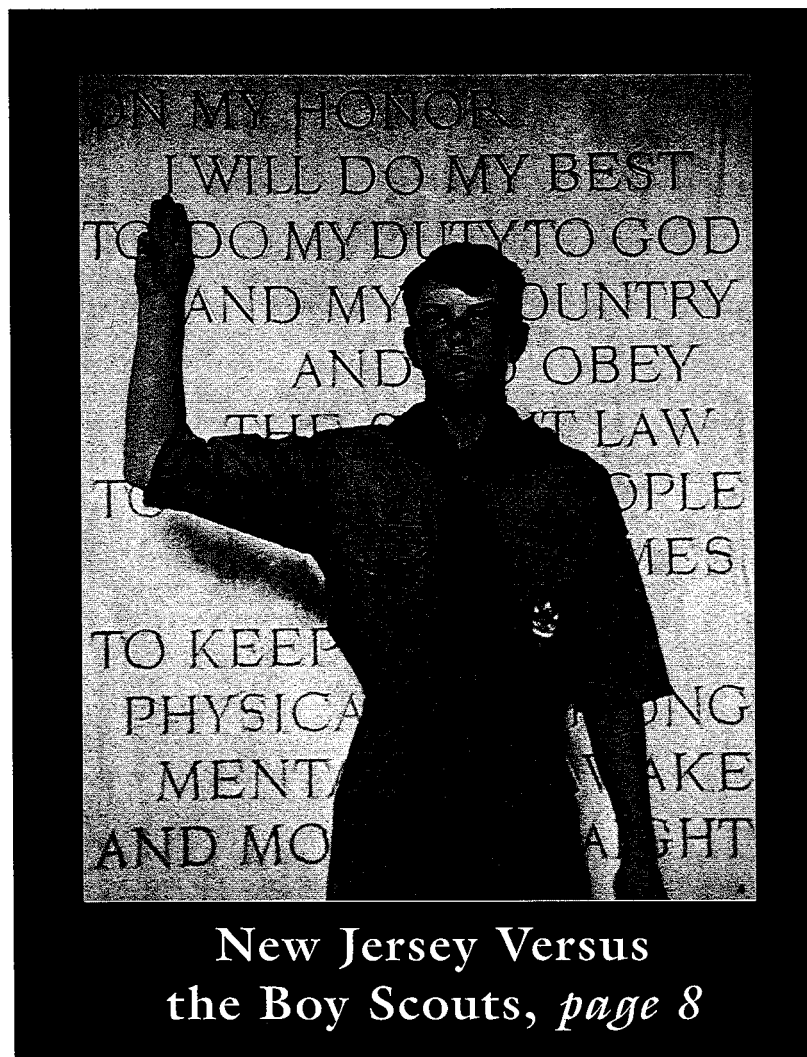


FAITH & FREEDOM

REFORMING THE CHURCH'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL WITNESS

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THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN INTERNATIONAL
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International Briefs, From the President,
Reforming the Church, Election
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*A court order could
change the
definition of
moral rectitude
illustrated in this
Norman Rockwell
print.*

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FAITH & FREEDOM, Vol. 19, Num. 2



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Phone: 202-986-1440

Fax: 202-986-3159

Email: mail@ird-renew.org

The IRD is a non-profit organization committed to reforming the Church's social and political witness and to building and strengthening democracy and religious liberty, at home and abroad. IRD committees work for reform in the Episcopal Church, the United Methodist Church, and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The IRD also sponsors the Ecumenical Coalition on Women and Society.

Contributions to the work of the IRD are critically needed. Your gifts are tax deductible. Thank you for your support.

Diane L. Knippers
President

Alan F. H. Wisdom
Vice President and Editor

Mark D. Tooley
Research Associate

Steve R. Rempel
Research Assistant and Associate Editor

Faith J.H. McDonnell
Religious Liberty Associate

IRD Staff
Abigail G. Noll, Jerald H. Walz

Newsletter Design
Anne Green

LETTERS

IN "CHURCH LEADERS ON THE CLINTON SCANDAL" YOU STATE that "during the congressional votes on impeachment the National Association of Evangelicals asked its constituents simply to pray." While that is undeniably true, it is only part of the story.

...(W)e very specifically rejected each of the "emerging doctrines" that Steve Rempel and Alan Wisdom now describe as mainline Protestant moral teaching: that sexuality is a "private" matter of little moral weight; that personal sins should be overlooked when "progressive causes are at stake"; and that forgiveness means relieving a person of all consequences.

And while you summarize the contrasting reactions by religious leaders to President Clinton's "vague confession" at a White House prayer breakfast on September 11, 1998, you neglected to mention one other option often available to clerics being courted by politicians-to turn down a White House invitation. NAE's leadership did just that on the rationale that "our presence would be misconstrued." ...Either way, the NAE did not leave it up to lawmakers or our membership to "simply" pray about the decision of impeachment, although that's always the right place to start.

Rev. Rich Cizik
Vice President for Governmental Affairs
National Association of Evangelicals

WE RECENTLY RECEIVED OUR FIRST ISSUE OF *FAITH & FREEDOM*, read it cover to cover, and enjoyed it very much. We were impressed by Mark Tooley when we saw him on TV. We are looking forward to learning more about the National Council of Churches, as we have been upset with the liberal direction the mainline churches have been taking over the past few years. Our sons have left the Methodist Church, joining an evangelical church. At this point and time, I pray we won't have to do the same.

...Thank you for the magazine. We look forward to the next issue.

Mrs. Pat Worden, Midland, MI

For Further Reading...

As this edition goes to print, we are feverishly preparing for three national church conventions. "Same-sex unions" will be a major issue at each. Three of the best resources on the topic are:

- *Same-Sex Marriage?* by David Orgon Coolidge (Crossroads Monograph Series on Faith and Public Policy, Vol. 1, No. 9, 1996). Copies may be obtained from Evangelicals for Social Action by phone at (800) 650-6600.
- *Two Sexes, One Flesh: Why the Church Cannot Bless Same-Sex Marriage*; by Stephen F. Noll (Latimer Press, 1997). This can be ordered by phone at (800) 553-3645.
- *Same-Sex Partnerships? A Christian Perspective*; by John R. W. Stott (Fleming H. Revell Co., 1998). This book is available at many Christian bookstores.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

IRD ON THE ROAD AGAIN

By Diane L. Knippers



As I write these words, the IRD stands poised at the starting gate of what I've begun to call our Millennial Marathon. Within just four months – May through August – the IRD will field teams at three national church conventions *and* move to new offices here in Washington.

Actually, ours is a relay race. First, Mark Tooley, Jerald Walz and I head to Cleveland for the quadrennial General Conference of the United Methodist Church. We are sponsoring or speaking at luncheons on three important topics: how to defend the unique covenant of marriage against attempt to celebrate “same-sex unions” in church and society; why “hate crimes” legislation fosters dangerous “identity politics”; and what the church must do to expand religious liberty worldwide. Members of the IRD’s UM Action Steering Committee who will work with us in Cleveland include: Bill Bonner, Riley Case, John Dowlin, Ira Gallaway, Tom Oden, Edmund W. Robb, and Faye Short.

Then in late June, Alan Wisdom leads a team to Long Beach, CA, for the annual Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assembly. A major priority for the IRD’s Presbyterian Action will be a proposal to cut the Presbyterian Church’s massive support of the World and National Councils of Churches back to levels commensurate with other denominations. The funds freed up would go to other genuinely ecumenical ventures not linked to the two councils. Members of our Presbyterian Action Steering Committee that will be working at the Assembly include: John Boone, Louise Holert, Mike Kruse, Rebecca McElroy (who is a commissioner this year), Terry Schlossberg, Ron Siebens, and Burl Watson.

