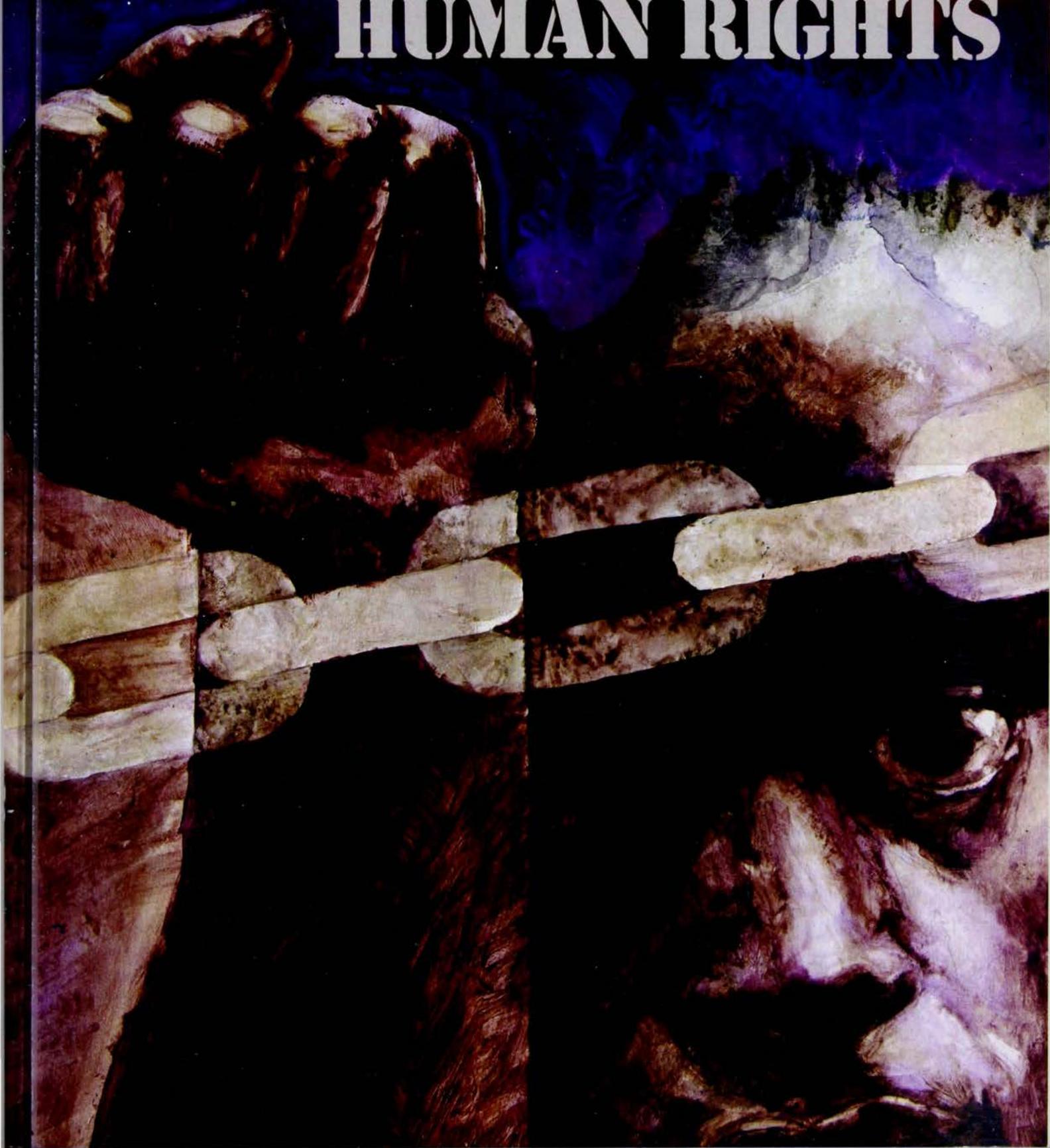


# new world outlook

OCTOBER 1979

## HUMAN RIGHTS



# new world outlook

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*Editor*, Arthur J. Moore; *Managing Editor*, Charles E. Brewster  
*Associate Editor*, Ellen Clark; *Art Director*, Roger C. Sadler  
*Administrative Assistant*, Florence J. Mitchell

475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York 10027

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# MISSION MEMO

News and Analysis of Developments in Christian Mission

October, 1979

China. One thousand Chinese Christians attended a service of thanksgiving to mark the reopening of Moore Memorial Church in Shanghai, September 2. The church, which was one of the largest and best-known centers of Methodism in China, had been closed almost three decades. Announcement of the ceremony was made by Li Shou-pao, associate general secretary of the National Committee for YMCA's of China, one of a four-member delegation of Chinese Christian leaders presently touring the United States. Dr. Li hailed the reopening of the church, which has been re-named Mo-en (Grace) Church, as "signalling a new beginning for churches in China." He predicted the reopening soon of "three or four" more churches in Shanghai. Recounting that an American friend had asked if he was not afraid that no one would attend church services, Dr. Li laughed.

UMCOR. The United Methodist Committee on Relief will hold a three-day celebration in Washington, D.C., January 11-13, to begin observance of its 40th Anniversary year. Among those invited to attend special public meetings there are former heads and staff of the organization and all UM Senators and Congresspersons.

National Seminar. 263 women representing conference, district and local units of United Methodist Women grappled with a variety of issues Aug. 17-24 in Lincoln, Nebraska, during their quadrennial National Seminar. The most emotional issue was racism, centering around plans to ratify the UMW Charter of Racial Justice Policies. High spot was a live satellite conversation with staff members of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland. Much of the week was spent in intensive study on a broad range of issues such as political skills, the family, women in prison, the biblical faith and homosexuality. The last topic, supposedly controversial, excited very little debate at the meeting. The women recommended 27 (out of 31 suggested) items to the Women's Division for future programming consideration.

World Conference on Religion and Peace. Representatives of all the world's major religions gathered in the U.S. August 28-September 7 for the Third Assembly of the World Conference on Religion and Race. Most of the sessions were held in Princeton, N.J., but included an opening interfaith service at New York's St. Patrick's Cathedral and a visit to Washington where they were addressed by President Jimmy Carter. The 350 participants from 47 countries included eight representatives from mainland China, a first, as well as 34

Japanese, the largest non-U.S. delegation. Of the religions, Christians were the most numerous (85), but Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Jains and others were also present. Adopting a five-page "Princeton Declaration", the Assembly proposed: cessation of all testing, research, manufacture, spread and deployment of nuclear weapons and other instruments of mass destruction; a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty; a UN covenant against the use of all weapons of mass destruction; and replacing the present concept of balance of power with a system of collective security. The document also urged the need for "a just and equitable economic order", condemned religious discrimination in any form, called for a UN declaration and covenant on the matter, and noted "the views of some of the participants that there should be no continuation of the development of nuclear power."

Lebanon. Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark has urged United Methodists and those "who want to love justice" to plead with Israel to stop bombing southern Lebanon. He reported to the UMC Panel on International Affairs September 7, following a trip to Lebanon to survey the state of human rights. Noting that the Israelis had been engaged in daily raids on southern Lebanon since April 22, using U.S.-made jets and artillery, Clark said "the people who remain there are utterly defenseless and include women and children." He stated that "Since April Israel has not claimed to be doing retaliation. They are engaged in preemptive strikes, a euphemism from the Vietnam war."

Pacific Homes. The United Methodist Church has gained a major ally in its appeal for Supreme Court review of California state court decisions holding that the Church may be held liable in lawsuits against Pacific Homes. A "friend of the court" brief submitted by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, representing several Baptist denominations, charges that the recent California rulings threaten the "demise of religious denominations as they now exist." The Baptist brief argues that the diversity of Church polity among denominations requires courts to refrain from placing them into categories of "hierarchical" or "independent". Various shades between the two extremes must be acknowledged, the Baptists say. The Baptist brief further declared that because ecclesiology is based on theological beliefs and understandings, the state is not a competent definer of "the nature of religious intraorganizational relationships." It is anticipated that the Supreme Court will consider the petitions in the term beginning in October, but there is no indication when a decision should be expected. The National Council of Churches has also filed a brief in support of the UMC position that the denomination is not a "suable entity."

Middle East. The Executive Committee of the National Council of Churches has said it is in "fundamental agreement" with resigned UN Ambassador Andrew Young's challenge to the U.S. and Israel to end their "no-talk" policy regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization (see editorials), but the Committee stopped short of asking the U.S. to officially recognize the PLO as a party in peace negotiations. The NCC statement evoked an immediate response from several Jewish organizations. In a joint statement the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the Synagogue Council of America, and the Interreligious Affairs Department of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations said they "regret that the representatives of America's largest group-

ing of Protestant and Orthodox Churches have failed to face the moral and religious issue underlying America's no-talk policy with the terrorist Palestine Liberation Organization". The Jewish statement went on to say that in carrying out its goals the PLO "resorts to self-confessed acts of terrorism against innocent civilians", and the NCC Executive Committee has failed to call for a cessation of these acts. The adopted NCC Executive Committee resolution called attention to a 1974 resolution which urged Israel and the Palestinians "to recognize the right of the other party to the same self-determination which they desire for themselves," and called on the U.S. to "develop more open contacts with . . . the Palestine Liberation Organization."

Iran. Thirty men burst into the home of Anglican bishop Hassan Dehqani-Tafti in Isfahan, Iran (see June NWO), damaging furniture and seizing church documents but otherwise not harming the bishop. The raid marked a continuation of harassment of the Episcopal Church in Iran, and followed earlier protests by the bishop over the seizure of Church institutions. Other Anglican bishops in the Middle East have rallied to Bishop Dehqani's support with a cable of protest to the Ayatollah Khomeini. "It is sad to have to admit to concerned Christians abroad that in Iran arbitrary action seems to be taken with impunity," the bishop said.

Ecumenism. Dr. James I. McCord, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, led a seven-member delegation of Reformed Church leaders in a four-day meeting in Istanbul with Eastern Orthodoxy's Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios I. It was the first official delegation of Reformed leaders to the Phanar since the early seventeenth century. Dr. McCord, who is also president of Princeton Theological Seminary, noted that both Churches emphasize the unity of the Church grounded on the apostolic faith, and he said their discussion on the doctrine of the Trinity "has proved to be of extreme importance." Similar visits have been made in the last year by United Methodist leaders.

Anglicans. The new Archbishop of Canterbury and spiritual leader of the world's 65 million Anglicans is Bishop Robert Runcie of St. Albans, England. Bishop Runcie, who will succeed Archbishop Donald Coggan in January, has chaired the Anglican team in the Anglican-Orthodox dialogues, and is known as an expert on Orthodox theology. He is identified with the "high Church" or Catholic wing of the Anglican Church and is opposed to women priests though he is in favor of allowing divorced persons to remarry in the church, which is at present barred. He is also a football (soccer) fan, and raises pigs for a hobby.

The One and Only. Lillian R. Block will retire as editor-in-chief of Religious News Service (RNS) on January 1, a post she has held since 1957. During her 37 years with RNS only once was the news service not issued on its regular five-days-a-week publication schedule, and that was during the 1977 mid-July power failure in New York when all electrical equipment went dead. More than 800 media outlets are serviced by RNS which has been hailed by many religious newspapers and magazines as the single indispensable tool of the trade. Ms. Block will be succeeded by Gerald Renner, RNS managing editor.

Angola. Dr. Agostinho Neto, the Marxist poet, physician and philosopher who became the first President of Angola following the end of Portuguese rule, died in Moscow of cancer at the age of 56. Mr. Neto, a member of a prominent Methodist family, at one time worked as a secretary to Bishop Ralph E. Dodge, and received his medical education in Lisbon with the help of Crusade Scholarships. He became an opponent of Portuguese colonialism during his student years, and was incarcerated by the Portuguese several times. His death may mean a new period of uncertainty in Angola.

Deaths. Miss Lenore Millen, a former editor and director of the children's department of Friendship Press, died of heart failure September 1, in Crossville, Tenn., at the age of 83 . . . . Rev. Everett M. Stowe, a former Methodist missionary in China for 23 years, died July 1, in Wilmington, Ohio.

Personalia. After only a little more than a year in office, Dr. Douglas Reid Sasser has resigned the presidency of Scarritt College in Nashville, Tennessee, to assume responsibility of his family's business in Georgia . . . . Rev. Allan Brockway, former editor of Engage/Social Action magazine of the UM Board of Church and Society, has been named to a post in Jewish-Christian relations with the World Council of Churches headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland . . . . Janice L. Frederick, 29, a former Crusade Scholar and graduate of Scarritt College and South Carolina State College, is a new staff member in the Ecumenical and Interreligious Concerns Division of the Board of Global Ministries . . . . Rev. Shoji Tsutomu, a minister of the United Church of Christ in Japan and general secretary of the National Christian Council of Japan, made his first visit to the U.S. since being elected in April, 1978 . . . . Grant L. Shockley, president of the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, will become president of Philander-Smith College in Little Rock, Ark., on January 1.

Mozambique. Chalmers and Pauline Browne, United Presbyterian missionaries who served for 25 years in Brazil, have recently returned from four years in Mozambique where they were sent by BOGM's World Division to do work in simplified literature for new literates. They worked basically in workshops with church members in which the people themselves developed their own stories out of their Christian experiences. Although the Brownes have concluded their work, a staff of Mozambicans will carry it on. The mining ministry among Mozambicans who work in South Africa mines continues, though in somewhat reduced numbers; literacy work among those miners has led to dramatic increases in literacy in those areas in Mozambique to which the miners returned, they report.

USSR. The largest Methodist congregation on the continent of Europe is located in Tallinn, Estonia, now part of the Soviet Union, according to a report in Flame, the journal of the World Evangelism Committee of the World Methodist Council. Methodism began in Estonia in 1910 and grew slowly, then lost half its membership in World War II. Membership in the Central Methodist Church in Tallinn was reduced to 70 and the church building was destroyed. Under the leadership of Hugo Oengo (who recently died), the Central Church began to grow again and now has 1100 members and 12 choirs and music groups. The congregation worships in the Seventh-Day Adventist church building.

