristic and idolatrous if it is an attempt at autonomous human fulfillment. It will fail, as did the Marxist vision of total transformation, if it proceeds on that basis.

Growing Chorus Urges Shift to Domestic Priorities

With the Cold War decisively over and the elections heating up, debate on the budget is in high gear. One contribution, launched in January, is the Campaign for New Priorities. It has received endorsements from the United Methodist Board of Church and Society and National Council of Churches General Secretary Joan Brown Campbell.

The Campaign's analysis says that the United States is not keeping pace "in an increasingly competitive world." Citizens, therefore, must demand from reluctant politicians that they make public investments "vital to our country's future." The funds for these repair jobs in education, health care, and infrastructure would be those formerly earmarked for U.S. military preparedness and foreign military aid.

Now that "the world has become a very different place," the Campaign's literature says that the federal budget reflects a world "that no longer exists. Now there are new -- economic -- challenges to our national security."

Specifically, the Campaign aims at altering past budget agreements limiting the relative percentage of spending reductions that can be taken from the military. Ironically, in the 1980s, those limits were set to protect social programs from being depleted to pay for rising military expenditures.

The Campaign raises some obvious and important issues, some of which have been recognized by political leaders -- for example, in President Bush's plans to cut-back the procurement of certain weapons. But the Campaign's lobbying effort says nothing about the continued role -- even the obligations -- of the United States in the world. There is no reference to spending levels recommended to maintain a just defense in a still-unsafe world. While concern over America's problems is not necessarily the same as the inward and isolationist-oriented "America First" platform, the Campaign's silence on such questions makes it difficult to determine the difference.



Nigerian Religious Strife on Rise

By Stan De Boe

The Nigerian government is working its way toward democratic elections. Yet progress on other democratic essentials has remained tragically elusive. Last year, Christian-Muslim tensions resulted in three major incidents in which thousands were killed and a significant amount of church and other property was destroyed.

Nigeria's government claims to be "secular," showing neither support for nor discrimination against any religious body. Yet it enacted a constitution allowing the use of Shar'ia courts in many states and inconsistently showed favoritism to certain groups, which only increased tensions between Christians and Muslims.

In October the officials of the predominantly Muslim city of Kano gave permission for German Christian evangelist Reinhard Bonnke to conduct a crusade in the city. Muslims were angered by this action since two Muslim leaders, South African Ahmed Deedat and Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, had been denied permission to work in Kano. On the day before the crusade, Muslims took to the streets, killing Christians, burning and looting churches and Christian-owned businesses. Christians responded by attacking Muslims and looting mosques and Muslim homes and businesses. Nearly 300 people died as a result.

That Christians are responding to the tensions more often with violence has led to a crisis within the community. Christian leaders are looking for peaceful ways of dialoguing with the Muslim community and solutions for their conflicts. But some followers involved in the violence are justifying their actions by pointing out that they are not responsible for starting it but are simply reacting after many years of suffering at the hands of the Muslims. They point to a pattern of discrimination and violence directed against Christians, during which the Christian community received little support from the government. Christian advocates of violence point to government policies that place Muslims in favorable positions socially, economically, politically and militarily. In particular situations, when the government has responded to the religious crisis, the instigators usually are given minimal sentences. Compensation to the Christian communities has not covered the cost of the damages.

In contrast to the violent approach, religious leaders in the north, where most of the tensions are centered, have organized the National Council of Elders and Religious Leaders. Many denominations and both major branches of Islam in Nigeria are represented, as well as a leader of an

indigenous Nigerian religion. According to Anglican Bishop Josiah I-Fearon of Sokoto, a member of the council, its goals are to stop the continuing religious crisis and to forge ways and means for Christians and Muslims to live together in peace. The council has met twice and is working on specific proposals for their religious groups and the government. In addition, officials of the Lutheran and Catholic churches have also called for dialogue and cooperation among Christians and Muslims.

