

# RELIGION & DEMOCRACY



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Visiting evangelical leaders talk with Fred Barnes of The New Republic (left of easel); below: Fernando Mendoza, a senator in Colombia.



## IRD Hosts Rising Latin American Leaders

Evangelicals in Latin America, with their rising numbers and increasing levels of education and economic clout, will be a major force in that region's future. But are they now ready for a share of leadership in nations that aspire to be democratic and pluralist?

A group of 15 visiting evangelical Latin American politicians came to Washington February 15-18 with that question on the table. IRD helped organize meetings for the group's sponsoring organization, Semilla. The participants represented nine political parties in seven countries. They included two senators from Colombia who were instrumental in writing strong religious freedom provisions into their nation's new constitution. Also present was a Peruvian government official, as well as likely candidates for the presidency in El Salvador and Bolivia.

At the conclusion of their visit, the group decided to form an International Christian Alliance for the purpose of training in Christian citizenship.



## Facing the Truth in El Salvador

*This is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. John 3:19-20*

By Alan F. H. Wisdom

As this passage of the Gospel suggests, the light of truth -- whether it be the truth of Christ, or some lesser truth -- is not a blessing to everyone. Some may welcome the truth as a deliverance from lies. But others will reject the truth because it disturbs their peace. The truth sets free only those who allow themselves to be freed from the darkness in which they have walked.

Today we see the same lesson illustrated in the responses to the United Nations "Truth Commission" on El Salvador. The release of its report on March 15 set off a political crisis in El Salvador and an outbreak of ugly accusations in the United States. The exposure of truth -- or at least this portion of truth -- was not a pretty scene.

### The Military: Rejecting the "Insolence" of Truth

The fiercest reaction came from the Salvadoran military, which the U.N. commission held responsible for killing thousands of civilians during El Salvador's 12-year civil war. On March 23 the entire Army General Staff, standing in a solid mass of uniforms, gave its response on Salvadoran television. The officers denounced the Truth Commission report as "unjust, unethical, illegal, incomplete, prejudiced, → See Truth, page 2

**Truth, from page 1**

and insolent." General Mauricio Vargas declared that the report "must be totally rejected. We cannot permit parochial avengers to wound the sovereignty of the state."

The officers' resentment of the report is easy to understand. It shines a harsh light on some of their darkest deeds. Consider November 15, 1989: On that evening San Salvador was convulsed by combat, as the Marxist FMLN guerrillas pressed a surprise offensive inside the capital. The Army General Staff, gathered for an emergency meeting, was worried that it might be losing the war.

So the meeting began on a note of religious solemnity. One officer gave a devotional talk based on Romans 13 -- the passage in which the apostle Paul urges Christians to "be subject to the governing authorities," who are "not a terror to good conduct, but to bad." Later in the meeting, the same military leaders decided to terrorize some of their civilian critics. The Chief of Staff, Gen. Rene Emilio Ponce, ordered that the Rev. Ignacio Ellacuria -- leftist rector of the Jesuit Central American University -- be killed. Ponce specified that "no witnesses are to be left." Early the next morning, Ellacuria, five fellow Jesuits, and a domestic and her daughter were mowed down with automatic weapons.

It is chilling to imagine the hardness of heart that is required to do such deeds. As yet there has been no public expression of regret or repentance by the Salvadoran officers for the innocent blood that they shed.