# EDITORIALS

## NO TALK IS NO WIN

All the furor over the resignation of US Ambassador to the United Nations Andrew Young has tended to focus on the strain in relations between Jews and Blacks in this country and the personality and style of Mr. Young himself. These are important and interesting topics but they miss the central lesson of this incident, namely that the U.S. commitment not to talk to the Palestine Liberation Organization until it fulfills certain criteria is a short-sighted policy and one which any UN ambassador worth his or her salt would eventually have stumbled over.

In 1975 the U.S. government agreed to the Israeli government that it would not have any formal contacts with the PLO until they agreed to "recognize the right of Israel to exist." Such an undertaking to a nervous ally might seem unexceptionable since the existence of Israel is certainly a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy.

In fact, however, the U.S. government had made the fatal diplomatic mistake of excluding one party in a dispute from negotiations until it agreed to the terms of the other side.

It has long been the position of the Israeli government that the PLO are simply "terrorists" who cannot be brought into any negotiations. This is a case of passion overruling good sense. History records all too many former "terrorists" who are now respected statesmen. Ironically enough, the name of Menachem Begin comes immediately to mind.

In any case, the majority of nations in the world (and, more importantly, the majority of Palestinians) do not agree with the Israeli government on this matter. That being so, it was diplomatically foolish for the U.S. to close off its options. By doing so, we have placed ourselves in a situation where hypocrisy and deceit on the part of our representatives was inevitable.

As might have been predicted, the U.S. is now in a no-win situation. To maintain our present policy is to give up a great deal of negotiating leverage and to appear a captive of an Israeli policy which they themselves may have to abandon in future. To repudiate this

policy now means to appear to rebuff our ally Israel and to favor the PLO.

Nonetheless, it seems to us that all we can do is swallow hard and abandon the policy. Any settlement in the Middle East is unworkable without the Palestinians and that includes the PLO. Our main commitment is to peace and justice for all sides, including the Israelis and the Palestinians. Let us hope that we will not get distracted over very real intergroup tensions in the U.S. Perhaps this whole sorry business will help foster a bit more realism. If so, Andy Young will not have resigned in vain.

## THE DALAI LAMA'S VISIT

The general public is likely to be so entranced by the exotic nature of the Dalai Lama's first visit to the United States as to miss the remarkable significance of this event for interfaith relations. At an unusual service at New York's St. Patrick's cathedral the 44-year-old exiled leader of Tibetan Buddhism was welcomed by an overflow crowd of almost 5,000 persons including many American religious leaders. And when a minister suggested that everyone present touch someone next to them the Dalai Lama and Terence Cardinal Cooke clasped right hands. Progress in interfaith relations, virtually unimaginable twenty years ago, had its most effective symbol in that handclasp.

The Cardinal went out of his way to explain that this service should not be construed as saying that all religions are the same—a point with which we concur—but he did say this represented a "dramatic movement of the spirit" in our day. It is a movement that deserves recognition and celebration.

The message the Dalai Lama has brought thus far in his 49-day trip has been surprisingly non-political. Instead, he has talked much about compassion, love, inner renewal, non-violence and peace. Compassion, he said, "cannot be bought in one of New York City's big shops." When he spoke to a large gathering at the Interchurch Center and thanked Church World Service for its long-standing aid to Tibetan refugees he talked so much about compassion and love that some observers felt it was the most spiritual message heard at the Interchurch Center in a long time.

This was particularly fortunate because by inadvertence the Dalai Lama's visit coincided with the first official visit of Christians from the People's Republic of China. They were understandably nervous about being associated in any way with the Dalai Lama. This put the National Council of Churches, which would like to nurture our very tenuous relationships with Chinese Christians and still continue to aid Tibetans, in a bit of a double-bind. The NCC's answer to this admittedly difficult situation was to ask representatives of Church World Service, but not NCC leadership, to host the Dalai Lama. Afterwards, in a fit of overkill, the NCC issued a statement saying it had no official relationship with the Dalai Lama. This seemed to please the visiting Chinese, but we wonder if this was capitulating too much to expediency. For a spiritual leader of the Dalai Lama's eminence not to be greeted by the leadership of the National Council of Churches, after he has sat holding hands with Cardinal Cooke in St. Patrick's Cathedral, does more to diminish the National Council than the Dalai Lama. There are times when it is best to stick to principles and let those who would complain understand them as best they can.

## THE DAVID DISASTERS

Hurricane David is now history and there will be no more TV film footage of its disastrous swing through the Caribbean and up the Atlantic seaboard. But the real work of relief is just beginning and will continue long after media attention has gone elsewhere. David was the sixth deadliest Atlantic-area storm in this century; its final death toll could reach into the thousands. Church World Service, of which the United Methodist Committee on Relief is a major component, is joining numerous other relief agencies to help the stricken and homeless in Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, as well as in the U.S. There is much we can do. UMCOR is seeking \$100,000, of which \$40,000 will go to Church World Service and \$60,000 to the Methodist Church of the Caribbean for direct aid to the tiny island of Dominica already, food and clothing have been air-lifted to the affected area.

It is often said that contemporary concern for human rights is based on the Bible. Prophetic concern for widows and children and the oppressed, denunciation of solemn assemblies until justice rolls down like a river and righteousness as a mighty stream, and the compassion of Jesus for the outcast and forsaken are often cited in support of Christian involvement in human rights struggles. The laws, such as the prohibition against killing, certainly imply the human right to life.

But there is a difference between what is there by implication and what is explicit and the truth is that our modern understanding of human rights is a concept largely foreign to Scripture. We do a disservice both to Scripture and those to whom we are indeed indebted for our human rights concepts to state too flatly that Scripture supports human rights. What we can say is that Scripture gives us the basis for our passion for human rights, but we are largely indebted to other sources for the idea itself.

The basic reason for that, as I see it, is that human rights basically means those things we can claim as ours due solely on the basis of our humanity. They are rights we have in common. When the Bible talks about *rights*, which is not nearly as often as it talks about responsibilities, it is in the context solely of specific rights, such as the rights of the first-born to a double share of the property (Deuteronomy 21:17). This is not what we mean today when we talk about human rights.

Another reason for the difference between the modern understanding of human rights and the perspective of Scripture is that our idea of human rights today is inextricably linked with notions of government. Of course, human rights encompasses a field far larger than simply political rights, such as the right to vote or seek office, but since the eighteenth century it has not really been possible to think of the



CHARLES E. BREWSTER

# HUMAN RIGHTS & THE BIBLE

broad field of human rights apart from thinking of how they can be achieved and preserved, and this means thinking about government.

Now there are many forms of government in the Bible, including the tribal confederacy, monarchy, and tyranny, but there is never the notion that the purpose of these governments is to keep people happy and if they aren't happy they have a right to get a new government. The closest the Bible comes to that sort of thinking are not, in fact, the prophecies of Amos, who never had the king's ear directly, but the psalmists. The writer of Psalm 72, which is a Royal Psalm and was doubtless sung in the king's presence, intones: "O God, endow the king with thy own justice . . . may he deal out justice to the poor and suffering . . ." The prophet Nathan's clever denunciation of King David to his face is another instance. These are attempts to humanize government, but the

appeal was not based on human rights but on the duty of the king to keep the covenant made by the people with God. Happiness in the Old Testament's view is to be found in study of the Torah and following its precepts, not by changing governments. As for the New Testament, with the sole exception of the 13th chapter of the Book of Revelation, which is more than balanced by the 13th chapter of Romans, there is little support for refashioning governments based on human rights concepts.

## Sources Outside the Bible

What then are the other sources to which we are indebted? These begin with Aristotle, are picked up and continued by Roman law, and reach their full flowering in the modern era in the thought of Enlightenment thinkers such as Locke, Montesquieu and Rousseau, and then the 20th Century's

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*Human rights are implied  
in Old Testament social justice  
and New Testament individual worth.  
But for the concept of human rights  
we have to look elsewhere.*

Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In his *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics* Aristotle concerned himself with *eudaimonia*, meaning "happiness" or "well being". (The word, incidentally, does not occur in the New Testament.) Although his thought forms and argument are tedious to us today, or seem to belabor the obvious, the fact that he dealt with questions of justice, friendship, and well being for both the individual and society is the true source for our concepts of human rights today. Aristotle was an aristocrat and felt that enlightened rule by an aristocracy was a jolly good way of achieving *eudaimonia*; he had much less respect for democracy, considering it only a government where the ruler is weak and everyone has license to do as he pleases. But even that is preferable, of course, to tyranny. It should be added that Aristotle had no notion of our understanding of representative democracy, but saw only the chaos of what we today call participatory democracy. Aristotle had the highest regard for monarchy, which he saw as the opposite of tyranny. In his definition the king ruled for the benefit of his subjects. "He cares for them with a view toward their well-being," he wrote in the *Ethics*.

Anyone who doubts the enormous contribution of Roman law to human rights need only consider how much we still rely on Latin words such as *habeas corpus*, and *juror*. For instance, in the Middle East dispute, Israeli claims to Palestine are based on the principles of irredentism (from the Latin, *redemptus*, to redeem), that land may be reclaimed by reasons of cultural and historical ties. The Arabs, also not at a loss for Latin, claim the Israelis are planting settlements on their land, giving those settlements *de facto* status and further altering the *status quo* in their favor. Roman law is the basis of the law codes in many countries as diverse as Japan, Scotland and Argentina. When it was codified



Contemporary Christian concern for human rights is symbolized by Pope John Paul II praying at the death wall at Auschwitz concentration camp during his recent visit to Poland.

by the emperor Justinian in the sixth century A.D. the legal codes were suffused with Justinian's deep personal Christian faith. This combination survived the Dark Ages and eventually came to light again in the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.

### "Divine" Right and Human Rights

One reason it came to light was the growth of a theory which was just exactly the opposite of human rights, namely, the theory of the divine right of kings. One of its proponents was none other than King James I of England, he of Bible fame, who said, "Kings are rightly called gods, for that they exercise a manner or resemblance of divine power on earth." (Needless to say, this was a total misreading of the Bible he authorized.) By contrast, the English political philosopher John Locke wrote in 1690 that "The liberty of man in society is to be under no other legislative power but that established by consent in the commonwealth, nor under the dominion of any will or restraint of any law, but what that legislative shall enact according to the trust put in it." Locke is rightly considered the father of modern constitutional law and democratic processes. His basic idea that natural rights stem from a kind of original "state of nature" in which all men possessed certain "natural rights" reflected the starting point of many political philosophers of the age. What, they asked, is humankind like apart from the constraints of civilization and in a "state of nature"? But whereas the Bible discussed this point only for the purpose of determining the origin of sin and humanity's alienation from God, the Enlightenment philosophers did it for the purpose of determining what form of government people should have. This is one reason why the Church was slow in appreciating the values of the Enlightenment and often appeared against it, though in later years, such as in the twentieth century, churchmen such as the American John Haynes Holmes could write appreciatively of the Enlightenment as the "full flowering" of Christianity.

### Rousseau's Social Contract

In the eighteenth century it was the Frenchman Jean Jacques Rousseau who did the most to lay the groundwork for what we currently think about when we think of human rights. *The Social Contract*, written in 1762,

began with the immortal words, "Man is born free, but is everywhere in chains." Not even the closing lines of Marx's *Communist Manifesto* have had the stirring worldwide impact of these words of the sentimental and impulsive Frenchman Rousseau. The current emphasis on human rights "covenants" (see elsewhere in this issue) is enormously indebted to Rousseau's "Contract." Rousseau ridiculed those powers and laws which "bound new fetters on the poor, and gave new powers to the rich; which irretrievably destroyed natural liberty, eternally fixed the law of property and inequality, converted clever usurpation into unalterable right, and for the advantage of a few ambitious individuals, subjected all mankind to perpetual labor, slavery and wretchedness." The French Revolution which followed Rousseau's death by only ten years has rightly been called his Revolution. The French Constitution of 1791 included a Declaration of the Rights of Man, which began: "Men are born and remain equal in rights. . . . The aim of every political association is the protection of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression. The source of all sovereignty is essentially in the nation; no body, no individual, can exercise authority. . . ."

Rousseau did not advocate a return to the "state of nature" in which men had an unlimited right to everything. Rather he felt that society required some form of trade off, a social compact in which some natural liberty is exchanged for civil liberty for the sake of mutual protection. The individual will, he said, would be subordinated to the General Will, which is what he meant by the sovereignty of the people. The sovereignty of the people is inalienable. When young people today shout "Power to the People" they are echoing Rousseau. In fact he thought Locke's idea of democracy, which was representative, was not radical enough. Rousseau's basic idea was of a community of free people who share responsibility for the welfare of the whole and still have personal enjoyment (Aristotle's "well being").