As the Presbyterians head home in early July, Episcopalians will gather in Denver for their triennial General Convention. Faith McDonnell (along with her

5-year-old daughter, Fiona), Abigail Noll, June Leeuwrik, and I will join with dozens of others seeking to give an orthodox testimony of faith before lay and clergy deputies and bishops. IRD’s Episcopal Action program will sponsor a candlelight vigil for the persecuted church. I’ve even been elected an alternate deputy and hope to have the opportunity to cast some votes myself.

Of course, the most contentious issue facing these three denominations this summer is the debate over homosexuality. The IRD is involved in intensive preparation to counter revisionist ethics and to defend biblical teaching on marriage. We are committed to a two-fold message:

❖ *“Marriage is designed by God.”* God’s good plan for humanity calls for the family as the most basic social unit – a family based on a life-long commitment between husband and wife. Sexual expression outside of marriage falls woefully short of God’s will and wreaks devastation, particularly on society’s most vulnerable members – the young and the poor.

❖ *“God’s love changed me.”* We are all sinners saved by grace. To suggest that we cannot overcome our tendencies to sin is a message of hopelessness and faithlessness. The Church betrays the gospel when it fails to proclaim God’s transforming power.

In March, I spoke to a special session of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado, defending these precious truths. If you would like a copy of the address I gave, please let me know.

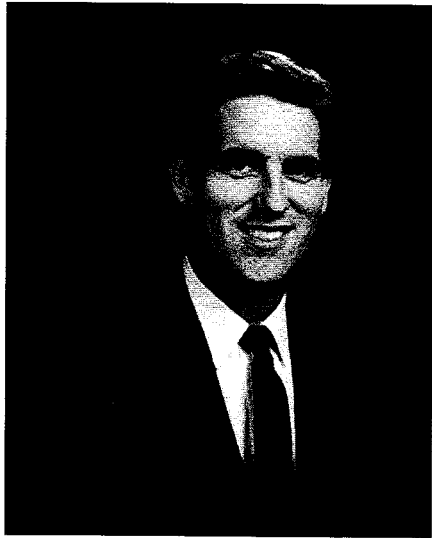
I don’t have space to tell you about all the other things we’ve been doing so far this year – speaking to church groups on oppression in Sudan; helping craft a major statement on religion and public life; providing journalists covering the Elian Gonzalez story with the data on the NCC’s shameful pro-Castro history; or assisting a Nigerian Anglican bishop in garnering press attention.

On top of everything else, our current lease is up and we need to move this summer. If you are in the Washington area and want to help us pack – give us a call! Seriously! Above all, keep us in your prayers. **f**

Evangelical Ecumenism – Not an Oxymoron

An Interview with Kevin Mannoia

Kevin Mannoia is the new president of the National Association of Evangelicals. Previously, he was a bishop in the Free Methodist Church based in southern California.



cess, where their identity is not necessarily needing to be defined by their institutional distinctiveness, but is increasingly defined in terms of their family values,

ington, but rather to be at the table and be salt and light. A direct answer to that question is the item of greatest importance to us is to ensure that we bring the Kingdom agenda to the political table.

“...the evangelical movement sees itself with a level of identity that we don’t have to define ourselves as being separate from someone else.”

Q. And by “Kingdom agenda,” you mean ...?

A. The nature of being the people of God, and being the people of God means that when an issue comes up that clearly violates the morality, the ethics,

the ethos that holds them together in that particular family system.

As denominations see themselves as family systems within the larger body of Christ, the block walls of segregation that have separated denominational groups can now be taken down and give way to “picket fences” which delineate one family from another, but not to such a degree that they become antagonistic or exclusive. They can still reach through the pickets to work together and understand that we are in a common mission together.

That manifests itself on a grassroots level, where my local Free Methodist church will begin to work in partnership with the local conservative Baptist church, or the local Vineyard church, or the Calvary Chapel, or the local Presbyterian church to do things that will have an impact collectively on changing Rancho Cucamonga for the sake of Christ. Those kinds of things are ultimately where the rubber of the Kingdom meets the road of culture.

the nature of what it means to be “Kingdom people,” that we will speak up. But we don’t want to engage on issues just for the sake of being in on an issue. We don’t want to engage on an issue for political purposes. Our commitment to being the Church will help us to determine what political agendas and issues we need to speak out on. And it will help us to determine when to stay quiet.

Q. The NAE has recently dropped its prohibition of joint membership in the NAE and the National Council of Churches. What significance does such a move hold for evangelicals within the “oldline” denominations?

A. I hope that it sends a two-fold signal. Number one, that there is a home for them in the NAE, if they so choose. We didn’t do this out of a motivation to lure anybody to anything. Secondly, the evangelical movement sees itself with a level of identity that we don’t have to define ourselves as being separate from someone else. If the NAE has to define itself based on not being a member of the NCC or not agreeing with the NCC, then our identity is rooted in the wrong place. Hopefully, it will send a signal to those people that their identity can similarly be defined, not in terms of what they’re against, but who and what they’re for in terms of mission.

Q. What is the greatest opportunity you see for the evangelical community in America in the next decade?

A. Number one is deepening its understanding of what it means to be the people of God. Number two is to engage in an integrated, holistic way with our culture so that when people look at our culture in America, they see a “saltiness” of the Kingdom of God that is extant within that culture. I believe our culture is opening itself now like perhaps never before to opportunities for that kind of spiritual discovery. The bad side to such a spiritual openness is that it is open to all kinds of imprints. It is our responsibility to make sure that it is a holy, spiritual imprint.

Q. How do you think ecumenism and the lessening influence of denominationalism play into the making of a distinct Christian imprint?

A. Denominational segmentation of the church in America is not bad. However, I do think that denominations in America are going through a similar maturing pro-

Q. What do you think is of central importance to NAE’s witness here in Washington?

A. The focal point of our interest in Washington is to be at the table. Not to transform culture by overcoming it, nor to secede from dialogue and from Wash-

CHURCH NEWS

CHURCH AGENCY RAISES MONEY FOR ELIAN'S FATHER

From the beginning of the Elian Gonzalez dispute, the U.S. National Council of Churches has spoken strongly for taking little Elian away from his Florida relatives and returning him to Cuba with his father. In April another church agency came to the fore. The United Methodist Board of Church and Society

fund. Nor would United Methodist congregations or individuals be solicited to contribute. Yet within a few weeks, with very little publicity, the fund had accumulated more than \$50,000.

It appeared that the board was providing a tax-deductible shelter through which anonymous non-Methodist donors – probably a few large unsolicited donors – could support the effort to return Elian to Cuba. The United Methodist General Council on Finance and Administration took exception to this unusual arrangement. So Fassett was forced to transfer administration of the fund to the National Council of Churches. Neither Fassett nor the church council is revealing who the donors are.

RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATORS SEARCH FOR A STORY

Over 1,100 staffers with official church publications, most of them from mainline Protestant denominations, gathered in Chicago in April for a once-a-decade conference. The theme of Religious Communication Congress 2000 was "Faith Stories in a Changing World." While a smorgasbord of other faith stories was offered, the Gospel of Jesus Christ was barely mentioned.

A Native American speaker told a lengthy story about the "earth mother" and various talking birds and animals. A feminist rabbi retold the biblical creation story from the perspective of "Lileth," an anti-Eve who refused to submit to Adam sexually.

One of the worship leaders was a Hindu from West Virginia named Andy Fraenkel. "I worship Govinda," he began, as he shared Hindu scriptures about various deities. Fraenkel led the audience in chanting: "I worship the primeval Lord Govinda, source of all." He also led the crowd in praising "the all glorious one, Ram." Fraenkel concluded by asking listeners to fill out prayer cards.