**President Cristiani: Reluctant to Punish**

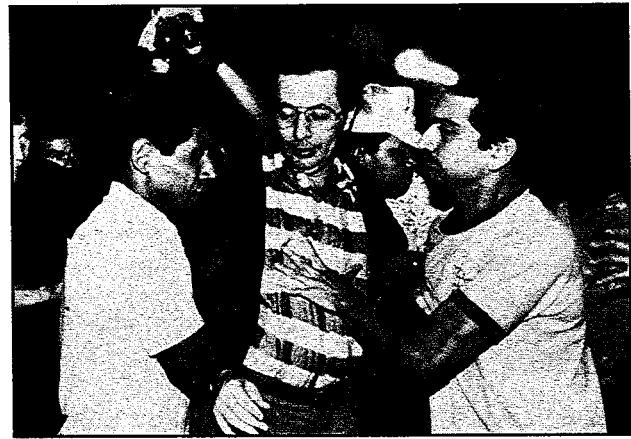
This military reaction to the Truth Commission put Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani in a bind. On the one hand, he recognized -- as his army did not -- that the human rights defined in international covenants are a proper concern of the international community. In signing the Salvadoran peace accords last year, Cristiani accepted the idea of the U.N. Truth Commission as an essential step in the process of national reconciliation.

But on the other hand, President Cristiani hoped to maintain the fragile balance of democratic order. He did not wish to test his strength against direct military insubordination. He had no appetite for war crimes trials -- particularly if those charged were officers who, despite their earlier crimes, had more recently lent crucial backing to the peace process.

So the Salvadoran president backed away from the Truth Commission's assertion that "justice demands punishment for the violations of human rights." Cristiani argued instead that most Salvadorans just wanted "to forgive and forget the painful past that has caused so much suffering." In the name of reconciliation, therefore, Cristiani's ARENA party swiftly pushed a bill through the National Assembly to grant amnesty to all persons named in the U.N. report.

Regarding another major Truth Commission

recommendation -- that there be a "turnover of the present members of the (corrupt and partisan) Supreme Court" -- Cristiani also passed. He maintained that he had no authority to effect such changes. But the president did



Salvadoran Army Colonel Guillermo Benavides is flanked by bodyguards outside the prison where he was released April 1, after the country's National Assembly granted him amnesty in the 1989 murder of six Jesuit priests and two women. RNS PHOTO/Reuters.

promise eventually to follow one key commission recommendation: the forced retirement of the forty officers named as human rights abusers by the Truth Commission.

**The Guerrillas: Banned in San Salvador**

One might think that with the military commanders outraged and President Cristiani troubled by the U.N. report, the former FMLN guerrillas would be rejoicing in their vindication. But such is not the case. In fact, the report has made life harder for the FMLN, too. It faulted the rebels for a strategy of assassinating civilians branded as "collaborators" with the government. At least eleven mayors and hundreds of others were killed -- in precise fulfillment of FMLN directives. The Truth Commission recommended that six top leaders of one guerrilla faction be prohibited from holding public office for ten years.

Unlike their military counterparts, the FMLN commanders admitted their actions and accepted their banning from office. (But they did not apologize.) Furthermore, after much wrangling within the FMLN, it was agreed to extend the ban voluntarily to include the chief of each of the five FMLN factions -- as a sign of collective responsibility. This clean sweep of the top echelon of leadership could damage the FMLN's political future.

The guerrillas addressed the possibility of war crimes trials for their former adversaries in the military with a remarkable lack of enthusiasm. FMLN leaders have placed much more emphasis on the need for institutional reforms the judiciary and the military. Perhaps the former rebels understand one fact: to the extent that they demand retribution against the military, it will be meted out to them in similar measure.

### The Need for Confession: The Catholic Contribution

Thus it becomes clear that the release of the Truth Commission report has put El Salvador in a very delicate situation. Somehow Salvadorans must find a balance between the requirements of justice and reconciliation. It will not be possible to do perfect justice, because there is too much blood on too many hands. But still some action must be taken to show that the authors of atrocities can be held accountable.

Some of the wisest insights into this moral dilemma have come from a body that has suffered much: the Roman Catholic Church in El Salvador. The head of the Central American Jesuits, Jose Maria Tojeira, summarized the church's view: "Those who have been involved in so many crimes must pay a price. We favor a reconciliation law, which would offer generous pardons to those who confess their crimes. But those who do not should be judicially investigated and defeated in court." The Jesuits themselves had requested a pardon for the two officers convicted of killing their brothers.