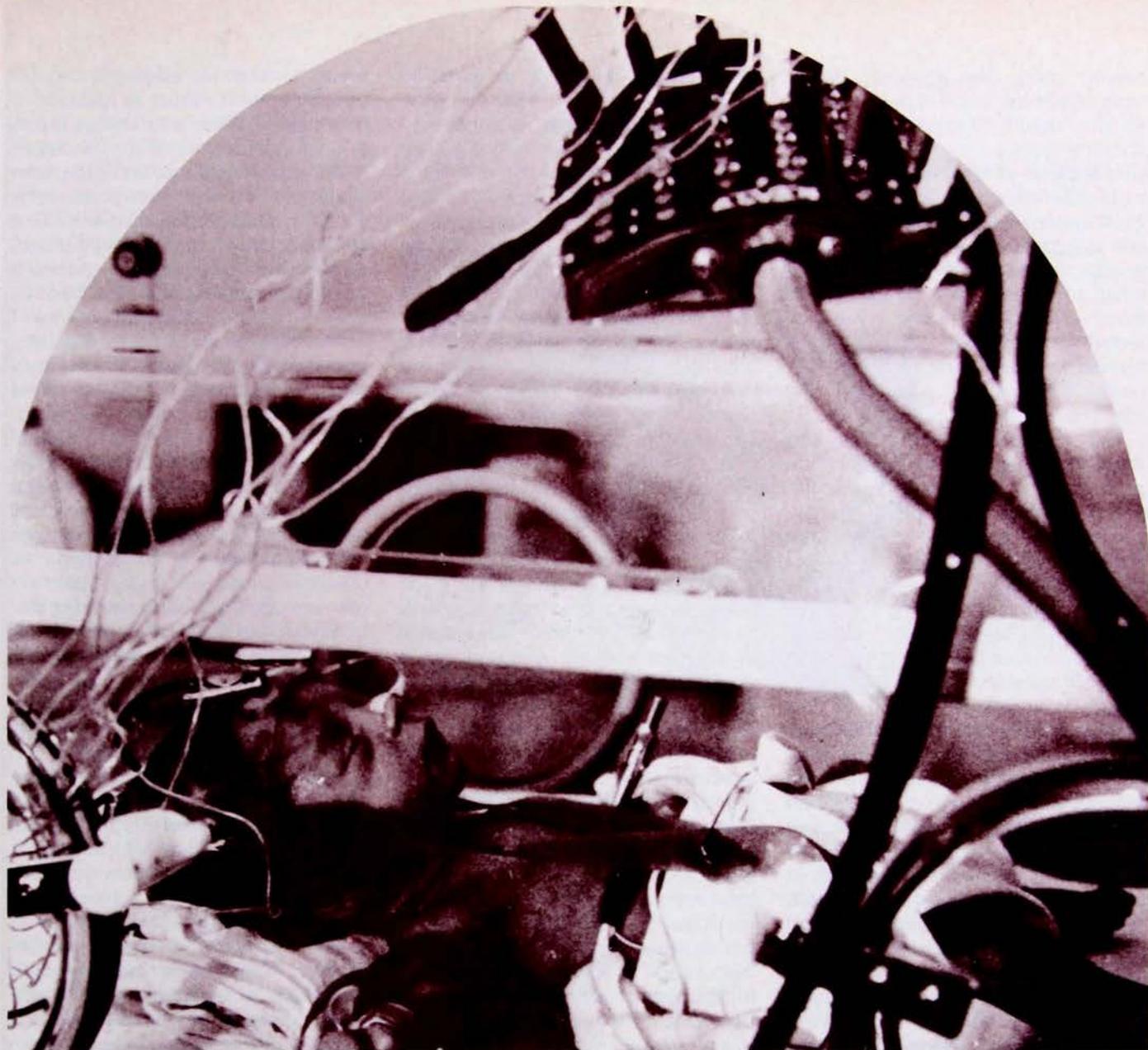
Rousseau saw that it is not enough for government to protect individual liberties. Government must also work for equality, including economic equality, though Rousseau was realist enough to see the limits of government in this area.

### The New Economic Emphasis

Today we are seeing a new emphasis on economics in the pursuit of human rights. But one wonders if Rousseau would be entirely pleased with this direction, especially when individual liberties and human rights tend to be forgotten. Rousseau's writings had balance, but that is not always the case today. In 1977, the U.N. General Assembly decided that the first priority of human rights was not that of individuals but of peoples. The first priority was now to combat colonialism, apartheid, racial discrimination, and the denial of self determination of peoples. Even Andrew Young, who is no friend of apartheid, objected to this new emphasis. In effect, the U.N. reversed its longstanding position going back to Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which gave absolute priority to the pursuit of individual human rights. Additionally, the U.N. resolution in 1977 urged efforts for a "New International Economic Order", holding this to be "essential" for promoting human rights.

It may be argued that this is a necessary emphasis. Many western nations which have long championed individual human rights have been apathetic to the problems of economic exploitation and colonialism. Perhaps a neglected strain of Rousseau is being mixed with the social justice of Amos. Perhaps. But it is also possible, human nature being what it is, that this new emphasis is a convenient cover for those societies which still have great difficulty with the rights of individuals. The "divine right of kings" didn't die with James I and Louis XIV; it survives in politburos and among scores of generals, colonels, and "presidents for life" in numerous countries. The message of the dignity and worth of each individual, so basic to the teachings of Christianity, has hardly been heard in many lands.

The best movie ever made about human rights was "Z". It was about life in Greece under the colonels in the 1960s and early 1970s and it depicted the struggle of one man and his followers to change a system which daily denied human rights to the people. In Greek, "Z" refers to a small word meaning "he lives." It could also mean "it lives," that is, the idea of human rights lives no matter how hard those who are in power try to suppress it. ■



## GENETIC ENGINEERING WHOSE HUMAN RIGHTS?

CATHIE LYONS

**T**he birth of baby Louise Brown over a year ago in England was cause for celebration by many childless couples who would have given up homes and savings to experience what came true for the Lancashire housewife and her railway worker husband. As the cameras focused on Oldham and District General Hospital, tension-filled reporters readied themselves for the news story of the century. Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* listening audience waited in an atmosphere

mixed with side show curiosity and human suspense. Soon the electric-charged message was released. "Test-tube baby born."

The baby Brown birth was the public beginning of a drama which started a few decades ago through the pioneering work of two English researchers, Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards. Through them, methods were perfected which resulted in Louise's birth on July 25, 1978. When one considers the joy and hope this

happy bouncy baby represents in the lives of infertile couples, it becomes easy to imagine that in vitro fertilization (egg fertilized by sperm in a petri dish) and embryo transfer (placement of the fertilized egg into the uterus by mechanical means) will become logical, inevitable methods of human reproduction for some persons. Perhaps it is in this drama that the most important events shaping our biological future have had their beginning.

Louise was not a genetically engi-

neered child. The germinal matter from which she came was not altered so she would have pre-determined characteristics such as dark coloring, slim features or big brown eyes. Nor were other efforts at designed procreation undertaken. Sperm and egg were not selected to guarantee a chosen gender. But what was done is basic to what is to follow. The life substances from which Louise came were subjected to laboratory processes, to human handling, care and oversight during the gestation period prior to implantation in her mother's womb.

Her conception was totally and dramatically dependent on technical processes and mechanical manipulation of egg and sperm outside the bodies of her parents. The fact of her birth has been sufficient to shatter speculation about whether host motherhood (a woman carrying a baby to term for another woman), children designed to meet specific characteristics, and sex selection will take place. These activities are a part of our reproductive future. The fact that baby Louise is apparently healthy and other childless couples want the same help assures that we are on the way to producing progeny conceived and designed through laboratory methods. Most of the ingredients are already in the mix: the technology, or much of it, exists and is being perfected; the British "first birth" was a success; and there is a limited but growing public acceptance and demand for it. In addition, we have been given some quiet lag time in which to adjust to this new way of doing things.

### Baby Brown's Progeny

What will come next? Will the grandchildren of Louise Brown and the generations which follow be genetically engineered for intelligence, ability to cope with constant change, and freedom from genetically caused diseases and disabilities? Indeed, much of what could come one day is highly desired now, particularly in the case of preventing or treating gene-transmitted illnesses. Even the most stern critics of genetic engineering are able to applaud the benefits of basic research on monogenic diseases or those problems caused by the malfunctioning of a single gene. Two thousand diseases fall in this category and may one day be alleviated by genetic surgical skills for replacing defective genes and introducing new genetic material. Diabetes will proba-

bly be operated on first, followed by cures for hemophilia, PKU and Tay-Sachs disease. These advances in disease control appear at first glance unlimited. This is the bright side of the work being done to splice genes and to recombine DNA molecules. Some would ask, however, is this not the beginning of a slippery slope? The answer is, "yes". Relief from inheritable diseases is just the beginning. Research on single gene malfunctioning will lead to research and applied technology to control those more complex characteristics associated with behavior and thought. The belief that "antisocial" conduct such as criminality and social protest is rooted in malfunctioning genetic information is already a working thesis of some prominent scientists. For these social and biological researchers the question of the logical next step arises. If we can genetically engineer the riddance of a defective gene which causes a gene-linked disease, why not engineer the genetic control of how we behave and think?

In raising this question it may appear we have moved a long way beyond baby Louise. This is true only in the sense of perfected technologies and the ability to manipulate and handle basic life substances. What is most important is the fact that there are some basic issues about human rights which are central to the baby Louise birth as well as to the genetic engineering of human life in the decades to come.

### Ends of Medicine

One of the issues is similar to a concern being raised in world politics. Political repression in North Korea and Nicaragua exemplifies how power yielded over persons brings with it questions of human rights. In the field of medical practice it is the question of the way in which technological power is shaping the ends of medicine. Specifically, the human rights issue here becomes one of: *first*, whether and under what circumstances it is right to manipulate human nature through genetic control; and *second*, on the basis of what reasoning will we determine whether human engineering is a proper pursuit for the practice of medicine? The answer to these questions is not clear and yet one method of decision-making is already operative. It originates in the familiar adage that what can be done will be done, but has been refined slightly

owing to scientific emphasis on risk-benefit analysis. What is resulting is the principle that if a technique is safe it is morally permissible. This quasi scientific-moral equation is demonstrating itself in the wake of the baby Brown event. It reads like this: First test-tube baby born normal = procedure is safe = infertile couples should be helped to bear children through these laboratory techniques.

There are scientists and ethicists, however, who believe considerations about risks and safety (as important as they are) are not adequate in addressing the specific issue of the rightful purpose of medical science. They know the question must be put in more precise and practical goal-oriented terms. They are asking, for example, "Should not the practice of medicine devote its resources to the treatment and prevention of diseases and disabilities? And if so, what constitutes treatment and in what instances is it to be applied?"

Some have tried to establish the medical propriety of baby Louise's birth by citing in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer as acceptable methods in the treatment of infertility. Others have argued to the contrary that in terms of "treatment" the procedures were unacceptable and unethical from the start because they subjected the embryo to elements of unknown risk.

Even more far reaching and problematic, in terms of the rightful ends of medicine, is the application of techniques designed to assure the birth of children of a desired sex or of particular physical characteristics. Such technological feats do not constitute therapy or treatment in conventional terms. Rather, they are methods for the design and control of human progeny based on those physical attributes which prospective parents or society deem most desirable.

### Need For Guidelines

When one talks about techniques one is addressing the question of means or the methods we use in achieving our goals. It is at this point that two additional human rights issues arise. One has to do with the protection of vulnerable life and the other has to do with the conflict developing between the freedom of scientific inquiry and public participation in decisions about techniques which will have major social and political applications and consequences.

There are those who have contend-

ed for a number of years that the production of a baby through in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer would never be ethical. This line of reasoning is drawn from two sources: the one involves the principle of medical ethics which states, "do no harm," and the other concerns the fact that we are unable to assess in advance the actual risks in the genetic manipulation of generative substances (egg and sperm) or in the laboratory procedures for artificial fertilization and implantation. One raises the rights question directly by asking "when do claims of protection originate?" Responses to this are usually fuzzy because of the lack of legal and moral standing which have been accorded the human embryo. What has been acknowledged, however, is that procreative matter and the embryo are vulnerable. Ought protection be demanded for that which is vulnerable? Should that protection become an a priori ethical concept guiding future work with basic human life substances?

In 1975 a group of scientists, including Nobel laureate James D. Watson (discoverer of the double helix), had a letter printed in *Science* magazine which called for a moratorium on recombinant DNA research until there could be better assessment of the biohazards involved. The letter brought about a conference at Asilomar, California of scientists from 17 countries and has recently resulted in the development of NIH (National Institutes of Health) Guidelines to be followed by federally funded institutions in which the recombining of DNA molecules is taking place. The present guidelines deal largely with defining safety levels and the kind of laboratory containment required depending on the extent of risk involved in the research.

In the four years since this small but notable band of scientists spoke up much has been written from within the scientific community against their action. Some of the signatories of the "Berg letter" subsequently suggested they overreacted, citing it as an example of crying wolf too soon.

#### Questions About Research

Whether or not these scientists thought there was fire before they smelled smoke is to some not the most important point. What stands out more clearly is that a few scientists looked beyond the conclaves of science and

***"On the basis of what reasoning will we determine whether human engineering is a proper pursuit for the practice of medicine?"***



The birth over a year ago of Louise Brown, the first test tube baby and apparently a healthy child, shattered medical precedents.

realized they were not in this alone. They were conscious that larger issues existed. They were aware of the crucial step about to be taken in moving from pure science (that value-neutral domain) to applied knowledge and started to ask, "is it morally right to be about this research in the first place?" The most noted scientist raising questions about gene splicing and modifying techniques is Robert Sinsheimer of the California Institute of Technology. His concern is with what this will lead to in the future. We are, in his opinion, in a lock-step progression from single gene therapy to the wholesale redesign of human life. For him the social hazards of genetic engineering through recombinant DNA are of the highest magnitude. Sinsheimer and others writing from within the scientific community are trying to establish a conceptual framework from which to proceed scientifically and morally in the future. They are asking, "what is the ethical acceptability and social value of genetic research?" and are seeking support from the lay public in getting an answer.

Our advances in DNA research ultimately take us back to our beginnings. The germinal and molecular matter upon which personhood is dependent is what is under examination and will one day be subject to laboratory control mechanisms. The biological future of humankind is

being shaped by research going on now to understand and manipulate genetic information prior even to conception. In some ways this is good. In other ways it is not. To date we have found it difficult, either through inability or lack of interest, to accord protection or human rights considerations to the fetus. Equally important, we have not yet determined how we should value or what worth should be extended to the egg and the sperm.

Why write about baby Louise in an article on genetic engineering and human rights? Because baby Louise is a public example of something we've tried to keep hidden. She represents a skeleton which has come out of the closet and she is there to be addressed. Baby Louise enjoyed a safe birth and appears healthy. But is all well? The Three Mile Island nuclear accident, Love Canal, thalidomide poisoning, Agent Orange and baby Louise all rock in the same cradle. The stories that unfold about them point to the absolute vulnerability of embryonic life and germinal matter. They also point to a need for a "rights ethic" which accords humane protection and high level regard for the germinal substance from which our next generations will be born. ■

*Cathie Lyons is assistant general secretary, Health and Welfare Ministries Division, Board of Global Ministries. She has written frequently on ethical issues in biology and medicine.*

# TORTURE

## a spreading evil

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Many states in the world today deliberately use torture. Policemen, soldiers, doctors, scientists, judges, civil servants, politicians are involved in torture, whether in direct beating, examining victims, inventing new devices and techniques, sentencing prisoners on extorted false confessions, officially denying the existence of torture, or using torture as a means of maintaining their power. And torture is not simply an indigenous activity, it is international; foreign experts are sent from one country to another, schools of torture explain and demonstrate methods, and modern torture equipment used in torture is exported from one country to another.