The major Christian speakers were the Rev. Jesse Jackson and former National Council of Churches general secretary

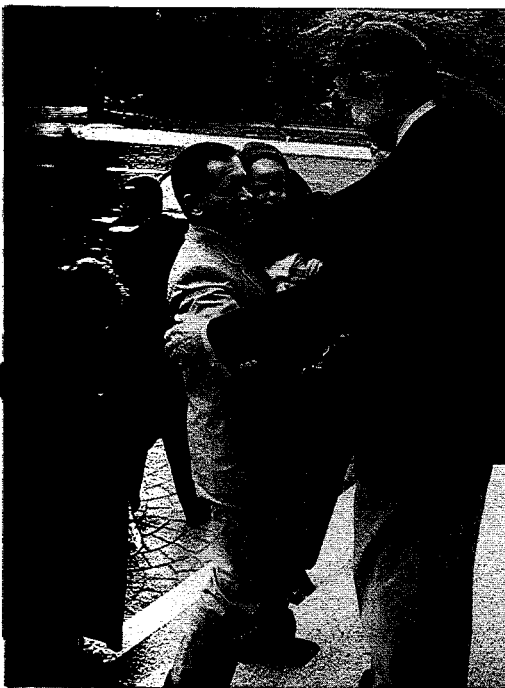
Joan Brown Campbell. Their presentations revolved around liberal political themes. Campbell discussed her ongoing efforts to return Elian Gonzalez to Cuba. Jackson pronounced himself "disturbed by a new wave of religious and political conservatism."

CHURCHES IN THE MARRIAGE DEBATES

Churches played prominent roles in recent debates over the meaning of marriage in California and Vermont. In both of those rather liberal states, polls showed a strong majority of citizens favoring the traditional definition of marriage as only between a man and a woman. Roman Catholic, Evangelical, and Mormon leaders were among the foremost proponents of Proposition 22 in California, which inserted that definition into the state constitution. Similarly, Catholics and conservative Protestants took the initiative in protesting the Vermont Supreme Court decision mandating that same-sex couples receive all the benefits of marriage.

But in both states, mainline Protestant leaders were more visible on the other side of the debate. Liberal church leaders in Vermont, including a United Methodist and an Episcopal bishop, encouraged the legislature to uphold the court decision and recognize "civil unions" between homosexuals.

In California, a full-page newspaper ad in the March 2 Los Angeles Times proclaimed, "Interfaith Religious Leaders Say No on Proposition 22." The ad denounced the proposition as a "masquerade" that would "limit the rights and freedoms of a sexual minority." It exalted "the love between two adults of the same sex" to the same plane as marriage, as equal manifestations of "the love to which God calls us." Signers of the ad included the new general secretary of the National Council of Churches, the Rev. Robert Edgar, as well as five Episcopal bishops and numerous seminary luminaries. Despite their objections, Proposition 22 passed by a 60 percent majority. **f**



The Rev. Thom White Wolf Fassett greets Juan Miguel Gonzalez at the United Methodist Building in Washington, DC, as former NCC General Secretary Joan Brown Campbell looks on.

emerged as the party that had procured a high-priced U.S. lawyer for Elian's father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez. The Methodist board also announced that it was raising funds to pay the lawyer, Gregory Craig.

According to the board's general secretary, Thom White Wolf Fassett, the new "Humanitarian Advocacy Fund" was inspired by the board's "long history of advocacy for children in every area of the world." Fassett stated that none of the denomination's dollars would go into the

THE POLITICS OF THE JESUS SEMINAR

By Mark Tooley

You probably have read about them. The scholars of the Jesus Seminar meet twice a year to decide which parts of the Gospels are not true. Adopting the most radical techniques of biblical revisionism, the scholars gain headlines by dismissing Jesus' miracles and messianic claims.

The media usually accept the seminar's claims to "scholarship" at face value. But the "discoveries" of the Jesus Seminar are not based on newly unearthed archaeological or manuscript evidence. They are composed almost entirely of an ideological critique that refuses to acknowledge the possibility that a transcendent deity might intervene in human history.

During its nearly two decades of existence, Jesus Seminar scholars have delighted in playing the role of mischievous blasphemers poking fun at stuffy old-time religion. The seminar has largely escaped any examination of the very serious, very left-wing ideology that underlies its pronouncements. That ideology determines the "historical Jesus" that the seminar scholars see behind the centuries of Christian faith that they would like to peel away. For the Jesus Seminar, the man from Galilee was simply an activist for social equality.

The scholars of the Jesus Seminar are largely men and women who came of age in the 1960s and who still feel the romance of social revolution. Sexual freedom, radical environmentalism, hostility to capitalism and the traditional family, resentment over continued U.S. predominance in the world, and faith in a global utopia under a world government are all hallmarks of this worldview.

CHALLENGING THE "DOMINATION SYSTEM"

At their fall 1999 meeting, the assembled scholars opened rare windows into their political agenda. Their views emerged as they repeatedly departed from their biblical studies to lament the continued reactionary influence of orthodox Christians. "Often there's no awareness [among Christians] of their collusion with economic injustice, sexism and patriarchy and hegemony over the rest of the world," observed Walter Wink of Auburn Theological Seminary. "They serve as the court chaplains of the domination system."

A large portion of the future church will remain "reactionary," predicted Hal Taussig, a United Methodist pastor and professor at Union Seminary in New York. "Fundamentalism and authoritarian Catholicism will remain strong for the foreseeable future," actively resisting "scientific, feminist and ecological

consciousness." In a country addicted to "private property and individual rights," Taussig urged progressive churches to debunk the "imperialist claims of the reigning modalities in American and European Christendom."

John Dominic Crossan, professor emeritus at DePaul University, took aim at America's largest Protestant denomination. He likened the Southern Baptist Convention to Walt Disney, Inc. Both are contending for the "global control of fantasy," according to Crossan. Both are equally dangerous in large doses, but the Southern Baptists especially so. With them it is difficult to separate "religion from Prozac, Christianity from chloroform, and baptism from lobotomy."

Jesus Seminar founder Robert Funk called for the "mythic messiah" of Scripture to be replaced by a contemporary political messiah. This new messiah would be found in "random acts of kindness, some proposal to close the hole in the ozone, some discrete move to introduce candor into politics, some new intensive care program for the planet."

'GOD IS A POLITICAL AGENDA'

One member of the audience asked the scholars why there was no Republican among them. "God is a political agenda that is driving our inquiry," the questioner suggested perceptively and not disapprovingly. "What's driving this, the God behind this, is the agenda of individual rights and rational inquiry that we got from the secular agenda of the Enlightenment." The Jesus Seminar's "biases for women's rights and gay rights are the God that is a political agenda that is driving our inquiry into religion, and we try to find parts that support our agenda."

Tom Sheehan from Stanford University replied: "I would be delighted to have a Republican on the panel so long as we had a socialist and a communist on the panel." Complaining that the Jesus Seminar talks about Martin Luther King, Jr, but not Malcolm X, about Gandhi but not Che Guevara, Sheehan rejected the complacent pacifism of people who already have their slice of power. "Jesus took on the religious establishment and the empire," Sheehan remarked. "The Seminar has done well in analyzing the first but not the second." He declared: "If Jesus had died in America, we could be wearing cruise missiles or Agent Orange [around our necks]." The audience applauded this bitter diatribe.

New Zealand theologian Lloyd Geering was more optimistic. "The whole capitalist system is going to



Liberal Catholic scholar John Dominic Crossan (right) compares Southern Baptist theology to a Disney fantasy. Jesus Seminar founder Robert Funk (left) wants to provide therapies so that humans will "take responsibility for ourselves."

come to an end possibly as quickly as the socialist system came to end," he said. Geering, a one-time Presbyterian minister who lost his faith, was actually the only seminar scholar to express appreciation for the accomplishments of traditional Christianity, despite its alleged misrepresentation of Jesus.