The Archbishop of San Salvador, Arturo Rivera y Damas, saw the problem of past atrocities as not merely political but also spiritual. He spoke of a moral disequilibrium in personal lives and the life of the nation that needed to be set right. The National Assembly's quick declaration of amnesty would not suffice to achieve true reconciliation, the archbishop warned. "Reconciliation is not the fruit of a decree," he said, "but rather the result of a collective and personal attitude that includes the recognition of guilt." Archbishop Rivera called on those cited in the Truth Commission report to confess -- before God and the Salvadoran people. In a Palm Sunday sermon, he encouraged the guilty to accept "the amnesty of God."

### The U.S. Religious Left: Still Vengeful After All These Years

The pastoral approach of Salvadoran Catholic officials was reflected in statements by the U.S. Catholic Conference. Unfortunately, the same tone did not prevail in other sectors of U.S. religious leadership. While the Salvadorans were striving toward reconciliation, the U.S. religious left was clamoring to settle old political scores.

The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Edmond Browning, exemplified the tone of shrill condemnation. Summoning up again the old rage from the 1980s, the bishop blasted the United States government as entirely guilty for "this disgrace of history" in El Salvador. "How shameful it is that the United States, the world's champion of democracy, provided the weapons for this slaughter and the training for the perpetrators of these heinous crimes," exclaimed the bishop. "For the sake of our own national soul," he said, "I call for an investigation and, where appropriate, prosecution of U.S. officials involved in lying to Congress and covering up these atrocities."

These statements by the Presiding Bishop were read at a

press conference at Episcopal headquarters in New York. The sponsor of the event was an organization that would hardly be considered a model of Anglican moderation: the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES). Since 1980 CISPES has defined itself by its open and unstinting solidarity -- not with the Salvadoran people in general, but with the FMLN guerrillas.

*The National Catholic Reporter*, like Bishop Browning, responded to the Truth Commission report with renewed railing against old enemies. The *Reporter* charged that U.S. policy in El Salvador under Presidents Reagan and Bush "was little short of criminal." It damned former Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams as "a right-wing ideologue and consummate liar."

By contrast, the leftist Catholic weekly showed great indulgence in its treatment of the Salvadoran guerrillas: "The [Truth] Commission documented several hundred civilian deaths at the hands of the FMLN, but it appears the rebels almost never killed indiscriminately. They were not, in other words, making war on the people they were trying to liberate." In the *Reporter's* view, apparently, a murderer is less blameworthy if he has chosen his victims carefully.

One wonders why these U.S. religious leaders seem so comfortable in the light shed by the Truth Commission report. It certainly cannot be that they are without fault. Their long record of statements partial to the FMLN, of solidarity and support for groups (like CISPES) that sympathize and cooperate with the FMLN, gives much cause for reflection and repentance.

### Looking Back in Humility

Perhaps such reflection might disclose a fuller view of the tragedy in El Salvador: almost nobody involved emerges with completely clean hands. Who can say that they have never shaken hands with a murderer, or that they have always declared the whole truth?

One wonders, therefore, why the U.S. religious left is so eager to sit in judgment over former U.S. policymakers. It is true, as people such as Bishop Browning allege, that U.S. tax dollars paid for the training and equipping of Salvadoran soldiers who later committed atrocities. It is also true that U.S. officials have not always spoken frankly about the moral character of some Salvadoran allies.

But the fact that our nation has blood on its hands does not mean that the overall U.S. policy was wrong. Our policymakers did not have any attractive options in the early 1980s. If they had left El Salvador to its own devices, either of two results might have ensued: the Marxist rebels might have seized power by military force, or the army might have suppressed them with even greater brutality. We only have to look at Nicaragua (where the first result occurred) and Guatemala (where the second happened) to see that neither option would have been an improvement.