It is commonplace to view our age as one of "ultraviolence"! Much of the mass of information we are exposed to in the West reports catastrophes, atrocities, and horrors of every description. Torture is one of these horrors, but even in an age of violence, torture stands out as a special horror for most people. Pain is a common human denominator, and while few know what it is to be shot, to be burned by napalm, or even to starve, all know pain. Within every human being is the knowledge and fear of pain, the fear of helplessness before unrestrained cruelty. The deliberate infliction of pain by one human being on another to break him is a special horror. It is significant that torture is the one form of violence today that a state will always deny and never justify. The state may justify mass murder and glorify those that kill as killers, but it never justifies torture nor glorifies those that torture as torturers.

And yet the use of torture has by all indications increased over the last few years. The continual limited wars of our time—civil wars, colonial wars, and territorial wars—account for part of this, but an increasing proportion is accounted for by states who use torture

as a means of governing. Torture in those countries plays an integral role in the political system itself. Its function is not only to generate confessions and information from citizens believed to oppose the government; it is used to deter others from expressing opposition. For those who govern without the consent of the governed this has proved to be an effective method of maintaining power. To set torture as the price of dissent is to be assured that only a small minority will act. With the majority neutralized by fear, the well-equipped forces of repression can concentrate on an isolated minority.

Torture today is essentially a state activity. While the state hardly has a monopoly on the use of violence in today's world, and the increase in criminal violence and political terrorism bears witness to this, the preconditions for torture make it almost the exclusive province of the state. Torture requires that the victim be kept under the physical control of the torturer. The criminal or the insurgent does not have the same facilities for detention as the state, and he uses other means of violence, not because he is less violent necessarily, but because the techniques of torture are normally not available to him. As one approaches a situation of developed insurgency and civil war, the possibilities for torture by the anti-government forces grow.

The widespread use of torture is alarming in itself, but what is especially alarming is that the consensus against torture is being weakened not only by its constant violation but by the attitude of people in general. Many people are indifferent, and some even appear ready to accept the practice, and to say so in public. These justifications never use the word "torture." Torture is of course forbidden by the Geneva Conventions.

It is apparent today that much of state torture is carried out by the

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.  
Article 5, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

This article is adapted from the introduction to the Report on Torture by Amnesty International, the human rights organization which was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977. The complete report was published in the United States by Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Inc.

The photographs with this article are reproductions of two posters from a series done by distinguished artists for Artists for Amnesty. For further information about these, write to Amnesty International USA, 304 W. 58th St., New York, N. Y. 10019. The work below is by David Hockney; the work on page 16 is by Alexander Liberman.



military forces, usually elite or special units, who displace the civil police in matters of political security. Their military training and their exposure to post-World War II theories about "unconventional war" make them particularly apt for the practice and enable them to apply the concept of "war" to any situation of civil political conflict no matter how mild.

Those who consciously justify torture, and are not candid enough to state that they use it to defend their own power and privilege, rely essentially on the philosophic argument of a lesser evil for a greater good. They reinforce this with an appeal to the doctrine of necessity—the existential situation forces them to make a choice between two evils. Only the sadist, and there are obviously many sadists directly involved in torture, would celebrate the act of torture for itself. The non-sadist must view it as a necessary means to a desirable end.

The usual justification posits a situation where the "good" people and the "good" values are being threatened by persons who do not respect "the rules of the game," but use ruthless, barbaric, and illegal means to achieve their "evil" ends. Only similar means will be effective enough to defeat the evil purposes of these persons beyond the pale. This argument has had a broad appeal and continues to have it: Stalin had to use torture since the bourgeoisie use it and it gives them an unfair advantage; the only way to defeat the Tupamaros in Uruguay—or any other urban guerrillas—is by making them talk; it is the only way to deal with Communists/Fascists/Catholics etc.

The most effective presentation of the argument justifying torture today is given in the form of a concrete dilemma. The classic case is the French general in Algiers who greeted visiting dignitaries from the metropolis with: "Gentlemen, we have in our hands a man who has planted a bomb somewhere out in that city. It will go off within four hours. Would you not use every means to save the lives of innocent people?" An updated version would be a jumbo jet with a bomb aboard and only the man in your custody can tell you how to disarm it—if he will speak. What if you could bring utopia to earth by just torturing one man? The thrust of this argumentation is that if one places a value on human life, indeed the highest value, one is really obliged to hurt one person to save many lives. In real life cases do not present themselves this sharply, but for the sake of argument it does take the issue and push it to its most extreme possibility.

The prohibition of torture as a *universal value* is a recent achievement. The abolition of slavery was achieved only in the last century, and its prohibition is a universal value, though it continues to be practiced in some regions in violation of this prohibition. The prohibition on torture is based on man's long experience as a social and moral being who developed increasingly humane standards out of his belief in the dignity and integrity of each human being. The prohibition finds support in the teachings of the world's religions, the writings of philosophers, and the development over the last three centuries of a concept of inalienable human rights.

One argument that has been presented in the past and is often heard today is that torture is inefficient. This

addresses itself to two points. One is that if you produce false confessions and wrong information it is an inefficient means of attaining the goals of punishing the guilty and uncovering mischief. The other is that there are more efficient ways to get information, and clever methods of interrogation get better results, another way of saying that torture is not necessary. The line of argumentation based on inefficiency is totally inadmissible. To place the debate on such grounds is to give the argument away; in effect it means that if it can be shown to be efficient it is permissible. It might well be that there are more efficient methods to obtain information than torture, but this does not mean torture cannot also be efficient. In a country without trained interrogators it might indeed be relatively efficient. Furthermore, this argument tends to disregard its major use today, which is to deter others from action, and the evidence is that torture is quite efficient in this respect.

The main arguments for the abolition of torture have based themselves on its inhumanity and injustice. In a classic work first published in 1764, *On Crime and Punishment*, the Italian Beccaria wrote: "The strength of the muscles and the sensitivity of the nerves of an innocent person being known factors, the problem is to find the level of suffering necessary to make him confess to any given crime." The argument that innocent persons were being forced to confess and were being executed is as valid today as it was in the eighteenth century. The injustice of torture is found also in the fact that it offends the notion of just punishment which is based on a fixed term of imprisonment for a specific offence. The duration of torture is completely open-ended and often has nothing to do with a specific offence.

No act is more a contradiction of our humanity than the deliberate infliction of pain by one human being on another, the deliberate attempt over a period of time to kill a man without his dying. The thorough degradation and debasement of those involved is well described by a victim of torture:

"I have experienced the fate of a victim. I have seen the torturer's face at close quarters. It was in a worse condition than my own bleeding, livid face. The torturer's was distorted by a kind of twitching that had nothing human about it. He was in such a state of tension that he had an expression very similar to those we see on Chinese masks; I am not exaggerating. It is



***"Torture is the most flagrant denial of man's humanity, it is the ultimate human corruption."***

not an easy thing to torture people. It requires inner participation. In this situation, I turned out to be the lucky one. I was humiliated. I did not humiliate others. I was simply bearing a profoundly unhappy humanity in my aching entrails. Whereas the men who humiliate you must first humiliate the notion of humanity within themselves. Never mind if they strut around in their uniforms, swollen with the knowledge that they can control the suffering, sleeplessness, hunger and despair of their fellow human beings, intoxicated with the power in their hands. Their intoxication is nothing other than the degradation of humanity. The ultimate degradation. They have had to pay dearly for my torments. I wasn't the one in the worst position. I was simply a man who moaned because he was in great pain. I prefer that. At this moment I am deprived of the joy of seeing children going to school

or playing in the park. Whereas they have to look their own children in the face." (Geo Mangakis, "Letter to Europeans," *Index*, vol. 1, no. 1).

The arguments against torture rest essentially on moral grounds. And yet man's historical experience provides a very practical argument. Nowhere is the argument that the means corrupt the end more true. History shows that torture is never limited to "just once": "just once" becomes once again—becomes a practice and finally an institution. As soon as its use is permitted once, as for example in one of the extreme circumstances like a bomb, it is logical to use it on people who might plant bombs, or on people who might think of planting bombs, or

on people who defend the kind of person who might think of planting bombs. The example of Algeria is a classic case. Torture began under certain restraints and then it spread into an indiscriminate orgy of brutality, the victims first limited to "natives," then finally spreading to France itself. It was effective as a weapon in the struggle, and the French won the military battles, but they lost the war. Cancer is an apt metaphor for torture and its spread through the social organism. The act of torture cannot be separated from the rest of society; it has its consequences, it degrades those who use it, those who benefit from it, and it is the most flagrant contradiction of justice, the very ideal on which the state wishes to base its authority. It can be argued that torture could produce short-term benefits for those in power, but it is a basic principle of law and civilization that many short-run expediencies are prohibited to preserve a greater value, a value on which society itself is based. The illegal obtaining of evidence is an example. It might produce the conviction of a criminal in one case, but the greater value of protecting every citizen from arbitrary and illegal searches is a higher value than one conviction. So also with torture. History has shown that a system can function well without illegal evidence and without torture, and it also shows that once these are permitted the temptation to use "easy" methods is unavoidable. Just as states say that to give in to terrorism is to invite the loss of many more lives, so to give in to the use of torture is to invite its spread and the eventual debasement of the whole society. Torture is never justified.

The absolute prohibition on torture is the only acceptable policy. The system that uses it only mocks any noble ends it might profess. If the use of torture occurs, and abuses occur in every system, it must be dealt with by an impartial tribunal, a tribunal that would take into account the circumstances as it would for other crimes such as homicide. Man with his innate aggression has learned to place limits on his capacity for excess. He has learned to place limits on the exercise of the power by the few to protect the many and ultimately to protect everyone. Torture is the most flagrant denial of man's humanity, it is the ultimate human corruption. For this reason man has prohibited it. This human achievement must be defended. ■



# a human rights survey

This survey is based on Amnesty International's 1978 report of political prisoners, torture and use of the death penalty, with some updating.

## Africa

Conflicts and disputes have continued to dominate events in Africa, but significant improvements in human rights have been made in several countries. The most dramatic improvement followed the overthrow of Idi Amin in Uganda, putting to an end the massive practice of murder and heinous torture by security officers. In neighboring Tanzania most prisoners of conscience have been released and torture appears to have been eliminated on the mainland. In Mali and Sudan also, political prisoners have been freed under amnesties granted by governments keen to promote national reconciliation. In July of this year Algeria released former Prime Minister Ben Bella after 14 years of confinement, leaving few if any political prisoners. In war-torn Zimbabwe, Rhodesia, military and civilian deaths continued to mount and AI estimated the number of political prisoners at more than a thousand in 1978; but on a visit to the U.S. in July, Prime Minister Abel Muzorewa said he had released all political detainees.

Human rights violations—arbitrary arrests, deaths from torture and summary executions—continued on a large scale in Equatorial Guinea. One of every 500 of the country's 300,000 citizens is known to have been executed in the past decade, most of them without trial. In Ethiopia, conflicts with Somalia and secessionist forces in the Ogaden and Eritrea have resulted in large-scale killings, and purges by the ruling Derg have resulted in political assassinations, mass arrests and executions, particularly in Addis Ababa, the capital. In South Africa, the number of convicted political prisoners serving sentences increased substantially in 1978; reports of torture of detainees there and in Namibia were common. Executions were carried out in early 1978 in Congo and Zaire after political trials, and in 1979 Ghana sent to the firing squad former government officials charged with corruption.

## Asia

Several Asian governments have released numbers of people held in political detention; even so, there are still very many political prisoners who have been held for long periods without trial. The Indonesian government released 10,000 political prisoners a year ago and said it would release the remaining untried political prisoners—numbering tens of thousands reportedly—by the end of 1979; most of them have been held since 1965. The South Korean government released more than 100 public security law violators last December, but, according to Christian church sources, 338 government critics remain in prison and hundreds of others are under house arrest. No information was available on



(Above) Mrs. Martha Mahlangu of South Africa cries after her son was executed last April for murder following anniversary of the Soweto riots. (Below) Nicaraguan couple describe how their two teen-age sons were machine-gunned by the Somoza National Guard during a sweep of their barrio in Managua.



This Cambodian boy was tied to a crossbar and forced to stand on his tiptoes in the sun all day long for reportedly stealing food from a Khmer Rouge soldier in a Thailand refugee camp.



North Korea. In 1978 China announced the release of about 110,000 people who had been detained since an "antirightist" campaign in 1957, plus the rehabilitation of many local officials; analysts in Hong Kong surmise that the overall total of remaining political prisoners cannot be small.

Gross violations of human rights continued in Kampuchea (Cambodia) and Vietnam, where reports of widespread detentions, deaths and suffering caused grave concern. In Iran, more than 200 people have been put to death by firing squads since the regime of the Shah was toppled in February; in July the govern-

ment declared an amnesty to affect some 3,000 political prisoners. In Pakistan the number of political prisoners increased and at least 160 political prisoners have been flogged. Arbitrary detention of political opponents continued in the Philippines, Bangladesh, Malaysia. Large-scale political arrests and killings have been reported in Afghanistan.

## **The Americas**

Throughout Latin America there continues to be a high level of political violence: abductions, disappearances, torture and extra-legal executions or assassinations. The incidence of these violations of human rights ranges from an estimated 15,000 dead or disappeared in Argentina since 1976 to an estimated 1,500 disappeared in Chile since 1973, and more limited numbers in rural parts of Mexico. Killings and detentions in Nicaragua were widespread before the brutal war that ended General Somoza's rule in July; a sizeable portion of the nation's small population have been decimated. There have been numerous disappearances and assassinations in El Salvador as well. Political imprisonment continues to be widespread in Latin America, and in some countries, torture, secret detention and long-term imprisonment without trial have occurred in the context of various forms of the State of Siege or State of Emergency.