"Global vision" came from Judaism and Christianity, Geering reminded his audience. Modern science and technology evolved out of Christian culture and cannot be accounted for except by the "biblical doctrine of creation." Asian religion was "too arbitrary and too impersonal," while Greek science lacked Christianity's "relentlessness" in the search for truth. The ancient Israelites abolished the gods of nature, and subsequent Christians were able to experiment and explain the natural world as no other culture had been able.

The global secular world, with its affirmation of basic human rights, is a direct product of Christianity, Geering stated. Of course, the secular world is far from perfection. But if we acknowledge that the "throne of heaven is empty and we humans are on our own," we can make the right decisions, he affirmed. When shorn of its supernatural elements, the "Incarnation tells us we humans have to play the role of God whether we want to or not."

THERAPIES FOR DELUDED CHILDREN

Funk asserted that the Jesus Seminar's role is to provide the "therapies" required for the transition from traditional faith to "new perspectives." The aspiring religious reprogrammer compared most people

to children who "want to know who's in charge of the universe" and "want someone to establish the rules of belief and behavior." This desire "opens doors to tyrants and to God," Funk warned. We must be clear that the "messiah has not come and will not come," he insisted to his agreeing audience. "We need to take responsibility for ourselves, our home and planet."

Sheehan, joined by other speakers such as Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong, advocated a "pragmatic atheism" to guide the world into the future. Whenever an audience member asked about what role God would play in the new world order to come, each scholar assured

him that God was excluded, unless by God we mean simply "justice" or "community."

Like its theology, the Jesus Seminar's politics is an outdated adaptation of the reigning leftist ideologies of secular universities. As a purely academic gathering, the seminar scholars would have little distinction. If they were organizing a political party, they would quickly be dismissed as crackpots.

The only influence that the seminar exerts is upon the American churches. Conservatives become apoplectic at every report of its proceedings. Liberal church officials gush at how "refreshed" they are by the scholars' "new insights."

Clearly, the seminar's "prophecies" have already failed in two respects. Its politicized portrait of Jesus cannot come to terms with the rich Gospel witness to the strange man from Nazareth – who called God his father, who taught and acted with authority far beyond the scribes', who dared to forgive sins, and whose followers staked their lives on the claim that this man had been raised from the dead. Likewise, the seminar's socialist, secularist, anti-western politics have not been vindicated by recent history.

One can expect that the seminar's attempts to wean our churches away from the "mythic messiah" will prove equally unsuccessful. There may be some arrogant church leaders who, like Funk, set themselves up as therapists to their child-like parishioners. But very few souls will be satisfied with the thin political soup that the seminar serves. Vital churches will be nourished with heartier stuff – the body and blood of the Savior who died to redeem them.

NEW JERSEY VERSUS THE BOY SCOUTS

By William C. Duncan

As I write these words, the fate of freedom of association is in the hands of the U.S. Supreme Court. The case is *Dale v. Boy Scouts of America*, and Scouting is the immediate issue. But the deeper question raised by the controversy is this: Will Americans still have the right to organize and promote their values in a diverse society? Or will the courts try to forbid them?

On April 26, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in this case and will decide it no later than the end of June. Here is the story: In July 1990, James Dale, an assistant Scoutmaster of a New Jersey Boy Scout troop, was featured in a Newark, NJ, newspaper discussing the needs homosexual teens have for homosexual role models. In the article, he was identified as a gay activist. He was serving at the time as co-president of the Rutgers University Lesbian/Gay Alliance.

The Boy Scouts subsequently revoked Mr. Dale's registration as a Scout leader. This action was in keeping with a longstanding, low-key Scout policy barring active homosexuals from such positions. Behind Dale's ouster also stood the Scouts' code of moral conduct, represented within the law and oath memorized by every boy. The injunctions to be "clean" and "morally straight" were vague, and they were never aimed particularly at homosexuals. Nevertheless, it was widely understood that the Scouts discouraged all sex outside of marriage – including homosexual practice.

Not long after Dale's dismissal, New Jersey adopted an anti-discrimination law which included a prohibition of discrimination based on "sexual orientation." Sensing an opportunity, Mr. Dale sued the Boy Scouts. The trial court rejected Dale's claims, holding that the Boy Scouts were not covered by the law and that even if they were, the First Amendment prevented them from being forced to accept a leader violating their own policy.

A COURT TRIES TO DEFINE THE SCOUTS' MISSION

Case closed? Hardly. It was only beginning. Mr. Dale appealed his case and the appeals court decided against the Scouts. On August 4, 1999, the New Jersey Supreme Court also ruled against the Boy Scouts in a *unanimous* opinion.

The crux of the court's opinion was its acceptance of the Orwellian argument advanced by Dale's attorneys. It goes like this: The Scouts exist to promote good citizenship, including the values of "tolerance" and "diver-

sity." So if the Boy Scouts even had a clear policy of disapproval of homosexual leaders, that would actually *contradict* the Scouts' own mission. The court said: "The words 'morally straight' and 'clean' do not, on their face, express anything about sexuality, much less that homosexuality, in particular, is immoral." So the court concluded that forcing the Scouts to accept homosexual leaders wouldn't significantly affect the Scouts.

The court also held that New Jersey's interest in preventing discrimination trumps any claim by the Boy Scouts that they should not be forced to implicitly endorse a message with which they don't agree. Nowhere, though, did the court describe why it, rather than the Boy Scouts, has the right to determine what is essential to the Scouts' mission. This is judicial tyranny at its worst.

The Boy Scouts appealed this decision to the U.S. Supreme Court, which agreed to hear the case. At the Supreme Court, Dale's attorneys describe the Boy Scouts as a "recreational organization" and make much of the Scouts' unwillingness to emphasize their policy of not accepting active homosexual leaders. They say that the Scouts expelled Dale "because of his identity." They insist again that Dale and his attorneys understand better than the Boy Scouts what the Scouts' true purpose is, and that purpose does *not* involve promoting a traditional understanding of sexual morality.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INFLUENCE ON 'IMPRESSIONABLE' BOYS

In response to this extraordinarily arrogant claim, the Boy Scouts make the unremarkable assertion that it is not the role of government (here, the courts) to determine what the policy of a private organization is. The Boy Scouts are arguing that they should not be compelled to appoint a "gay rights activist" as a leader charged with the responsibility of communicating the Scouts' moral values to youth, by word and example.

Interestingly, Dale himself seems to understand that communicating a moral message really is central to the Scouts' mission and that who the Scouts have as leaders is crucial to this task. When asked in an interview with the *New York Times Magazine* whether he would encourage his child to be a Scout, Dale responded: "I would want to know who the people were that were influencing him – his Scoutmaster, the other Scouts. *A kid can be highly impressionable*, and I wouldn't want some narrow-minded person leading my son's troop."

An interesting sideshow in the case involves dueling friend of the court briefs filed by various religious groups. Backers of the Scouts include the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and the Latter-Day Saints (Mormons). Supporters of Mr. Dale include the United Church of Christ Board for Homeland Ministries, the Episcopal Diocese of Newark, and the Unitarian-Universalist Association.

The division on this case even runs between two agencies of the United Methodist Church. On the one hand, the General Board of Church and Society joined a brief claiming that the denomination does not support the Boy Scouts' policy and doesn't sponsor Scout troops to advance a "discriminatory" message. On the other hand, the United Methodist Men charged with oversight of the Scouting program joined a brief that argues that Scouts are a "value-inculcating movement" which should not be compelled to accept as leaders individuals who by their actions contradict the message the Scouts are trying to instill. Both briefs argue that the other agency does not speak for the United Methodist Church. The Church and Society brief, however, doesn't explain why the United Methodist Church itself has policies similar to the Scouts': disapproving homosexual acts, prohibiting same-sex "unions," and denying ordination to practicing homosexuals.