→ see *Truth*, page 8

# Armenian Christians Hold Desperately to Historic Land in Nagorno-Karabakh

By Fredrick P. Jones

Armenians in the Caucasus region historically have had little control over their fate -- Ottoman Turks and Russians have made sure of that. Most recently, the Armenian majority in Nagorno-Karabakh has had its territory whittled away through a five-year war. Karabakh, the size of Rhode Island, is just miles from the Republic of Armenia. Reports indicate that 2,000-3,000 have died in the fighting. Refugees have flooded the Republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan, while tens of thousands of Armenians remain victimized by the siege of Karabakh. The conflict has been filled with claims and counter-claims of ethnic cleansing, a tactic which violates existing international norms for the treatment of civilians in conflict and often is accompanied by rape and torture. Armenian forces in April opened up a second corridor into blockaded Karabakh through Kelbadjar, an act that was condemned widely but finally has resulted in more international attention to the crisis.

This war accelerated in tandem with the Soviet empire's dissolution and the restoration of open religious practice in Karabakh by Christians and Muslims under Mikhail Gorbachev's reform policies. These religions, with their long histories in Karabakh, stand poised to play a key role in the war. Christianity was adopted as the national religion of Armenia in the Fourth Century. Islam came to the Azeris, a Turkic people, via Arab invaders in the seventh century.

When the region was controlled by the Soviet Union, Karabakh had been granted semi-autonomous status within Azerbaijan. In 1988, the Karabakh parliament sought to have its administration transferred from Azerbaijan to the Republic of Armenia. Moscow did not comply, and instead, beginning in the spring of 1990, began using troops to put

## Religious Liberty Alert

down the protests, strikes, and acts of violence between Karabakhi Armenians and Azeris. By this time, according to a September 1992 Human Rights Watch report, raids on villages by armed bands of Armenians and Azeris became a frequent occurrence. Arms began flowing to the Karabakhi Armenians, who formed paramilitary self-defense forces.

The conflict escalated when Azerbaijan special forces and Soviet troops began Operation Ring, which was intended to halt the flow of arms and non-Karabakhi Armenians to Karabakh. Armenians claim that Operation Ring was a pretext for ethnic cleansing and preparation for war. According to Human Rights Watch, it opened the way for gross human rights abuses:

In the process they [troops] interrogated and beat the



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inhabitants, rounded up male heads of households, and either participated in or allowed the looting and burning of homes. Men rounded up on suspicion of weapons possession, or of violating passport regulations, were taken to police lock-ups or prisons, where Azerbaijani police and jail personnel reportedly beat them on a routine basis. Families who were deported were forced to sign statements that they were leaving of their own accord. In some localities, the process was drawn out over the course of several weeks, during which villages offering resistance were apparently completely cut off from the outside and left without supplies.

The breakup of the Soviet Union had several effects, including the dispersal of more weapons to each side in the conflict. Most importantly, the newly independent Azerbaijan government, reflecting Azeri anger over Karabakh's previous request for incorporation into Armenia, revoked Karabakh's semi-autonomous status. Azerbaijan sees the Karabakhi Armenians as being in revolt, with the neighboring Armenian Republic violating its sovereignty by helping the Karabakhi Armenians. Karabakhi Armenians do not trust promises by Azerbaijan to protect their "cultural autonomy" and instead claim the right to self-determination.

By the winter of 1991-92, Azerbaijan's three-year economic and transport blockade left Karabakh without fuel (other than natural gas), electricity, running water, functioning sanitation facilities, communications facilities, and most consumer goods. According to British human rights advocate Baroness Caroline Cox, 30,000 Karabakhi Armenians could die if they do not receive fresh supplies.