On the plus side, Amnesty International welcomed the amnesty of 200 political prisoners in the Dominican Republic. The Cuban government has said it would release all remaining political prisoners by the end of September; most of them have been held since 1959 making them among the longest-serving political prisoners to be found anywhere. Paraguay, where reports of human rights violations have been common, has reportedly released hundreds of prisoners in response to human rights pressures. Amnesty International's major concern in the United States has been the use of the death penalty.

## **Europe**

Terrorist activities in Western Europe presented a grave challenge to respect for human rights in 1978, but most of Amnesty International's concern was focused on Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. In 1978 AI knew of more than 230 people in the Soviet Union who had been sentenced to imprisonment, exile or banishment, or who had been confined to psychiatric hospitals for the non-violent exercise of their human rights since August 1975. In Romania dissidents were also forcibly confined in psychiatric hospitals because of their political views. In Czechoslovakia new trials for political dissidents have been reported. ■



## THE WORLD REFUGEE SITUATION

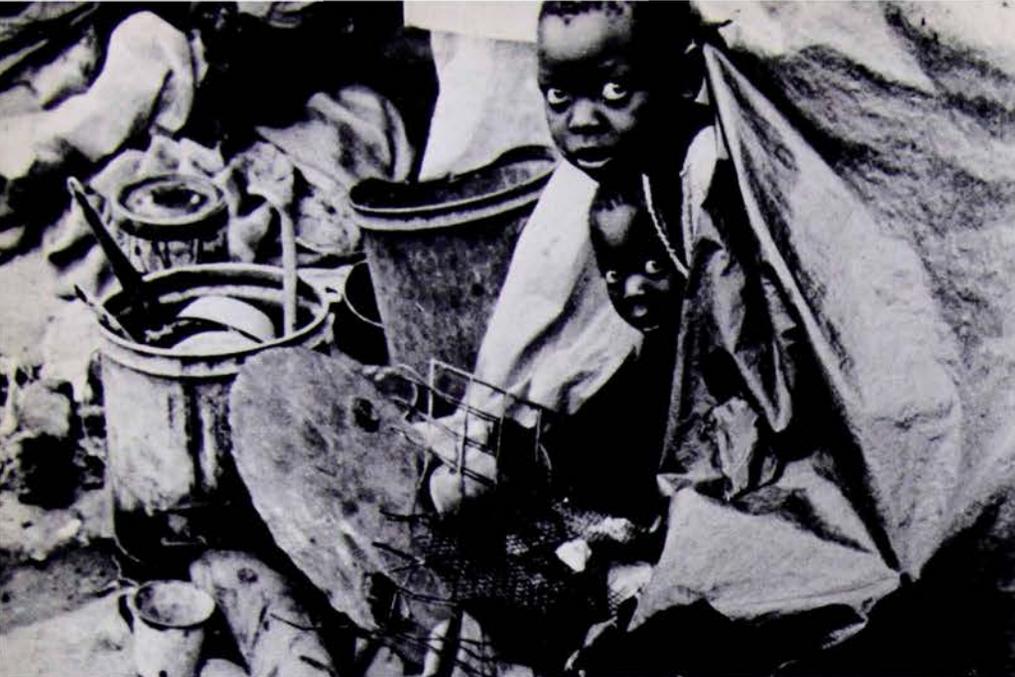
Lilia Fernandez

The world is trying to cope today with a flood of peoples escaping the fear of persecution. The relationship between human rights denied and refugees is markedly, painfully clear. By accepting refugees, advocacy of human rights becomes reality.

The pictures of global refugees in the media are poignant: the anguished Cambodian woman being refused refuge in Thailand and forced to return to her embattled homeland. The Vietnamese fishing boat overturning in the surf, where 250 of the people on board

will drown. The emaciated Ethiopian peasants of a Sudanese refugee camp. The Soviet Jews seeking a new life and opportunity away from a government that denies them the rights of other citizens.

There are so many refugees and the



These boys are in makeshift quarters in a refugee camp in Salisbury, Zimbabwe Rhodesia, having fled from warfare in the countryside.

list of refugee situations lengthens. The number of refugees grows, their problems worsen and expenses required to satisfy their most elementary needs increase.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has listed world refugee populations. Among the largest groups are 354,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, 683,000 Palestinians in Jordan, 212,000 Palestinians in Lebanon, and 198,000 Palestinians in Syria, 500,000 Ethiopians in Somalia, 250,000 Ethiopians and Zairians in Sudan, 100,000 Zimbabwe-Rhodesians in Mozambique, and 530,000 Angolans, Burundis, Rwandais in Zaire.

There are, however, reasons for hope. The work already accomplished with the cooperation of the international community gives cause for optimism. In 1978, tens of thousands of refugees, primarily Angolans, Burmese, Zairians, and Latin Americans, were repatriated. Hundreds of thousands of others, mainly in Africa, were installed in towns or rural areas on land made available by the authorities, while waiting to return to their homes. Finally, many have been naturalized and thus cease to be refugees.

### The "Boat People"

Few refugee tragedies have so captured the attention of the world's headlines as the Vietnamese boat people who take to the high seas, often in fragile, overcrowded vessels. It is estimated that 50 percent drown before reaching shore. Also, it is esti-

mated that 50 percent of the camp populations are composed of children, this in the International Year of the Child.

The growth of the "boat people" situation and the complexities of the problem were best revealed when the Malaysian government, its camps overburdened, towed out to sea incoming craft to float adrift to deserted Indonesian islands or to sink. By July the camp populations were 163,700 in Thailand; 78,000 in Malaysia; 54,000 in Hong Kong; 40,000 in Indonesia; and 5,260 in the Philippines.

The drama of the boat people, their method of escape and the perils they face have made them the best known of the world's refugees. Hopefully their story will make the world more conscious of the global refugee crisis—and help create new solutions for one of humankind's oldest problems.

### Asylum in U.S.

The United States is a land of immigrants and refugees. We are a people concerned, yet traditionally hesitant, fearing costs and numbers. In a major policy statement President Carter said before the U.N. General Assembly on the thirtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (December 6, 1978):

"Refugees are the living, homeless casualties of our world's failure to live by the principles of peace and human rights. To help them is a simple human dignity. As Americans, as a people made up largely of the descendants of refugees. . . I hope we will always

stand ready to welcome more than our fair share of those who flee their homelands because of racial, religious and political oppression."

We have seen an increased awareness of the refugees' needs in the past year in this country. The Carter administration appointed in February former Senator Dick Clark of Iowa as coordinator for refugee affairs. Both HEW and the Justice Departments have made concerted efforts to coordinate refugee activities better.

From 1946 to 1975 the U.S. provided asylum for two million refugees. We have accepted 210,000 Indochina refugees since 1975, and the Administration has assured an annual increase for one year of up to 168,000 Indochinese and 50,000 Soviet, Eastern European and other refugees. The United States has tried to set an example of refugee acceptance for other countries to follow, as well as playing a major role in international meetings on refugee resettlement.

Finally, the Administration-sponsored Refugee Act of 1979, if passed, will bring about the first comprehensive policy piece of refugee legislation for acceptance and resettlement of refugees. Essentially there are three sections to the bill: (1) A definition of refugee closely related to that used by the United Nations, eliminating both the ideological and geographical limits, and the two-year "conditional" status, and allowing refugees from around the world to be admitted as permanent residents immediately upon arrival, as are all other legal immigrants; (2) an annual numerical ceiling of 50,000 refugees with a parole provision for additional numbers if it is deemed humanitarian and in the national interest; (3) an across-the-board timed, federal funding for domestic resettlement programs for all refugees. Advocates look to passage of the Refugee Act of 1979 by September 30, the date when funding for the Indochina Refugee Resettlement expires, but in this fiscally conservative 96th Congress, loaded with domestic concerns, this may be delayed for a longer period of time, once more threatening our country's resettlement ability and program.

### Voluntary Agencies

The responsibility of refugee resettlement in the U.S. has been assumed by the private voluntary sector. The religious communities have been ac-

tive in refugee resettlement since before the turn of the century. The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), which relates to Church World Service, a national voluntary agency active in refugee resettlement since 1946, continues to meet the needs of refugees from all over the globe. When UMCOR began in 1940, there were only two areas where the few hundred thousand refugees wandered—Europe and China. Today there are refugees on every continent and in more than 80 countries.

UMCOR's work is based on Jesus' words: "I was a stranger and you took me in" (Matthew 25:36). Refugee resettlement will be an ongoing responsibility of churches. Yesterday UMCOR helped Hungarians, Cubans, Ugandans; today Haitians, Chileans, Ethiopians and Indochinese; tomorrow, we can only project. Last year UMCOR resettled 315 refugee cases totaling 1,082 persons. For the first six months of 1979 the figure was 261 cases totaling 939 refugees.

The Christian concepts of love, justice, and help are central to refugee assistance. In reaching those who have no home, who have lost family and friends and all sense of stability and love, we are touching Christ. "If you have done it to the least of these my brothers, you have done it to me." Also, we have a responsibility to help those who need help and cannot be heard. "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy" (Proverbs 31:8-9).

The international principles of human rights adopted by the United Nations and encompassed in so many eloquent documents can be seen at work in our ministry to refugees. The rights to a new life in this country cannot be guaranteed to everyone but many can be helped through sponsorship.

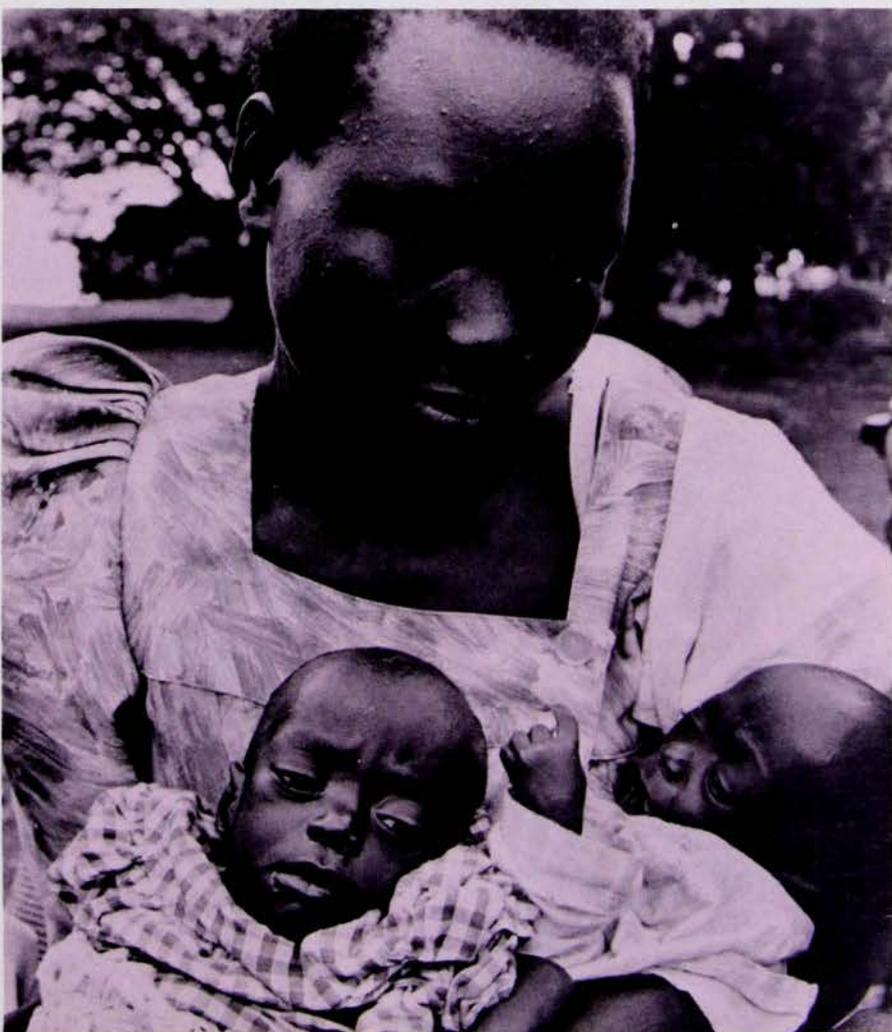
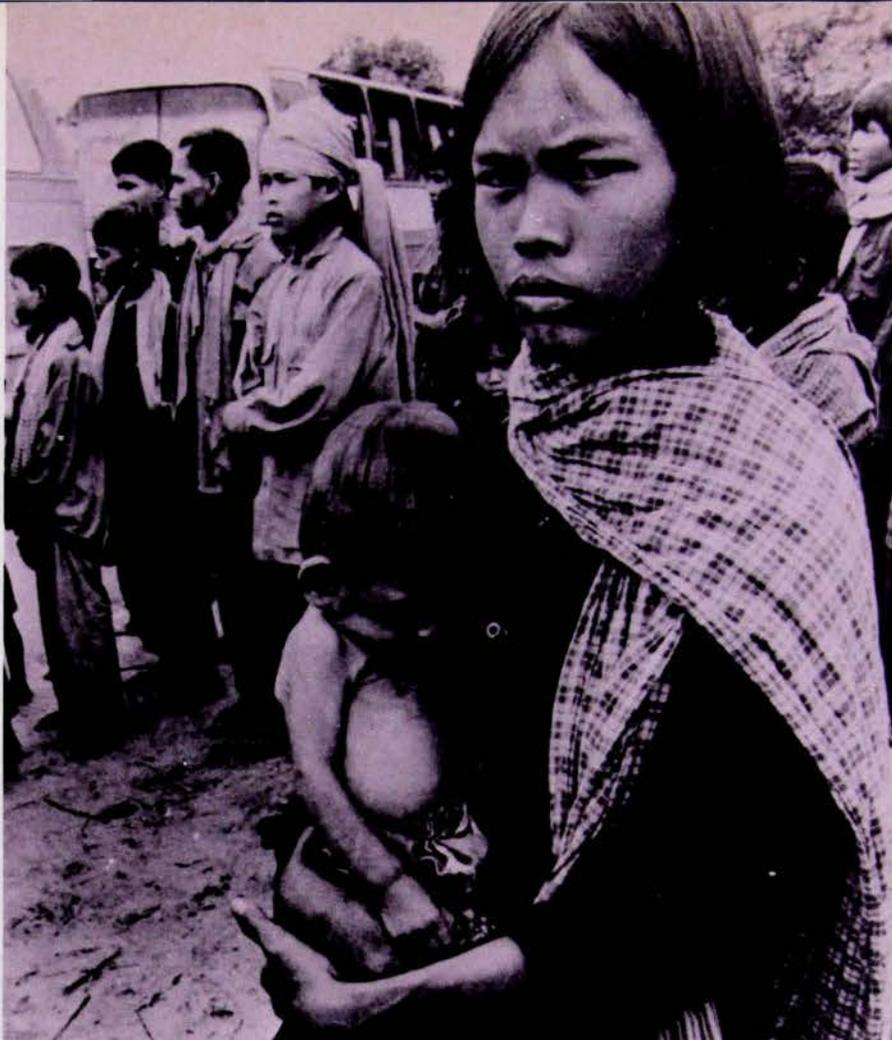
We are under a divine compulsion, under the obligation of the gospel, to do something for the homeless, the dispossessed. We are part of a new happening in the world as we work alongside all the world's people for a new and renewed world. ■

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*Lilia Fernandez is Secretary for Refugee Concerns, UMCOR.*

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**Refugee mothers and children in Thailand (top) and Uganda (bottom).**



# Religious Liberty How Free?

Tracy Early

Exiled Anglican bishops return to Uganda after the overthrow of President Idi Amin. Religious as well as tribal conflicts led to torture and deaths under his regime.