MORE THAN SCOUTS ARE VULNERABLE

As we await a decision in the case, we should consider the implications if Dale wins. For the Scouts, allowing the New Jersey decision to stand could be devastating. The Scouts' ability to instill their message of traditional morality would be severely hampered not only in New Jersey, but also in other states whose laws prohibit "sexual orientation" discrimination. Deciding in favor of Dale could also provide momentum for atheists and others who have previously been unsuccessful in their attempts to force the Scouts to include them.

In addition, by upholding the New Jersey decision,

the court could allow the troubling possibility that government might take upon itself the responsibility of interpreting what doctrines are central to an organization's belief. Ironically, this could lead to a situation where only obnoxious, bigoted groups are given First Amendment protection because only these could convincingly argue that their exclusionary policy is "central" to their purpose. Tolerant mainstream organizations such as

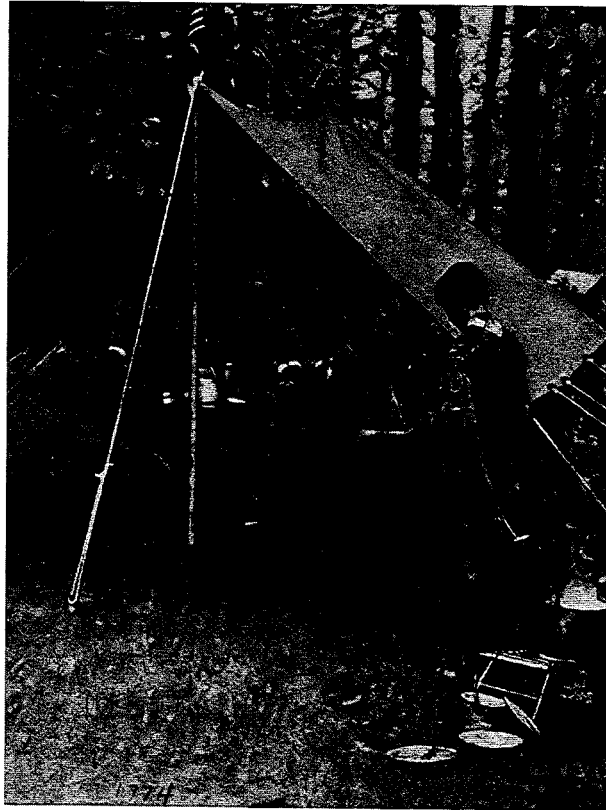
the Boy Scouts would be the greatest victims of this approach.

More generally, a ruling of this kind could embolden New Jersey and similar states to attack the policies of other faith-based organizations, whether churches or social service agencies. The Scouts have always had a close tie to churches, who currently sponsor 65 percent of Scout troops. This relationship is possible only because the Scouts share similar moral values with many churches. Yet, because the Scouts are not exclusively a denominational organization, they are able to play a wider role in American society. They can promote the shared values which allow a civil society to thrive.

This dual nature of the Scouts is what makes them and other "faith-based" or "faith-connected" groups most vulnerable to attacks from the state. The moral values they endorse invite attack from those who would remove such views from the public forum. But since these groups are not actually churches, they may not be protected by the First Amendment's guarantee of the free exercise of religion. It is now up to the Supreme Court to decide whether that protection will be available to these vital groups. Obviously, this is a decision of great import for all of American society.

For now, though, we don't know the outcome. So we must wait ... and pray. f

Mr. Duncan is the Assistant Director of the Marriage Law Project based in Washington, D.C. The Marriage Law Project's mission is to reaffirm the legal definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman. More information on the Project is available at <marriagelaw.cua.edu>.



Religion and religiously-based morality have always been a part of Scouting.

Correcting the Secular Vision

By Paul Marshall

At the end of 1997, the former executive editor of the *New York Times*, A. M. Rosenthal confessed: "Early this year I realized that in decades of reporting, writing or assigning stories on human rights, I rarely touched on one of the most important. Political human rights, legal, civil and press rights, emphatically often; but the right to worship where and how God or conscience leads, almost never." While Rosenthal has changed dramatically on this score, the pattern he describes is still widespread.

NEGLECTING RELIGION

One reason that religious persecution is neglected is that religion is neglected as an important political factor. One major cause of this neglect is the prevalence of "secular myopia," which is "an inability even to see, much less understand, the role of religion in human life." This is widespread amongst "the chattering classes." As Edward Luttwak has written, "Policy makers, diplomats, journalists, and scholars who are ready to over-interpret economic causality, who are apt to dissect social differentiations even more finely, and who will minutely categorize political affiliations, are

still in the habit of disregarding the role of religion in explaining politics and even in reporting their concrete modalities" ("The Missing Dimension" in D. Johnston and C. Sampson, eds., *Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*).

This can have painful consequences. One was U.S. ignorance of the views and power of the Ayatollah Khomeini's followers in Iran prior to 1979. Luttwak notes that there was *only one* proposal for the CIA to examine "the attitude and activities of the more prominent religious leaders" in Iran, and that even this proposal was vetoed as mere "sociology," intelligence speak for irrelevant academic verbiage. Consequently, as the Shah's regime was collapsing about them, U.S. political analysts kept insisting that everything was fine. They examined economic variables, class structure, and the military, and they concluded that the Shah was safe. Parallel, though less striking, tales can be told of Bosnia, Lebanon, the Philippines, Nicaragua, India, Israel and the Palestinians, Sudan, Indonesia, and even of Vietnam.

This neglect often comes not by ignoring particular trends but by redefining them. Americans are prone to redefine religion through the nebulous term "ethnic." For example, Chester Crocker gave an excellent lecture on "How to Think About Ethnic Conflict" (See Foreign Policy Research Institute's *Wire*, September, 1999). However, even he described the Northern Ireland and

India-Pakistan conflicts as "ethnic." But India and Pakistan are separate countries only because of different religions, and Ireland is divided for the same reason.

Other recent examples include the *Economist's* (September 25, 1999) description of the slaughter of 54 Buddhists in Sri Lanka as perhaps "ethnic cleansing," and fights between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria as "cultural" (July 31, 1999). Similarly, the *New Republic* contrasts the Sudanese conflict between a "predominantly Muslim north and a predominantly

The rise of the late Ayatollah Khomeini (left) in Iran surprised U.S. foreign policy experts who had ignored the role of religion.



Christian south," with a Western dream of a "multiethnic democracy" (July 12, 1999). These depictions seem to take their cue from descriptions of the former Yugoslavia, where we coined the term "ethnic cleansing" to describe the murder of Muslims.

Press coverage and political analysis often treats movements overseas in narrow western political categories. Hence, Islamic or (or Christian or Jewish) militants are described as "right-wing," whatever that might mean. But what is a "right-wing" or "left-wing" view of plans to build a Hindu temple on the site of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya, India? This scheme can only be grasped by understanding its deep-seated religious context.

When the vocabulary of left and right has run its tired course, we are left with that old standby, "fundamentalist," a word dredged from the American past and of dubious meaning even there. The term "fundamentalist" refuses to take seriously what people actually believe. It dismisses them as religious maniacs.

When ethnicity and psychology fail to subsume religion, it is treated as the sublimation of drives which can *really* be explained by poverty or the stresses of modernity. Of course, these factors play a role—no part of human life is sealed off from any other. But too often we encounter an *a priori* methodological commitment to treat religion as secondary, as a derivative phenomenon which can be explained in terms of other factors, but which is never an explanation in and of itself.