There are government policies and political interests that also add to the inter-religious tensions. Christians have felt



Both Christian and Muslim religious leaders recognize the dangers in the continuing escalation of tensions.



threatened by Nigeria's first-secret and then-open affiliation with the Organization of Islamic Conference. Christians call this a violation of Nigeria's official "secular" status; the affiliation was reportedly suspended in 1991. Nevertheless, in drafting the new constitution, provisions were made to allow state governments to establish Shar'ia courts in predominantly Muslim states to handle matters of family law. Shar'ia courts use Islamic religious laws, which Muslims believe to be a superior authority to civil laws. When the constitution was finally enacted, the clause limiting jurisdiction to family law matters was eliminated, giving Shar'ia courts jurisdiction in all matters.

Many Muslims are now calling for the establishment of Shar'ia courts in all states of Nigeria. The full impact of the Shar'ia court law on Christians is not yet known, since no cases have come up. The government assures Christians that they are not subject to Shar'ia courts, but it is not known if this will extend to matters between Christians and Muslims. In many small villages in the north, Shar'ia courts are the only legal system, leaving Christians no alternative.

Both Christian and Muslim religious leaders recognize the dangers in the continuing escalation of tensions. They are attempting to address themselves to not only their followers, but to the nation's leaders, who are forging ahead with plans for the election of a civil government later this year. Bishop Josiah said the move to civilian rule is a

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positive sign. He said that the last round of elections for governors was successful and shows that Christians and Muslims can live together in peace. He is calling on his people to "join hands with the president" to bring about democratic reform to Nigeria. The bishop is particularly encouraged by the formation of a committee of Christians and Muslims in the Plateau State. The committee discusses issues of concern for both religions and resolves conflict before the situation deteriorates to violence. Similar committees in other states could help assure that all are treated justly and no group receives special treatment.

Work at all levels will be needed to defuse the tension. More needs to be done to ensure greater legal protection of religious freedom. No one religion should be promoted by state and federal governments, and minority rights, religious and ethnic, must be secured. Religious leaders must refrain from inflammatory statements and teach the precepts of peace and justice found in the Bible and the Koran. Individual Christians and Muslims must want peace; they must cooperate in creating a free and just Nigeria.

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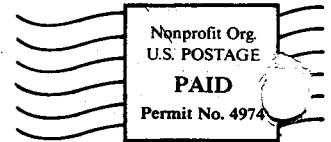
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Resource Center Available to Serve Russian Mission

IRD has a long-standing concern for democratic development and responsible Christian mission in the former Soviet Union, now called the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). To facilitate this, IRD has created a resource center that is gathering information on the many organizations that are involved in ministry in the CIS. The center also works to establish contact with indigenous organizations needing assistance from the West.

Dr. Kent R. Hill, IRD's President, is the director of the center. He will be on-site in Moscow until August 1992. The U.S.-based program administrator is Fr. Stan De Boe, a Trinitarian priest who is also a religious liberty associate at IRD. The center will house a data base on mission organizations developed in concert with the World Without War Council in Seattle, Washington, and the Institute for East-West Christian Studies in Wheaton, Illinois.

Inquiries to the center can be made to Fr. De Boe at 1331 H St., NW, #900, Washington DC 20005-4706. Phone: 202-393-3200.

Also available from IRD:

The Soviet Union on the Brink: An Inside Look at Christianity & Glasnost (This is a significantly expanded and revised edition of *The Puzzle of the Soviet Church*.) Kent R. Hill, Executive Director of the IRD, surveys the relationship between believers and the state in the USSR, with a special emphasis on the status of the church under *glasnost* and the prospects for the future in light of the political and economic instability. Appendices provide invaluable information on how Christians in the West can assist fellow believers in the former Soviet Union. Index. (Multnomah Press, 1991, 520 pp., hardcover, \$19.95.)

Turbulent Times for the Soviet Church Also by Kent R. Hill, this is an abridged version of *The Soviet Union on the Brink*. Appendix lists organizations involved in ministry, evangelism, exchanges. (Multnomah, 1991, 200 pp., paperback, \$8.95)