If you were Dwain Epps, you would have a splendid view of the United Nations out your office window. But even on a clear day you would not be able to see much progress on religious liberty.

For twenty years or so, an effort has been afoot to write a UN statement—a convention—on freedom of religion. But it never seems to get anywhere. Though most everybody extolls religious freedom in theory, the nations of the world agree hardly at all on what it means or what implications to draw from the general principle. Communist nations might even prefer to speak of freedom from religion.

Mr. Epps views it all as a lobbyist-observer for the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), a unit of the World Council of Churches, and has operated since last year from the United Methodist-operated Church Center for the UN. Before that, he worked at CCIA headquarters in Geneva, which is also headquarters for the UN Human Rights Commission, the agency responsible for drafting the religious liberty convention.

In appearance, Mr. Epps does not exactly suggest the striped pants school of international servants. A United Presbyterian minister, medium tall and medium heavy, at age 41 balding considerably but compensating with a full beard, he carries the informal ambiance you might expect in someone from Klamath Falls, Oregon. In spirit, he is no worldly-wise

cynic, but neither does he peddle cheap optimism.

As on that UN document. "For many years the blockage came from the countries of Eastern Europe, and when it became obvious nothing was happening, the CCIA more or less put the matter on the back burner," Mr. Epps says. "Now the title of the convention has been changed so that it includes the right to disbelieve as well as to believe, and there's a little more activity. But a new factor now is opposition from Islamic countries where the resurgence of militant Islam has become powerful."

## Do Statements Matter?

Writing and passing a UN statement will not necessarily advance religious liberty, Mr. Epps realizes. It will have no enforcement mechanism. "But the process of coming to agreement has immense value," he says. "And if a convention is adopted, it can be used to apply international pressure."

Mr. Epps contends that public opinion does affect governments, democratic or not. All countries today must enter into economic and other relationships with the outside world, he says, and consequently their governments must care about world opinion.

Whereas the West shows a relatively constant picture of basic respect for religious liberty, though with particular problems arising here and there, Mr. Epps says, an identifiable trend toward greater religious liberty can be seen in most of Eastern Europe.





Christians in India have expressed concern over a proposed "freedom of religion" bill introduced into Parliament which would prohibit religious conversions.

Albania remains an exception, totally suppressing religion, and Czechoslovakia still imposes restrictive measures initiated in 1968, Mr. Epps says. But he says other countries of the area, with Hungary as a particularly notable example, have begun taking a more open and positive attitude.

Mr. Epps gives the Helsinki accords considerable credit for stimulating the trend, and cites their impact as evidence that world opinion does carry weight. But he also credits church leaders such as those in the Christian Peace Conference and, in recent years, the Vatican for assuring communist governments that the church no longer sought to undermine the socialist system they were managing. So the church can now be tolerated as a kind of loyal opposition.

### Threats in Third World

In the Third World, Mr. Epps distinguishes four types of situations that threaten religious liberty today.

"First are areas where the church formerly supported a colonial or neo-colonial regime, but now in the interest of justice has begun to remove its ideological support and ally itself with the poor," he says. "The result is that the church itself becomes a target of the regime."

These areas include many countries of Latin America and such Asian

countries as South Korea and the Philippines, he says. And currently the trends here are mixed, he says, with the situation in places such as Brazil becoming somewhat better but in others such as Central America growing worse.

A key issue in these countries is whether the church should involve itself in politics. "This is the most interesting dimension of the ecumenical debate about religious freedom today," Mr. Epps says. It turns many church leaders of the Soviet Union and other communist countries into bedfellows with conservative clergy of countries such as South Korea. In both camps, status quo defenders argue that they enjoy full religious freedom because they can worship to their hearts' content, but that churches move outside their proper sphere when they attack government policy.

People on the other side of the debate say religious freedom includes the right to address public issues and take religion beyond church walls into the broader life of society. Mr. Epps holds to this latter position, and consequently sees a lack of full religious freedom in countries that try to confine religious bodies to a limited sphere defined as the religious. (Similarly, he argues that churches should concern themselves with all human rights, and not concentrate as heavily on religious liberty as the CCIA did in its earlier days.)

### Socialist Restrictions

"A second set of problems in the Third World," Mr. Epps continues, "are found in situations such as African countries that have undergone a rapid change from colonial to socialist government, and the church has been subjected to severe restrictions."

In this connection, he thinks especially of Mozambique. Though some Portuguese clergy supported the colonial regime, he notes, indigenous churches worked and suffered for independence. But despite their support for FRELIMO, which won the struggle and formed the new government, they now face repression, Mr. Epps says.

The churches "understood," he says, when the new government began with its nationalization program and took over church institutions such as schools and hospitals. But subsequently the government has restricted the right of church people even to work in such institutions, as well as their right to travel abroad. "The church-state situation in Mozambique is very tense," Mr. Epps says.

"The third area of difficulty," he says, "includes those places where the Christian churches are a small minority, particularly in the Islamic lands that have seen the rise of militant Islam." Within the past five to seven years, he says, they have imposed greater re-

strictions on missionary activity, on worship and on ownership of property.

Here, too, questions arise concerning just what religious liberty should mean. Mr. Epps himself is not willing to claim an unqualified right of Christian churches to evangelize in Muslim countries. As a result of the wider ecumenical dialogues, he says, churches are coming to a deeper respect for other religions. He also says Christians need to look more carefully at the political dimensions of their missionary programs.

The fourth area where Mr. Epps considers religious liberty endangered is in countries such as Indonesia, places where Christianity has become a force of some importance but remains a minority whose existence in certain ways disturbs the majority. Here, he says, differences of faith become mixed with cultural conflict, East-West tension, racism and other issues. "This situation is worsening in some places," he says, "and conflict is latent in others."

#### Liberty in the U.S.

If religious liberty survives so precariously in so many lands, Americans

might well give thanks for their good fortune. But a careful observer of the American scene, church-state specialist Dean Kelley of the National Council of Churches, finds no grounds for complacency. "There are still times and places in which numbers of people find they do not have as much religious freedom as they ought to have," he says.

Mr. Kelley recognizes that in comparison with Albania the United States can indeed be called a land of religious liberty. But he more often compares the U.S. with the U.S. Constitution and its First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

In Mr. Kelley's mind, that means "no law." But he finds government agencies continually ignoring the special constitutional protection and seeking to curtail the freedom of religious groups by bureaucratic application of one law or another. Offenses come via the Internal Revenue Service, Labor Department, National Labor Relations Board, Census Bureau and other agencies, he says. But he adds, "There is no conspiracy, just the normal bureaucratic mind at work."

Mr. Kelley also charges state governments with seeking to exercise improper authority over churches. A particularly outrageous example occurred earlier this year, he says, when an entire denomination, the Worldwide Church of God, led by Herbert W. Armstrong, was taken over by the state of California and its business affairs put into the hands of a receiver.

Private individuals, Mr. Kelley says, commit violations in such cases as kidnapping members of unpopular religious groups and trying to "deprogram" them. He questions all talk of these groups "brainwashing" members, and sees no evidence that they hold members against their will. "The evidence is all on the other side," he says. "Members of these groups, called cults as a put-down, are physically abducted, and then in deprogramming subjected to a spiritual gang rape. It is the ultimate in violation of religious liberty."

Is religious liberty secure in America? "I am appalled at the violations that occur and no one objects to," Mr. Kelley says. ■

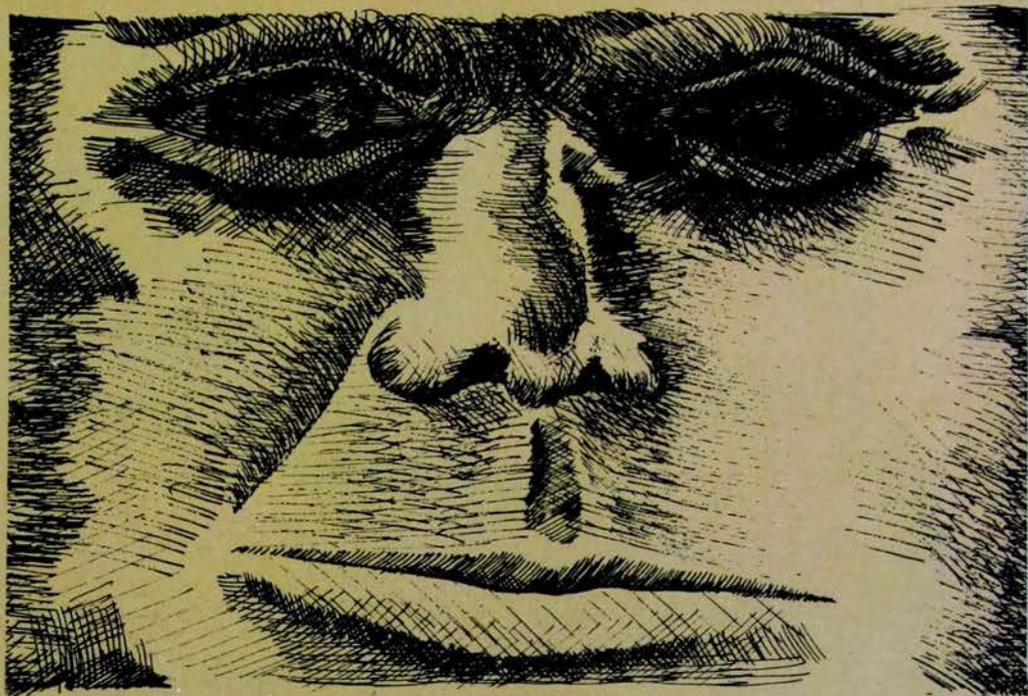
*Mr. Early is a frequent contributor to New World Outlook.*

Many of the recent attempts at suppressing religious liberty in the U. S. have centered around the so-called "cults," such as the Hare Krishna (shown here), the Unification Church, and others.



# THE CONTEMPORARY DEBATE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Ron O'Grady



The national leaders who implement the human rights statements start their reasoning from a political ideology and not from an abstract philosophy of humanity. Our discussion on the current human rights debate must be sensitive to this political reality.

Those whose educational conditioning followed the teaching of western liberalism will have a different interpretation of an event from those who came through the Marxist revolutions of eastern Europe, and these in turn will both differ from the understanding of developing nations.

In this article three principal categories will be used to show how human interpretation is influenced by ideological factors. As a convenient shorthand we will adopt the three "worlds" of journalists. The western capitalist societies centered mainly in western Europe and North America but including Japan, Australia and New Zealand constitute the First World; communist-socialist societies following the Marxist-Leninist model are the Second World; and those non-aligned developing nations which do not belong to either of the power blocs can be described as the Third World. Inevitably, this division is an over-simplification and does not allow for the great differences within each bloc. However, it provides a sufficient basis for an analysis of the differing expectations and interpretations of human rights questions.

## 1. The First World

a) Self-understanding: The capitalist world sees itself as the defender of liberty and upholder of rights and democracy. The declarations of the French and American Revolutions have profoundly affected the historic processes in western civilization, and have been a rallying point at moments of national and international crisis. The US president's emphasis on human rights is entirely consistent with western capitalist history. Particular stress is laid on individual liberties, which are protected by constitutions and a liberal interpretation of the rule of law. The right to hold and express minority views, to possess property, to have a fair trial before one's peers, to have freedom of expression in public media, and the rights of fair electoral procedures are all jealously guarded within the First World. The First World played the dominant role in formulating the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights". It claims to uphold these rights more adequately than other nations and, therefore, cherishes the title of "a free society".

b) The First World understanding of the Second World: Since the communist revolutions have not had the full approval of the majority, the people are repressed and denied their rights under communism. Communist rule is dictatorial, and the single party state denies the possibility of dissent, if

necessary by forceful repression. The refusal to allow self-determination in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Tibet are instances of the repression of people's movements for the sake of ideology. The refusal to allow political dissent has led to imprisonment, torture, exile, brainwashing, character defamation and forced confessions. The West sees the flow of refugees seeking asylum in the West as proof that communist society is repressive of human dignity. The denial of freedom of movement, freedom of expression, and a proper electoral process is further evidence of this. First World churches reflect their national ethos. There is the belief that both European communism and Maoism are inimical to Christianity, and deliberately restrict religious freedom. The inference is sometimes drawn that those churches which survive in eastern Europe have done so by compromising their beliefs—a view which is encouraged by refugees.

c) The First World understanding of the Third World: There is ambivalence in the western understanding of the Third World nations, because there are extensive historical links as well as the ever-present desire to retain western influence over the non-aligned nations lest they become communist. Even so, the liberal conscience of the West is angered by some blatant human rights violations in nations such as Haiti, Uganda, Chile, South

Korea or Rwanda. Most international human rights organizations, for example, Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists, have their base in the western bloc and there is widespread popular support for their criticisms of third world excesses. Since a number of third world nations are important trading partners or sources of raw materials, the protest at government level is often muted.