Azeri citizens also have suffered. Armenians effectively blockaded predominantly Azeri towns in Karabakh and sought to retake control of villages lost to the Azeris; now, virtually all Azeris have been driven from or fled Karabakh. However, the Human Rights Watch report, in tone and substance, confirmed what others have reported regarding the higher level of human rights abuses committed by the Azeris. Regarding indiscriminate attacks and the targeting of civilian structures, the report said:

Both Azerbaijan and Armenian forces actively shelled and engaged in sniper attacks on each other's towns and villages. The shelling alone damaged or destroyed hospitals, homes, and other objects that are not legitimate military targets under applicable humanitarian law rules. These attacks killed or left maimed hundreds of civilians, and generally terrorized the civilian population. Although both sides are guilty of these practices, Azerbaijani forces (while they still held Shusha) engaged in them with extraordinary ferocity and cruelty.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin has made several attempts to broker an agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan, all of which failed. More recently, action taken through the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) led to a brief cease-fire in April and new possibilities for dialogue between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijan government views the unrecognized government of Karabakh as a tool of the Armenian Republic. The Karabakhi regime says that it will participate in negotiations only if it is recognized as an equal partner.

There are concerns that the conflict could widen. Azeris, for example, claim that the Russians are aiding the Armenians. Turkey's President Turgut Ozal, who died suddenly last month, said at an April 14 news conference that Turkey "will take whatever steps are necessary if the fighting ... does not stop, including the formation of a military alliance with Azerbaijan." Iran warned the previous day that the fighting was dangerously close to its border. According to Daniel Sneider of *The Christian Science Monitor*, Iran has tilted in the past toward Armenia, fearing the spread of Azeri nationalism to the significant Azeri minority within its own borders.

### A Religious War?

What is at the root of the conflict? To call the war primarily a religious conflict of Muslims versus Christians is inaccurate; earlier pan-Turkic movements threatening Armenians were driven at times by Islamic impulses to cleanse non-Muslims from the territory, but at other times apparently by more secular motives, as is the case now. Under Soviet rule, national aspirations were ruthlessly suppressed, as was religion. Christians in Karabakh were left with no priests or bishop, no churches or monasteries. The closure of three mosques in Shusha left Muslims

without a public place of worship. Still, Soviet terror exploited ethnic differences and produced a precarious balance between the Karabakhi Armenians, then given a semi-autonomous governing status, and the Azeris.

Religious leaders from the region today have tried publicly to keep religion out of the center of the conflict. A February communique issued by the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Orthodox), Catholicos Vasken I, and the head of the Caucasian Muslims of Azerbaijan, Sheik ul-Islam Allahshukur, declared that from their perspective the war was not a religious one. Barbara Baker of News Network International noted that their document was reminiscent of one written in June of 1905, just before two pogroms were carried out against Armenians in the Azeri city of Baku. The 1905 document read:

Having in mind the hostilities, fratricidal struggles and massacres which have taken place between the two neighboring nations for centuries ... we the spiritual leaders of our two peoples today address this appeal ... to all our faithful, paternally beseeching them to bring to an end, once and for all, these absurd and pointless hostilities....

Baker reported that many Armenians feel it is the political and military leaders who have encouraged religious intolerance by Muslims for Christians. A Karabakh military official who interviewed Azeri prisoners of war said that Azeri soldiers admitted that they were told to destroy any Christian symbols they encountered, according to Baker. For example, just as the Karabakh Armenians were set to reopen the fourth century Amaraz Monastery, it was attacked. When the Azeris held the city of Shusha, they badly damaged the recently restored church there. In contrast, when the Karabakhi Armenians later took the city, they protected its mosque from fires. The mosque is empty but untouched, according to Baker.

According to Baroness Caroline Cox, Karabakhi Armenians say that they are fighting "to save our homes, our families, our homelands." Then they add, "our Christian heritage." Armenian Archbishop Nersess Bozabalian said that the Azeris have as their goal "to rub out completely the Armenian historical presence in these places." Armenians see ominous motives behind the attacks on their churches when they listen to Azeris such as historian Ziya Bunyatof, who in 1989 said, "We must destroy Karabakh, so you can't even smell a trace of the Christians."