TAKING RELIGION SERIOUSLY

If we take religion seriously, we may learn about many things. Chronic armed conflict in the world is concentrated on the margins of the traditional religions. The Middle East, the southern Sahara, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and South Asia are where Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism and Hinduism intersect. They are also the sites of most wars in the last fifty years. The point is not *why* people fight, but *where* they fight. These are not explicitly religious wars. But, since religion shapes culture, people at these boundaries have different histories and different views of human life, and are more likely to oppose one another. Regardless of the varied reasons for conflict, these are the areas where conflict likely occurs. They are religious fault zones, and hence sites of political instability.

The Chinese government takes religion seriously and represses it. In 1992, the Chinese press noted that "the church played an important role in the change" in Eastern Europe and warned that "if China does not want such a scene to be repeated in its land, it must strangle the baby while it is still in the manger." "Underground" church leaders consistently report that the current government crackdown is due to fears prompted by religious events in the former Soviet bloc.

But there is still little attention to China's dissident churches, which at a conservative estimate number some 35 million (apart from 15 million in the official

churches), and are growing rapidly. A 1997 *Far East Economic Review* cover story, entitled "God is Back," reported one Beijing official as saying: "If God had the face of a 70-year-old man, we wouldn't care if he was back. But he has the face of millions of 20-year-olds, so we are worried." The rapid growth of the only nationwide movements in China not under government control merits *political* attention.

Apart from the important examples of the Balkan conflicts, the rise of the Welfare and Virtue parties in Turkey, the BJP in India, and the growth of radical Islamicism, the following religious trends also merit political reflection and attention:

- ♦ The alarming upsurge of intolerance (official and unofficial) of minority religions ("cults") in Europe.
- ♦ Warfare along the sub-Saharan boundary from Nigeria to Ethiopia. This traces a Christian/Muslim divide.
- ♦ The rapid growth of Christianity in Korea, China, Taiwan and Indonesia.
- ♦ Widespread religious violence in the north and central regions of Nigeria, with several thousand dead in recent years, and fears that there could be a religious war.
- ♦ In Indonesia, rising religious strife precedes and has separate dynamics from recent anti-Chinese violence. It threatens to undermine what has been one of the world's best examples of inter-religious toleration and cooperation.
- ♦ The current exodus of Christians from the Middle East: over a million in the last five years. Currently some three percent of Palestinians are Christians compared to an estimated 25 percent 50 years ago. Similar movements have taken place out of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and Iraq.
- ♦ The emergence of Orthodoxy as a unifying symbol in Russia, the Balkans and parts of the former Soviet Union.
- ♦ The increasing prominence of religion in the conflicts between India and Pakistan, now enhanced by nuclear weapons.
- ♦ The rapid growth of charismatic Protestantism in Latin America.

I am not making the absurd suggestion that religion, apart from ethnic, economic, political, or strategic elements, is the only or key factor. Societies are complex. But it is equally absurd to examine any political order *without* attending to the role of religion. Analyses which ignore religious dynamics should be inherently suspect. Discussions of human rights which neglect religious freedom, and *the role of religion in all human rights*, should be equally suspect. **f**

Mr. Marshall is a frequent lecturer on the subject of religious persecution, and author of many best selling books, including Their Blood Cries Out and Heaven is Not My Home. He is the editor of the World Survey of Religious Freedom, and is a Senior Fellow at Freedom House.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

THE CHURCH IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

GROWTH AND GRACE

By Faith J. H. McDonnell

At one time it was convenient, though not absolutely accurate, to describe Africa's most populous country, Nigeria, as having a "Muslim north" and a "Christian south." Today in places like Kaduna and Jos, in the middle belt, and Sokoto and Kano, in the northern belt, the Church has blossomed. Christians are actually in the majority in the northern and middle belt states, with approximately 54 percent of the population, according to the Rt. Reverend Josiah Idowu-Fearon, Anglican bishop of Kaduna. Fearon and others like him have brought the message of the Gospel into northern Nigeria with loving, authentic Christian witness, and people have responded eagerly. But a recent surprise attack on Christians in Kaduna by Islamic militants has demonstrated again how the spread of the Gospel can provoke conflict.

Many Hausa and Fulani Muslims in the north felt that they had lost power

with the election last year of a Christian, Olusegun Obasanjo, as Nigeria's new civilian president. (Most of the previous military rulers had been Muslims.) They began to press the governors of many of the northern and middle belt states to implement full *sharia* (Islamic law) in place of the secular civil and criminal codes. By December 1999 five states had declared their intention of instituting full *sharia*.

Already, *sharia* was being practiced in some civil and family matters. Even this partial implementation renders non-Muslims second-class citizens, discriminated against routinely in terms of education and employment opportunities, Fearon explained. But most northern Nigerian Christians had tolerated the situation for the sake of co-existence with their Muslim neighbors. The threatened imposition of full *sharia*, possibly turning northern Nigeria into another Sudan, was another matter. The attorney general and other federal officials had declared the state actions instituting *sharia* to be unconstitutional; nevertheless, pro-*sharia* groups continued aggressive demonstrations into this year.

The Christians in Kaduna, Fearon said, decided it was time to speak up. A group had just delivered their petition to the lieutenant governor of Kaduna on February 21 when an onslaught of stones and bullets began, and the smell of burning buildings and scorched flesh filled the air. Churches and mosques, businesses and homes were all burned—some with the people still inside them. During the several days of rioting hundreds of vehicles were destroyed or damaged. Those who tried to escape were pursued and slain by rioting mobs. President Obasanjo said of the incident: "The devastation was so massive. It seemed as though Kaduna had overnight been

turned into a battlefield."

The noxious fumes of violence infected other states, as well, spreading the scene of carnage even into southern Nigeria. Although some reports numbered the dead in the hundreds, Bishop Fearon estimated the true toll at over 1,000. A newspaper sympathetic to the rioters bragged of killing over four hundred "infidels" in one attack alone, he said. The bishop came to Washington, DC, in April to make sure that the truth was known about the terrible slaughter. He also asked U.S. help for President Obasanjo's government in bringing democracy and religious freedom to Nigeria.

Fearon, who holds both an orthodox Christian faith and a doctorate in Islamic studies, is saddened by the fear and segregation of Muslims and Christians in Kaduna as a result of the riots. He is also grieved by reports of Christian retaliation resulting in a large number of Muslim deaths.

His fellow Anglican bishop, Benjamin Kwashi of Jos, observed that the Christians were "certainly being provoked and pushed to behave like unbelievers." "We resist this," Kwashi declared, "and will continue to resist this temptation, because if we give in we will have no gospel to preach; we will have no light to shine and we will have lost the opportunity of the evangelization of Africa."

The light of Christ continues to shine in northern Nigeria, though many have tried to extinguish it. Western Christians have much to learn from their brothers and sisters in Nigeria, who endure persecution and struggle to forgive their persecutors. With leaders like Josiah Fearon and Benjamin Kwashi, the opportunity of the evangelization of Africa shall not be lost. May we in the West be so faithful in pursuing the opportunities for evangelism in our societies. f



Josiah Idowu-Fearon, Anglican Bishop of Kaduna, Nigeria, with Senator Rick Santorum (R-PA).

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS

RELIGIOUS TENSIONS
IN INDONESIA

Continuing religious violence in Indonesia's Moluccas has left the islands' minority Christians in an exposed position. Mob rampages have cost over 3,000 lives since January 1999 and driven tens of thousands of refugees from their homes. Both Muslims and Christians accuse government security forces of abetting or tolerating the violence between them.

John Barr, the secretary for Indonesia of the Uniting Church of Australia, reported his observations in the region. He named several islands from which almost all the Christian population had fled. "Much of the Protestant church in Maluku has been destroyed," Barr said. "Roman Catholic communities and Pentecostal churches have suffered in a similar way." Additional alarms have been raised by rallies on the larger islands of Java and Sulawesi, at which thousands of Muslim militants have vowed to go fight a holy war in the Moluccas.