## 2. The Second World

**“Ultimately, the political leaders of each nation are motivated by national self-interest, economic development and political survival.”**

a) Self-understanding: The communist revolutions saw themselves as part of the historically determined process for restoring the rights to the people. After years of capitalist and bourgeois rule by persons whose motivation was their own self-interest, the communist revolutions gave back to the people the power to determine their own future. Competition gave way to cooperation, and the rights of rulers yielded to the rights of the masses. This gives communist states a sense of historical mission as the forerunners of the new world society. This new society will preserve the community rights and spell the end of the competitive systems of private enterprise. Rights belong to the whole society and not just to individuals. If individuals threaten the well-being of the wider community they must be punished. Basic human rights are better protected under communism than under any other form of government.

b) Second World understanding of the First World: The First World speaks about human rights in a self-righteous manner, but in fact is the principal offender. Western democracy denies people their rights in both subtle and blatant ways. The competitive system concentrates capital and leads to inefficiency, wastage of natural resources, unfair trade practices, and money manipulation, and the net results include poverty and unemployment. (There were eight million unemployed in the United States and one million in Britain at the beginning of 1977.) Alienation is the fundamental contradiction in capitalist society. It occurs through the ownership of property, which in turn gives rise to a non-productive elite. Loneliness and disenchantment mark the youth of western society, and corruption in high places indicates a basically unjust system. The official Czechoslovakian newspaper claims: “It is the capitalist states which are shamelessly trampling on human rights.” Christian groups in eastern Europe are defensive about western church criticism of their role. In response to the popular western question: “Can a Christian be a communist?”, the East European will reply: “Can a Christian be a capitalist?” Western society is often portrayed as a society which has become consumer-oriented and materialistic to the exclusion of the Christian virtues of compassion and community.

c) The Second World understanding of the Third World: Communism is selective in condemning Third World nations. Like the First World, the Second World will assiduously study the political implications and possible political gain from making a strong stand relating to rights. If a criticism is made, the background portentous presence of the western world is castigated. Communists see many third world nations as puppet governments, kept in power by American aid and armaments. If the rulers become oppressive, this will be interpreted as a way of retaining power for the capitalist system. The non-aligned nations are to be encouraged to take part in the world Soviet revolution. Maoism sees itself as identified more closely with third world nations and, therefore, is slower to be critical in instances of rights violations. In its battle with the USSR over hegemony in the communist world, China is more likely to use third world disturbances as an arena to fight this larger ideological difference.



### 3. The Third World

a) Self-understanding: The Third World, especially in Africa and Asia, is conscious of its difference from either the First or the Second World. Much of its cultural heritage dates back centuries, and has developed independently of the Graeco-Roman traditions of the West. While there are some similarities in the third world understanding of the human, yet it did not develop the competitive individualism which marked the 19th and 20th centuries in western Christian nations. When a third world nation is questioned about its actions in regard to human rights, the rulers will often return to their traditional history and claim, for example, that they are seeking African answers, or an Asian-style democracy. It will sometimes be claimed that the people understand an assertive leadership better than western-style freedoms. The intense concern for economic development is overriding. Third world leaders who recognize that they are taking unpopular and stern measures will justify the stand by claiming that some lesser rights must be sacrificed in order to achieve economic growth.

b) The Third World understanding of the First World: Third world nations are irritated by first world accusations of human rights violations, because they claim that the First World has violated the basic rights of developing nations for centuries. They look back to the exploitation of the colonial era as the root of many of their current economic ills, and recognize that the heavy industrialization of the capitalist nations has given an economic lever through which they can control a large sector of the world's economy for their own profit. Through multinational

corporations and the control of capital flow, the western nations have a stranglehold on third world economy.

The Third World reacts strongly when it is criticized for the same things which take place in the First World. They claim that a western society which can produce a Watergate and industrial bribery is in no position to criticize corruption in third world nations. Since the struggle to survive is so intense in poorer countries, they are angered when western nations appear to be more concerned about free trial than about basic rights to food and shelter. There is the suspicion that the capitalist nations use their intelligence services and their economic strength to keep the third world nations in a continual state of poverty and, therefore, dependence. This can be rationalized by criticisms about human rights violations.

c) Third World attitudes to the Second World: One of the human rights advocated by third world nations is the right of a people to self-determination. At times communism, both in Europe and Asia, has aroused the anger of third world nations for its influence on, and support for, revolutionary groups within the borders of an independent nation. This is seen as a violation of national sovereignty and independence. To many third world nations the communist bloc is considered to be just as exploitative as western capitalism. They have seen the same desire to purchase natural resources and convert them to manufactured goods which sell at prices no less than those of the capitalist nations. Communism is seen as a form of state capitalism which generates just as much injustice as private capitalism.

This summary makes no pretence of

being exhaustive, and does not allow for subtleties within each outline. What it does highlight, however, is that for each human rights violation situation there are many possible positions, each based on a fundamental political stance. Each nation will read a human rights violation through its own ideologically tinted glasses. It is this reality which makes the rational and objective assessment of human rights a political impossibility. The fact that a nation has ratified the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights", and even written it into its constitution, provides no guarantee that it will interpret it in the same way as other nations.

Ultimately, the political leaders of each nation are motivated by national self-interest, economic development and political survival. It is necessary for them to retain credibility in order to survive, and therefore their affirmations on human rights always sound altruistic and impressive. Yet these public affirmations have little practical meaning. Decisions on human rights will be made finally in line with major ideological alliances and possible spheres of influence, and we must be realistic about the limited room for movement this gives to political leadership. At the same time, governments are vulnerable to pressure, provided the goal does not deviate too greatly from their own image of their role. ■

*Ron O'Grady is an Associated Churches of Christ minister from New Zealand, who is currently serving as associate general secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia. This article is adapted from his book, **Bread and Freedom**, one of the **Risk** book series published by the World Council of Churches.*

# A COMMON STANDARD FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

CINDY M. BUHL

In 1948 the nations of the world gathered at the San Francisco Conference to sign the United Nations Charter. The Charter spoke of reaffirming "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal right of men and women and of nations large and small . . ." To promote these fundamental human rights, the United Nations created a standing Human Rights Commission whose first task was to establish an International-Bill of Rights. Eleanor Roosevelt chaired the Commission and persuaded it to write this Bill of Rights in three phases: 1) a Declaration recommending principles; 2) Covenants in treaty form embodying the principles; and 3) specific measures for implementation.

The first phase was completed on December 10, 1948, when 48 nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As the Declaration claimed that:

Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. . . .

it gave international significance to the words of an earlier Declaration:

We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights. . . .

The Universal Declaration reflected the lessons learned by a world that had suffered the economic hardships of depression and the destruction of world war. It reflected, as well, the horror of the holocaust when people saw all too starkly that the violation of any person or people debases all of humanity. *The Universal Declaration proclaimed economic, social, cultur-*

*al, civil and political rights as one indivisible body of rights necessary for the preservation of human dignity.*

The Universal Declaration is a "common standard of achievement" for all people in all nations. It commits member nations of the United Nations to work towards this goal, as elaborated in its 30 articles. It gives people a list of basic needs and reasonable expectations and provides an internationally accepted reference point for victims of human rights violations. The Declaration also provides a useful starting point for enforcing human rights reforms. It must be noted, however, that the Universal Declaration is *not* legally binding: that is the role of the Human Rights Covenants.

## International Legislation for Human Rights

The Covenants give legal force in the ratifying nations to the aims of the Universal Declaration. One treaty defines the economic, social and cultural rights listed in the declaration, the other the civil and political rights. They were completed on December 16, 1966, when after 12 years of debate, the General Assembly unanimously approved them. The Covenants went into effect in 1976 after the requisite 35 states had ratified them. Over 50 countries have ratified the Covenants and are now submitting reports to the United Nations on their programs in securing the rights of all their people.

The United Nations Economic and Social Council reviews reports under the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It also recommends ways and means to promote these rights. For economic, social and cultural rights are goals, and as such may be pursued in a variety of ways. The

question of what specific policies best secure food, housing, education and health care for all is open to debate. The United Nations provides a forum for such debates in a spirit of cooperation.

Unlike social and economic rights, civil and political rights are capable of clear and legal definition. The Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides standards that governments can respect immediately. This Covenant established the U.N. Human Rights Committee to monitor the performance of parties to the Covenants. This Committee is barely three years old, and has been monitoring reports for almost two years.

## Moving Towards the Goals: How Nations Have Responded

It's very hard to judge how a nation is directly *responding* to the goals enumerated in the Declaration and detailed in the Covenants. Different political systems encourage the growth of certain liberties in a variety of ways, just as the *denial* of rights occurs in different patterns as well.

The Human Rights Committee (not to be confused with the Human Rights Commission) has not allowed any country to pass easily through its inspection. Every country has had to submit its Constitution for review, and detailed questions regarding contradictions in human rights provisions have been consistently forthcoming.

### Finland

One of the most encouraging country reports at this time has been that of Finland. Finland ratified both Covenants in 1975 and made its first report to the Committee in 1977. The Finnish government has established a Covenant Committee and are presently revising the Constitution, making every effort to bring the wording of human rights provisions into line with the language in the Covenants. When Finland ratified the Covenants, they became an integral part of Finnish domestic law. In cases where there were inconsistencies between established Finnish law and the Covenants, the latter would prevail.

This does not mean that Finland is perfect: the government is still grappling with how to bring some of its trial practices—particularly those regarding juvenile law and assured access to competent legal counsel—into full compliance with the Covenants. Based on their past determination to

conform with the rights and obligations of the Covenants, one can only commend their serious approach and encourage careful scrutiny of their laws and judicial institutions.

### Ecuador

A country quite different from Finland has also pursued a most encouraging history in the promotion of human rights. In the past several years, Ecuador has moved from a dictatorship to recent elections. Prior to its elections, it submitted versions of its proposed constitution to the Human Rights Committee for review and comments. The success of Ecuador to move towards participatory government is cause for great hope when one looks at other governments in Central and South America. However, Ecuador's greatest achievement might very well be in its rural education program.

The majority of Ecuador's indigenous population are Quechua Indians. For years the target of social and economic discrimination, the Quechua have remained isolated from the mainstream of Ecuadorean life. For the past several years, a program has existed throughout the rural areas to ensure that all teachers and the parish priest are bilingual, speaking both Quechua and Spanish. The school radio program, which had been introduced as a means of bringing education to remote rural areas, broadcasts a large part of the curriculum in Quechua.

In 1969, when Ecuador ratified both Covenants, a large number of Ecuadorian adults were illiterate. A government literacy campaign was instigated and adults were encouraged to attend night courses at the primary level. Since 1969 there has been a considerable decline in the percentage of illiterates in the population, and in 1978 Ecuador achieved a 76.6% literacy rate.

### Romania

The case of Romania, however, is distinct from the previous two descriptions. Its health care system is improving and its educational program quite good. Of particular note are the measures taken in the last five years to empower women. Legislation has been adopted, programs developed and fairly well implemented to secure occupational training, guidance and employment for women, their promotion to posts of responsibility, their participation in decision-

making and the improvement of their living and working conditions.

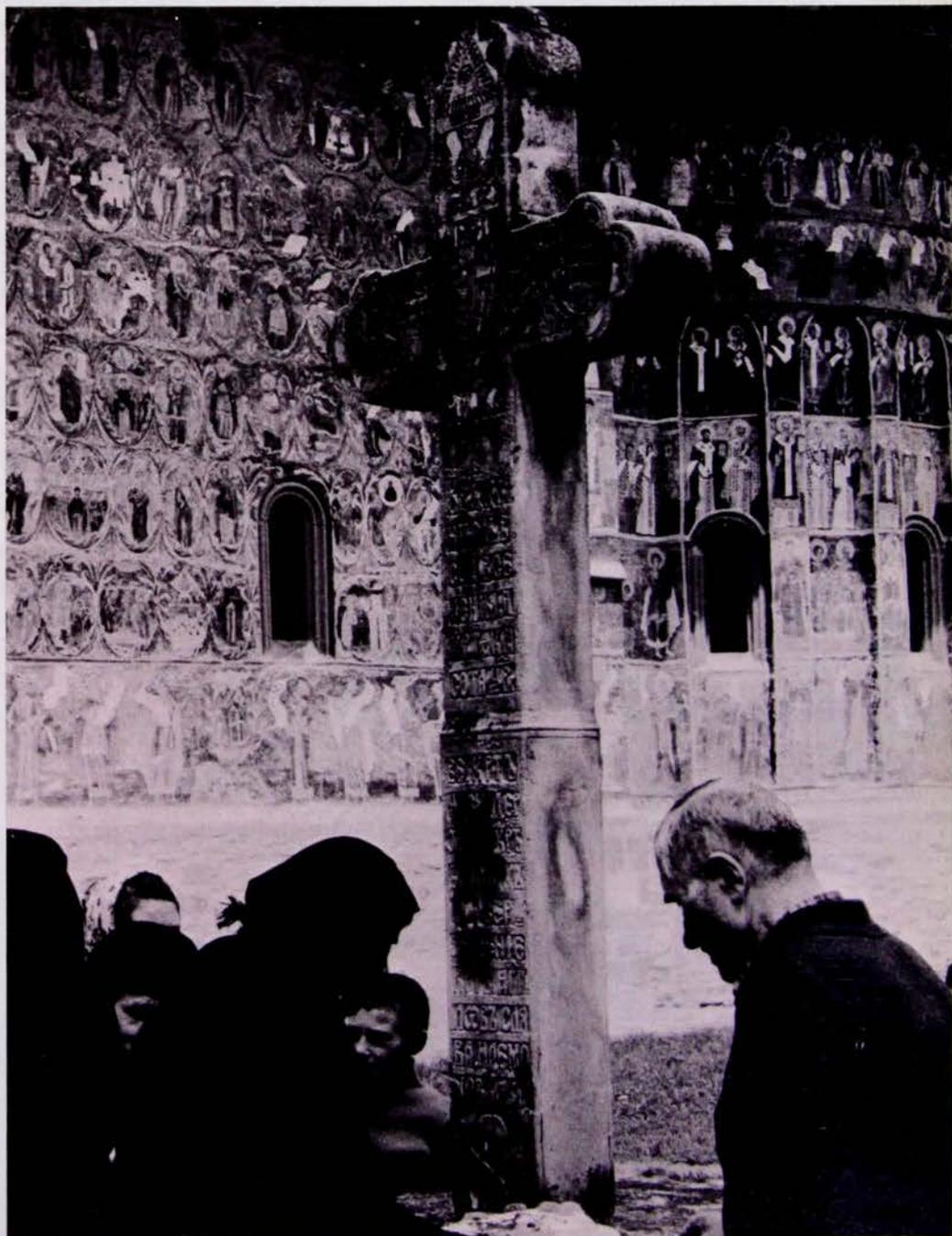
On the other hand, although the Romanian Constitution states a number of guarantees for human rights and freedom of expression, their penal code denies it. Psychiatric care is still inflicted on political dissidents. Considerable time and care was spent in the Human Rights Committee pinpointing these "areas for improvement," and continued pressure and scrutiny might serve its purpose and bring about changes.