### A History of Cleansing, Genocide

Armenian Christians under Ottoman rule (which declined in the late nineteenth Century and fell during World War I) were subject to repeated pan-Turkic campaigns as well as discrimination as a religious minority. They were relegated to second-class, or *dhimmi*, status and also suffered through → see *Karabakh*, page 7

## Briefs

## Clinton Draws Raves from Oldline Leaders

By Fredrick P. Jones

Suddenly, many oldline-related church agencies and organizations are singing praise rather than shouting prophecy toward the White House. The National Council of Churches (NCC) called President Clinton's economic plan "refreshing." Then, NCC President Syngman Rhee hailed as a "new day" a White House meeting Clinton held on March 23 with an NCC delegation of 38 church leaders.

Joan Brown Campbell, General Secretary of the NCC, reported that Clinton told the delegation that after all of the criticism he had received from the religious right, "it's good to have religious people who understand what I'm trying to do." Campbell affirmed that understanding with the pledge to walk with him "on this journey." The church leaders left behind for the President position papers on health care, urban initiatives, international tensions, and the economy.

"It is clear that the social and policy views of the new administration are more congenial to mainline church leaders," wrote James Wall, editor of *The Christian Century*. Since the Vietnam war, "it has been a long 30 years in the wilderness. Now is the time to make constructive use of their new access."

Roman Catholic leaders, who met with Clinton on March 5, also pledged to work with the administration on many domestic initiatives, according to a Religious News Service report. They did, however, restate their disagreement over abortion.

Evangelicals have had no similar meeting. Rich Cizik of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) said that the White House has not responded at all to NAE correspondence,

including an invitation to speak at its annual convention.

Regarding Clinton's economic plan, a large group of religious organizations, including the United Methodist Board of Church and Society, the NCC, the Washington Office of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and Interfaith Impact for Justice and Peace, sent a letter to each legislator urging the plan's support.

According to the Washington office of the NCC, "Particularly gratifying to



President Clinton with Joan Brown Campbell of the NCC. RNS PHOTO/REUTER.

the religious community was the stress on investment in 'human infrastructure,' which, while less than had been hoped, shows a commitment to future long-term efforts to rebuild the society."

UM Church and Society General Secretary Thom White Wolf Fasset issued a statement praising the plan because it is fair to the poor and working people, it focuses on job training and development, it shifts the emphasis from war-related investments to "constructive development," it begins to make constructive suggestions regarding the environment, and it begins to cut the budget deficit. Its major failing, though, "is the lack of provisions for poor people in the rest of the world," Fasset said. "The Clinton plan needs to include a commitment to help end world poverty, hunger, and ecological destruction. For comparatively little money, we can begin to address reform of foreign aid away from military assistance programs and begin to reform major international financial institutions."

For many oldline leaders, Clinton's presidency represents a step in the right direction from the Reagan and Bush administrations. The question remains whether, with a fresh taste of access to the White House, the prophetic criticisms of the President will be as harsh if the gains for the poor are marginal or non-existent, if deficit reduction does not really occur, and if the economy as a whole fails to sustain its climb out of recession. Also, reform of health care, which is likely to be slow in working through the legislative process, politically devisive, and incremental in its implementation, may test more radical oldline leaders' patience with the President.

## Episcopal, Methodist Groups Promote Orthodox Faith

By Kathryn Teapole Proctor

There is movement in the oldline churches to recapture classical Christianity as interpreted in the relevant denominational traditions. Two leading organizations in this movement are Scholarly Engagement with Anglican Doctrine (SEAD) in the Episcopal Church, and A Foundation for Theological Education (AFTE) in the United Methodist Church.

SEAD was founded in 1990 when a group of Episcopal scholars, clergy, and laymen found they shared a common vision of encouraging classical Christian theology as found in historic Anglicanism. In *New Millennium, New Church* (Cowley Publications, 1992), Richard Kew and Roger White wrote that "SEAD could well start bringing to theological education academic discipline rooted in the tradition, rather than the social ethics and psychology that shaped clergy from the Sixties to the present."