World Council of Churches General Secretary Konrad Raiser visited Indonesia in March to express his concern about the religious conflicts. But he concluded with a mostly optimistic assessment of the situation. According to Ecumenical News International, Raiser expressed great confidence in the new Indonesian president, Abdurrahman Wahid. He described Wahid, a moderate Muslim leader, as "one of the most impressive statesmen he had ever met."

"The Islam practiced in Indonesia is a very tolerant kind," Raiser insisted. "The militarism that has emerged recently does not reflect the thinking of most of the Islamic community there." The

WCC general secretary deemed the violence in the Moluccas to be "essentially a problem induced from the outside."

TAIWANESE VICTOR THANKS
PRESBYTERIANS

The newly-elected president of Taiwan was quick to credit the Taiwanese Presbyterian Church for its role in the movement that brought him to power. Three days after his narrow victory in the March 18 presidential election, Chen Shui-Bian visited the headquarters of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT). Chen thanked the Presbyterian leaders for championing "democratic and human rights and nationhood" for Taiwan, according to the church's general secretary, the Rev. William J.K. Lo.

Chen was elected as the candidate of the Democratic Progressive Party, in opposition to the Kuomintang party that had ruled Taiwan since 1949. Democratic Progressive leaders made their name as critics of earlier Kuomintang human rights abuses and as advocates for Taiwan's independence from China. The 220,000-member PCT, the largest Protestant denomination in Taiwan, was one of the few significant institutions to support that agenda. Dr. Kao Chun-Ming, then PCT general secretary, was sentenced to seven years in prison for his involvement in a 1979 demonstration. Chen was one of the lawyers who defended Kao at his trial.

"We elected Chen to show that there is no conflict between China and Taiwan," current general secretary Lo told Ecumenical News International. "It is my prayer that Beijing will now change its attitude toward the Taiwanese people and will respect our sovereignty and identity." World

Council of Churches and U.S. Presbyterian officials find themselves caught in the middle as they try to maintain relationships with both the Taiwanese Presbyterians and the China Christian Council, which supports the communist government's demand that Taiwan be reunited with China.

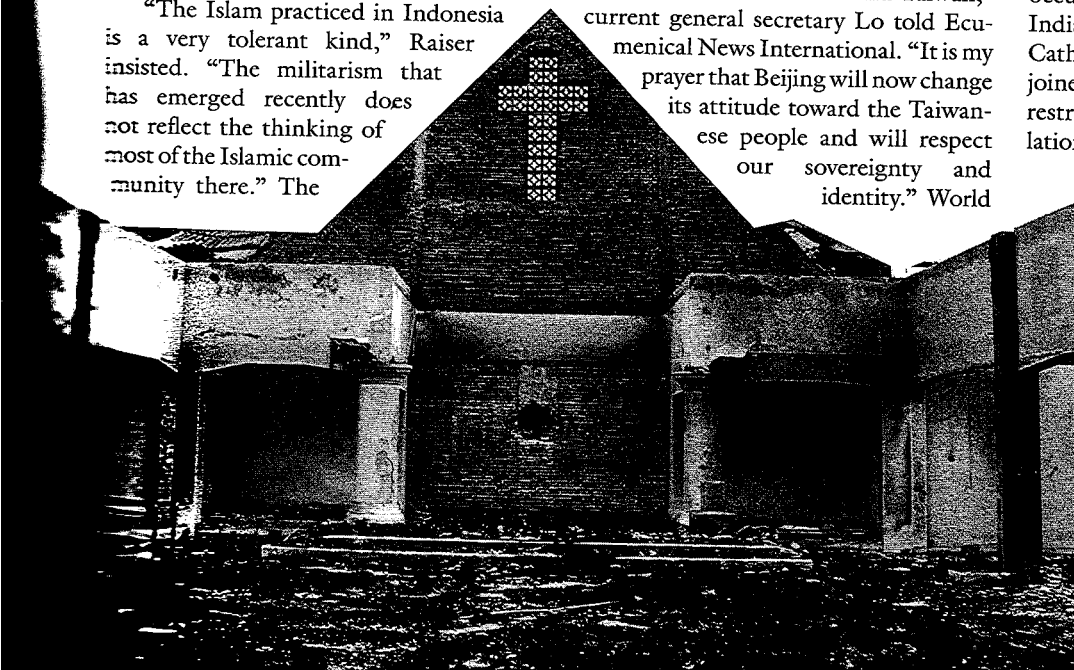
INDIA'S CHURCHES FACE
HINDU EXTREMISTS

Faced with the growing assertiveness of Hindu extremists, the National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) has appealed for religious pluralism. "The church is called upon to continually strive for greater mutual understanding with people of other faiths," stated the message released at the close of the NCCI's quadrennial assembly on March 6. The message urged churches "to show greater dedication and commitment to oppose Hindu fundamentalist moves to restore the casteist hegemony" of the upper over the lower castes.

Responding to allegations that Christian conversions were achieved through force or bribery, the NCCI assembly described the charges as "a mere bogey and cover for [Hindu] fundamentalists to prevent and terrorise the church from serving the poor and upholding their dignity and human rights." The assembly pledged "greater collaboration" with Roman Catholics and secular human rights groups.

An example of such cooperation occurred later in March in the eastern Indian state of Orissa. Protestants and Catholics and ethnic minority advocates joined in a legal challenge to a new state restriction on conversions. Under legislation passed last November, any potential convert would have to deliver an affidavit of his intention to a local magistrate, who would then check with police before granting permission for the conversion. Orissa Baptist leader Swarupo Patro, noting that the preparation of an affidavit typically cost about \$24, remarked, "Well, now there is a price tag to become Christian." f

A Christian church on the island of Lombok in Indonesia was burned down by a Muslim mob



AWAKENING TO THE SCANDAL OF SEX TRAFFICKING

By Abigail Noll

Recently, a friend of mine asked if I could help her find a job. "Preferably not waitressing," she added. I couldn't help but remember a Mexican woman I heard last month. Inez came to the United States for the promise of a waitressing job. "Preferably not forced sex," she should have said.

Inez, like too many girls from Mexico and other poorer countries, was caught in the web of the sex traffickers. Promised a menial but honest job in the United States, she became a bondservant of the smugglers who brought her here. She had to repay them from her "salary," which was calculated in empty condom wrappers worth \$25 each. Inez has lived to tell her story. Many others die of abuse, AIDS, or other diseases.

Sex trafficking, like religious persecution, shows up the darker side of our allegedly enlightened age. And, over the past year, many of those who had joined forces against persecution are now also mobilizing against sex trafficking. The IRD is pleased to be a part of this extraordinary coalition against an emblematic violation of human rights.

The statistics are stunning. Around the world, over 2 million women, boys, and girls are forced into prostitution every year, according to a leading international child protection group. A new report from the CIA indicates that 50,000 are brought annually into the United States for purposes of prostitution. Sex trafficking is a growing form of international organized crime. Sadly, many governments have not made it a priority to punish the perpetrators or protect the victims.

A particularly disturbing international argument has arisen over the definition of sex trafficking. The existing definition, under a 1949 United Nations conven-

tion, commits the nations of the world to "punish any person who ... procures, entices or leads away, for purposes of prostitution, another person, even with the consent of that person." But a much narrower definition is being proposed in ongoing negotiations in Vienna on a new "Protocol to Combat International Trafficking in Women and Children."

The new definition would cover only cases in which it can be proven that persons have entered prostitution through force, fraud, or deception. This change would make prosecution of sex traffickers vastly more difficult. It would also effectively condone prostitution as a legitimate form of labor. The strongest push for the new definition has come from European countries, with quiet support so far from the U.S. delegation. Most developing countries, in which sex traffickers find their victims, oppose any weakening of the 1949 standard.