SEAD seeks to encourage thoughtful engagement with the historic Anglican faith by pastors and teacher/scholars -- indeed all Episcopalians. The April 1993 conference brochure states, "SEAD holds that faithfulness to Anglican identity calls Anglicans to draw prayerfully upon the riches of the historic Christian faith in responding to the challenging issues of contemporary society and the Church." According to SEAD co-chair Christopher Hancock, who teaches at Virginia Theological Seminary, the goal is "engagement between the faith once delivered to the saints and the modern world -- as it is expressed in the parish, the home, the marketplace, the academy."

SEAD's work includes the production of written materials (eg., books, articles, study materials, and reviews), the organization of an annual conference (in April, "Renewing Anglicanism: The Case for Dynamic Orthodoxy"), and formation of topical interest groups including Anglican Studies, Biblical Studies, Ethics, Mission and Evangelism, Theology, and Spirituality and Worship). Members are encouraged to become further involved in SEAD's mission by joining one of the interest groups.

Bishop William Frey, Dean of Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry in Ambridge, PA, and mentor of the interest group on mission and evangelism says, "One of the best kept secrets in the Church is that such traditional Anglican teaching, which avoids the extremes of skepticism on the one hand and fundamentalism on the other, is our best bet for both 'inclusivity' and 'liberation.' SEAD offers us solid scholarly leadership in the two-fold task of understanding our tradition, and of responding with fidelity and openness to those things which challenge that tradition."

In the United Methodist Church, A Foundation for Theological Education (AFTE) seeks to revitalize theological education in the Wesleyan tradition. Dr. Edmund Robb, co-founder of AFTE

writes, "Church growth. Missionary outreach. Biblical preaching. Evangelism. All of these aspects of our Christian life depend upon sound theology. That's why theological education should be important to every concerned United Methodist."

AFTE seeks to promote biblically sound teaching in United Methodist seminaries. Each year it awards up to five John Wesley Fellowships to help United Methodist students, committed to Christ and their church, pursue doctoral studies. Since its founding in 1977, AFTE has awarded nearly \$1,000,000 in grants to over 60 men and women. Thirty-one are now teaching at university level, 3 are teaching abroad, 7 are pastors, 1 is a UM editor, and 21 are still students.

According to Dr. Steve Harper, new executive director of AFTE and its first John Wesley Fellow, in the next ten years over half the professors in United Methodist colleges and seminaries will retire or be replaced. Over the same period, about 40 percent of United Methodist clergy will retire. AFTE's goal is to have Christ centered leaders trained and ready to take their places.

While financing the education of individual leaders is AFTE's primary focus, another ministry is their newsletter *Catalyst*, which is mailed to 5,000 UM theological students. The newsletter serves as forum for scholarly discussion of classical Christianity. AFTE also sponsors occasional seminars and conferences designed to challenge students and leaders to theological reflection and spiritual growth.

To contact the organizations for more information:

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(903) 938-8305

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numerous pogroms. The "young Turks" who replaced the conservative Islamic Ottoman leadership in 1908 first believed that the Turkification of non-Turkic peoples could be achieved non-violently. But the Armenians would not submit. According to a report by Cox and John Eibner of the Swiss-based Institute for Religious Minorities in the Islamic World, the Turks then used "massacre and forced deportation -- the time-honoured means of the ancient Turkic warriors" to achieve their purposes.

The ethnic cleansing of non-Turks peaked in 1914-16 when Turkey killed 1.5 million Armenians it said were in rebellion (many Turks dispute the accusations of genocide). Of the 850,000 who survived, 250,000 escaped to Russia, 400,000 were deported to Syrian provinces, and 200,000 were forcibly Islamicized.

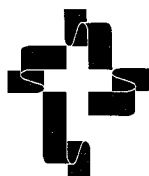
While they condemned the genocide and ethnic cleansing, Europe's great powers did not seek to liberate the Armenians because their priority was to strengthen Turkey against Bolshevik Russia, according to Cox and Eibner. Karabakh, under Russian rule during this period, was spared the worst excesses of the genocide under Ottoman rule. Nevertheless, Cox and Eibner note, tensions had risen between Azeri-Turks and Armenians in part due to Czarist Russia's successful divide-and-conquer policy that sought to stir inter-ethnic tensions.

After World War I, Britain forced Karabakh under Azeri rule, again to strengthen the Muslim barrier against the Bolsheviks in Russia. Armenia resisted, and with Britain's backing, Azerbaijan in 1919 placed Karabakh under an economic blockade. Terrorist brigades were organized "to destroy Armenian villages," according to Cox and Eibner. "The policy had the desired effect," namely that  
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**Truth, from page 3**

U.S. aid to El Salvador during the 1980s had four main purposes: to prevent an FMLN takeover, to foster the growth of democracy, to press for a decrease in human rights violations, and to make possible a peace settlement in which the guerrillas would have to give up their arms and compete in elections. Each of those purposes has now been achieved in large measure. The FMLN's "final offensive" was stopped in 1981. Power changed hands peacefully between elected civilian presidents. Killings of civilians went from 10,000 per year to fewer than 100. And next year, God willing, El Salvador will celebrate its first elections in which *all* parties will compete freely, fairly, and peacefully.

All who have witnessed these events should give thanks. At the same time, we must not forget El Salvador's past horrors, on which the Truth Commission throws its light. Now is not the time for stiff-necked self-righteous displays -- whether by the Salvadoran military or the U.S. religious left. Now is the time for repentance and forgiveness and dedication to the work of rebuilding.

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Karabakhi Armenians agreed "provisionally" to Azeri rule. Many Armenians revolted, but were overwhelmed by the Azeris.



*Baroness Caroline Cox in  
Washington to explain the  
desperate situation in Karabakh.*

The Soviets annexed Azerbaijan and Armenia in 1920, and in 1921 decided to leave Karabakh divided from Armenia under the governance of Azerbaijan. For nearly 70 years, old animosities and differences were either suppressed or exploited. During the unthawing of the late 1980s, after the Karabakh parliament sought a transfer to the Republic of Armenia, the treatment of Armenians in Azerbaijan surely sent ominous signals to Karabakhis, reminding them of older times. Anti-Armenian pogroms were organized in the Azeri towns of Sumgait, Baku, and Kirovabad. Some estimates indicate hundreds killed and tens of thousands removed from these cities. Now that this has escalated into war over Karabakh, the climate for negotiation has deteriorated further.

**What Can Be Done?**

Given the distrust of Armenians for Azeris and the government of Azerbaijan, a peaceful future for Karabakh will require enforceable, verifiable protection for minorities -- both for Azeris in Karabakh and for Karabakhis within Azerbaijan. As was proposed in Bosnia, a significant level of autonomy for Karabakhi Armenians will be necessary, which must be supported by all regional players: Turkey, Russia, and Iran. Perhaps the United States can broker an agreement should the United Nations and CSCE have fail. Richard Lehman, a Democratic Congressman from California who traveled to the region recently, said that America is the only party that both the Azeris and the Armenians trust.

Immediately, however, international agencies need greater access to Karabakh to monitor the treatment of hostages and prisoners of war. Relief is desperately needed in Karabakh, as well as for refugees in the Republic of Armenia. A lasting cease-fire must be negotiated.

Citizens should write their member of Congress and the Honorable Warren Christopher, U.S. Secretary of State, to encourage urgent U.S. action to avert greater devastation and loss of life in Karabakh, and to protect the religious and cultural symbols and structures that represent both Armenian and Azeri heritages.