A coalition of groups ranging from the National Organization of Women and Planned Parenthood to the National Association for Evangelicals and Focus on the Family has rallied against the new, narrower definition of trafficking. Letters of protest have come to Hillary Clinton and Secretary of State Albright from the likes of Chuck Colson, Diane Knippers, Gloria Steinam, and Patricia Ireland.

Meanwhile, U.S. Senators Paul Wellstone and Sam Brownback are offering different versions of a bill (already passed by the House) calling for U.S. actions against governments that tolerate sex trafficking. After meeting with teenage victims trafficked from Nepal to India, Brownback remarked, "They came home to die... My oldest daughter is 13. The idea of being subjected to that is unfathomable to me."

While legislation is a vital instrument for combating such crimes, the church also has a unique responsibility to uphold human dignity, and to offer hope and healing to victims whose lives are scarred by abuse and exploitation. Joining with human rights organizations and faith-based groups, IRD participates in a new coalition called Initiative Against Sexual Trafficking. The first event sponsored by the coalition was held at the National Association of Evangelicals convention in March. After two testimonies told by survivors, the rally continued with a panel of powerful speakers, a clip from a chilling documentary on a Bombay brothel, and a call to participants to collect a million keys - symbolic of freeing the captives. **f**



Young women turn away from the camera by the doorway to a brothel in Bombay, India. Are these women there voluntarily?

ELECTION MONITORING

SPRINGTIME IN WASHINGTON

By Steve R. Rempé

In springtime "a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love," as the poet Tennyson put it. But in Washington, spring is the season for protests. In April and May alone, several major demonstrations have taken place in Washington. Church agencies and leaders have played prominent roles. Among the events:

❖ A human chain encircling the Capitol building, sponsored by the Jubilee 2000 Campaign on April 9. Church agencies within each of the mainline denominations have endorsed this movement, which promotes cancellation of the foreign debts of the world's poorest nations by the end of the year 2000. Attendance at the rally was light, estimated at less than 5,000.

❖ An unsuccessful attempt April 16-17 to shut down the meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund by civil disobedience. The several thousand participants were a collection of environmentalist, socialist, anarchist, and other opponents of "global capitalism." While few clergy were visible on the barricades, a number of prominent churches in the area provided meeting space and lodging for protestors.

❖ EarthFair 2000, commemorating the 30th anniversary of Earth Day (April 22). Perhaps because this date fell during Holy Week for Western Christians, official involvement by church groups was limited. Some church bodies, including the National Council of Churches, encouraged pastors to speak from the pulpit on environmental issues. A suggested sermon by the NCC declares: "Each time we install an energy-efficient light bulb, it can be an act of faithfulness. Each time we ride our bike, or walk, instead of driving, it is a spiritual victory."

❖ The "Millennium March on Washington," supporting the legal

and social normalization of homosexuality (April 30). A number of pro-homosexual organizations within the various denominations endorsed the march. Festivities included "The Wedding," in which thousands of same-sex couples exchanged vows. The ceremony was conducted by the Rev. Troy Perry of the predominantly homosexual Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. Defrocked Methodist minister Jimmy Creech also addressed the couples. The vast majority of the half-million marchers did not have obvious church connections.



❖ The "Million Mom March" in support of stricter firearms regulation (May 11). This demonstration counted 37 faith organizations among its sponsors, including the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the women's agencies of the United Methodist Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the NCC.

That these protests are occurring in the months preceding a presidential election is hardly coincidence. By drawing thousands of protestors to Washington, organizers hope to gain national attention for their agendas. With enough attention, the candidates will feel obliged to weigh in on the issues being raised. Interest groups can then use such state-

ments as leverage on both the candidates and the voters.

Endorsements from mainline churches do not generally bring in large crowds of demonstrators. Many church members are in ignorance of, or disagreement with, the stands taken by their spiritual leaders. But the presence of prominent clergy at an event can lend it an air of greater moral seriousness.

It is worth noting that almost all of the major demonstrations this spring are for various causes aligned with the political left. The image thus portrayed is that Christians are only concerned with liberal issues and government solutions. More conservative evangelicals may balance the

picture somewhat with events such as a September 2 "day of fasting and praying for repentance and revival in the nation."

There is, of course, value to Christians exercising their constitutional rights to assemble peaceably and petition for redress of grievances. The danger lies in presenting over-simplified ideological slogans as the answer to deep-seated manifestations of human depravity. An effective church leadership would hold each issue up to the light of Scripture, pointing always toward the Gospel that is so much more powerful than any political program. Christians should be careful not to put too much faith in either the existing power structures or their own political advocacy, lest this spring of protest turn into the winter of our discontent. **f**

REFORMING THE CHURCH

A DIFFERENT VIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENT

In October 1999, 25 leaders in the fields of theology, science, economics, and public policy gathered in West Cornwall, Connecticut. They were concerned that environmentalism had become identified exclusively with the theological and political Left. Many participants wished to challenge the tendency to use environmentalism as an excuse for revising basic Jewish and Christian teachings. They wanted to resist the temptation to enlist religious bodies as lobbyists for heavy-handed statist proposals. Participants sought to offer an alternative to the National Religious Partnership on the Environment, giving greater stress to the biblical teaching of human stewardship over the earth. They also wished to put forward a more positive view of economic freedom and technological innovation.

Below are excerpts from the statement that resulted from this gathering, the Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship. IRD President Diane Knippers was a participant and signatory.

❖ Many people mistakenly view humans as principally consumers and polluters rather than producers and stewards. Consequently, they ignore our potential, as bearers of God's image, to add to the earth's abundance.... A clean environment is a costly good; consequently, growing affluence, technological innovation, and the application of human and material capital are integral to environmental improvement. The tendency among some to oppose economic progress in the name of environmental stewardship is often sadly self-defeating.

❖ Many people believe that "nature knows best," or that the earth – untouched by human hands – is the ideal. Such romanticism leads some to deify nature or oppose human dominion over creation. Our position, informed by revelation and confirmed by reason and experience, views human stewardship that unlocks the potential in creation for all the earth's inhabitants as good.

❖ Men and women were created in the image of God, given a privileged place among creatures, and commanded to exercise stewardship over the earth.... Sound environmental stewardship must

attend both to the demands of human well being and to a divine call for human beings to exercise caring dominion over the earth.

❖ God's law – summarized in the Decalogue and the two Great Commandments (to love God and neighbor) ... – represents God's design for shalom, or peace, and is the supreme rule of all conduct, for which personal or social prejudices must not be substituted.

❖ By disobeying God's law, humankind brought on itself moral and physical corruption as well as divine condemnation in the form of a curse upon the earth. Since the fall into sin people have often ignored their Creator, harmed their neighbors, and defiled the good creation.

❖ Human beings [in their restored fellowship with God] are called to be fruitful, to bring forth good things from the earth, to join with God in making provision for our temporal well being, and to enhance the beauty and fruitfulness of the rest of the earth. Our call to fruitfulness, therefore, is not contrary to but mutually complementary with our call to steward God's gifts.

❖ We aspire to a world in which

human beings care wisely and humbly for all creatures, first and foremost for their fellow human beings, recognizing their proper place in the created order.

❖ We aspire to a world in which liberty as a condition of moral action is preferred over government-initiated management of the environment as a means to common goals.

❖ We aspire to a world in which the relationships between stewardship and private property are fully appreciated, allowing people's natural incentive to care for their own property to reduce the need for collective ownership and enterprises, and in which collective action, when deemed necessary, takes place at the most local level possible.

❖ We aspire to a world in which widespread economic freedom – which is integral to private, market economies – makes sound ecological stewardship available to ever greater numbers.

❖ We aspire to a world in which advancements in agriculture, industry, and commerce not only minimize pollution and transform most waste products into efficiently used resources but also improve the material conditions of life for people everywhere. **f**



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