### No Easy Summary

When one looks at the list of countries which have ratified both

Covenants, two glaring violators of human rights seem to jump right out: Iran (under the Shah) and Chile. When Iran presented its report in July 1978, it underwent some of the most intense questioning put forward by the Committee—so much so that the Iranian representative finally refused to respond and said he would return with a written reply to all questions after his government had researched the Committee's concerns. Even more significant, a group of prominent Iranian lawyers, writers, physicians and journalists presented a letter to Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim protesting what they called personal despotism, a partial judiciary and restrictions on

**Parishioners at an Orthodox church in Romania. The country is officially atheist but 85 per cent of the population belong to the Romanian Orthodox Church.**





# Monitoring the Helsinki Accords In Eastern Europe Andrew Sommer

The Helsinki Accords were signed on August 1, 1975 by the United States, Canada, the USSR, and thirty two European nations. The document linked security and trade considerations to the promotion of human rights and cultural exchange. The Accords contained no self-enforcing mechanisms, relying instead on the good faith of the signatory governments for their gradual implementation.

Within months the Accords occupied a central position in the struggle for human rights in Czechoslovakia and the USSR. Shaped by the recent history of the opposition movement in these countries, the groups whose formation the accords helped to inspire have been united in two things. Each group has sought to expose the discrepancy between its nation's formal commitment to international human rights standards and the regular abuse of those rights. The same institutions which each group seeks to reform have been used to silence members of those groups.

Since the Helsinki Final Act was a consensus agreement which represented a series of trade-offs hammered out over long years of negotiation, the implementation process was expected to proceed at a different pace in each of the signatory states. But the signing of the Final Act raised legitimate hopes that less restrictive policies towards dissent would gradually evolve in the

Eastern Bloc nations. Those hopes clearly have not been borne out by the treatment accorded the Helsinki monitoring groups in the USSR or the Charter 77 group in Czechoslovakia.

## The Helsinki Monitoring Movement in the USSR

The formation of the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group was announced on May 11, 1976 in the simple, dispassionate language which would quickly become a hallmark of all of the documents released by the Group. The eleven founders, all veterans of the human rights movement in the USSR, were led by Dr. Yuri Orlov. One of the Soviet Union's leading physicists, Orlov had already been denied employment for over a year because of his human rights activities.

The Group stated its intention to "foster compliance with the Final Act . . ." by collecting information on the Soviet government's failure to observe its humanitarian provisions. Announcing plans to publicize the information and to transmit it to the leaders of other signatory states, the Group declared its readiness to accept written complaints on Final Act violations from Soviet citizens.

Three days after the Group's announcement, Orlov was picked up by the KGB and warned that he would be subject to arrest if he persisted. TASS publicized the warning the same day

(Bottom) A scene in a Soviet courtroom in Riga, Latvia. Three judges are seated at a raised desk. The defendant (right), accused of rape, is cross-examining his accuser. (Below) Of the noted Soviet dissidents who have been expelled, shown here is Baptist leader Georgi Vins, now in the U. S.



in a bulletin which described the formation of the Group as an attempt to disrupt detente by casting doubt on the USSR's fulfillment of its international obligations.

Over the next year, the Group continued its work in the face of official harassment. Although subject to regular interrogations, searches, surveillance, and the threat of impending arrest, Group members succeeded in publishing over twenty reports which accurately documented its government's violations of the Accords.

These reports covered a broad array of abuses. Largely descriptive and carefully framed by specific provisions of the Final Act and of other international human rights documents which the Final Act incorporates, the reports ranged from discussions of official obstacles to emigration and information exchange to violations of civic, national and religious rights suffered by Pentecostals, Jewish activists, political prisoners and workers.

One measure of the Group's success was that others soon followed their lead. Helsinki monitoring groups were formed in the Ukraine, Lithuania, Georgia, and Armenia.

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***"Ironically, nothing has done more to focus the attention of the world on human rights violations . . . than the persecution of members of these groups."***

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Then, in early 1977, the Soviet authorities moved to cripple the growing monitoring movement. Yuri Orlov and Alexandr Ginzburg, two of the Moscow Group's most prominent members, were jailed. Other arrests followed throughout the country, and the groups had come full circle. With increasing regularity, they began issuing reports on the violations of their own members' rights.

The campaign against the monitors reached its zenith during the spring and summer of 1978, with the trial of Orlov and Ginzburg; of Jewish activist Anatoly Scharansky, also a member of the Moscow group; and of Lithuanian monitor Viktoras Petkus. The charges against them were similar. All were accused of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda. Scharansky, accused of working for the CIA, was also tried for treason.

The same dubious circumstances surrounded the trials of all four men. Although their monitoring activities were the basis for the charges brought against them, none was permitted to call witnesses to testify as to the veracity of the reports prepared by the Helsinki groups. Prominent figures in the human rights movement and Western reporters waited outside the courtroom for the duration of each of the trials, but none was ever permitted to enter. Inside, the defendants were reportedly heckled by hand-picked galleries—heckled, at times, even by the judges who presided over their trials.

When Orlov was denied his request that British barrister John Macdonald act as his defense attorney, he chose to represent himself. In the midst of the statement traditionally granted the defendant at the conclusion of a trial in the USSR—one of the few opportunities Orlov was afforded to speak—the presiding officers stood and left the courtroom. They returned to deliver their verdict: Orlov was found guilty and sentenced to seven years in a strict regimen labor camp and five years of internal exile.

The other three men were also found guilty. Ginzburg was sentenced to eight years in a special regimen camp; Petkus to three years imprisonment, seven years in a strict regimen labor camp, and five years internal exile; Scharansky to three years imprisonment and ten years in a strict regimen labor camp.

Soviet authorities have managed the attrition of the monitoring groups' membership with brutal efficiency. In the three and a half years since the founding of the first Helsinki Watch Group, twenty-three of the fifty-five Helsinki monitors have been imprisoned. (Fourteen are now serving out their sentences.) Others, given a choice between imprisonment and exile, have chosen to emigrate.

Remarkably, the Helsinki monitoring groups, bolstered in some cases by the addition of new members, have continued to function. They are concerned now with securing the release of their imprisoned colleagues as well as with assisting other Soviet citizens whose rights have been violated. But they have not ceased to evaluate their government's human rights performance in coolly measured language which belies the danger that they too may some day be swept up in the maelstrom of oppression.

## Czechoslovakia and Charter 77

In 1977 hundreds of prominent Czech intellectuals formed a group called Charter 77 to expose the gap between Czechoslovakia's professed adherence to international human rights principles and the reality of the Czech government's internal policies.

In many ways Charter 77's history parallels that of the Helsinki monitoring movement in the USSR. From its inception, the activities of the Charter were hindered by the Czech government. Pressures on intellectuals who had not signed the document to issue denunciations of the group were intense, and many who did sign suddenly found themselves unemployed. Inevitably, one of the frequent themes of Charter documents became the defense of its own members against a wave of oppression by Czech authorities.

Six Charter signers were arrested in January of 1977 and tried in September and October of that year. Vladimir Lastuvka, Ales Machacek, Jiri Lederer, Ota Orenst, and Frantisek Pavlicek all were charged with subversion of the Czech Republic. Vaclav Havel, Czechoslovakia's foremost living playwright, was accused of attempting to damage the reputation of the Republic abroad. Tried in a closed courtroom (representatives of Amnesty International were denied admission), all were found guilty and sentenced to prison terms ranging from one and a half to three and a half years. Havel and Pavlicek's sentences were suspended.

As this article is being written, ten leading members of the Charter 77 group, including Havel, are held by Czech authorities in another apparent effort to destroy the movement's operations. Their trial will be the largest in Eastern Europe in years.

Ironically, nothing has done more to focus the attention of the world on human rights abuses in the USSR and Czechoslovakia than the persecution of members of the Soviet Helsinki monitoring groups and of Charter 77. Each day that they spend in prison or toiling in labor camps confirms the validity of their criticism and offers further proof of their governments' failure to comply with the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Accords. ■

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*Andrew Sommer works with the U.S. Helsinki Watch Committee.*

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# EAST-WEST CHURCH DIALOGUE DEEPENS UNDERSTANDING

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David Dillon

An intensive dialogue between church leaders in the West, and in Eastern Europe, is bringing about a deeper understanding of human rights in different social and historical contexts, along with a resonant affirmation of the primacy of personal conscience.

A colloquium on human rights sponsored by Christians Associated for Relationships with Eastern Europe, an affiliate of the International Affairs Office of the National Council of Churches, reveals the current progress of the dialogue.

The seminar was chaired by Professor James Will of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary; fellow participants were Bishop Karoly Toth of the Reformed Church of Hungary; Wojciech Ketrzynski, Roman Catholic newspaper editor and former Polish diplomat; and Father Vitaly Borovoy, of the Russian Orthodox Church, who represents his communion at the World Council of Churches in Geneva, and has served as Dean of the Patriarchal Cathedral of Moscow.

In contrast to meetings of a decade past, when each side tended to assume fixed positions, current discussions reflect a new willingness to recognize

the good faith of each party, and to take account of the historical setting in which Christian witness must take place.

With one accord, the leaders of the churches of eastern Europe stressed that they were dedicated to individual rights, such as freedom of religion or speech, as well as to social ones, such as job security or health care. But they argued that these personal liberties had to be awakened and nurtured in circumstances radically divergent from those faced in the West.

### A Russian's Plea

As Father Borovoy explained, "If you are going to evaluate us from an American point of view, and expect us to act just as you would . . . we will fail, by your standards. Please take into account not only what we *should* do, but what we *can* do in our churches. Try to believe us, as we believe you. We recognize that the American concern for human rights is real, and not just ideological. We would like you to interpret to your people that human rights in Russia must be implemented in our own context."

He reminded his audience that the

Orthodox Church had, in the past, suffered a loss of credibility with the leaders of Russian revolutionary movements. "There is even today this suspicion that the Church is looking back nostalgically to the 'good old days' when it was established." For this reason, Father Borovoy explained, Orthodox Christians have tried to re-establish credibility by witnessing their faith within the present political order, and by contributing positively to socialist society.

"Another problem," according to Father Borovoy, "lay in reorienting some of our older ideals to the present situation. Historically, we Orthodox had tried . . . and failed . . . to build a holy society, a holy Russia. In the attempt, we placed great importance on individual holiness, the quest for human perfection and divinization.

"We should give a very powerful injection into socialist society of this respect for human dignity, the way Christians understand the term. This comprehends individual rights and the sacredness of the person, the whole God-given nature and destiny of man.

### The Church's Credibility

"But this must arise from the effectiveness of our witness in present-day Russian society. We are regaining our credibility in the eyes of unbelievers, and a substantial number of the younger generation is changing its attitude and turning to the Church. In the process of restoring credibility, we will gain an ever larger influence on the practice of human rights."

Father Borovoy's remarks on the dignity of the person, uttered with passion and resonance, distinctly reminded me, in its evocation of the "nature and destiny of man," of the philosophy of Nicholas Berdyaev. Berdyaev, an Orthodox thinker who had espoused a reformist version of socialism, was exiled by Lenin's government in 1921. He rejected both the competitive economic model of international capitalism, which he found to be soulless and depersonalizing, and

Pope John Paul II and Edward Gierek, first secretary of the Communist Polish United Workers' Party, confer in Warsaw during the first visit of a Pope to a Communist country.



atheistic Marxim-Leninism, which he regarded as a new idolatry of the state. What Berdyaev wanted was a socialist commonwealth which recognized human rights within a Christ-centered philosophical framework. In evoking the theme of the "nature and destiny of man," the title of one of Berdyaev's most important books, Father Borovoy displayed a kinship of spirit and intellect with this thinker.

Father Borovoy's portrayal of the historical setting of the Russian Orthodox Church also is consonant with the teaching of Berdyaev. For Berdyaev, the Russian Revolution of 1917 could not be understood apart from the religious context. The radicalism of Lenin, and of the Narodniki (Populists) who had preceded him, was messianic, prophetic, but godless. Russian radicalism reflected profound disillusionment with an Orthodox church which indeed had offered, through its spiritual and monastic life, and through its liturgical celebration of God's new creation, an icon of a Christian social order . . . only to betray this dream by cleaving to the policies of the Old Regime. When the Revolution struck, the vengeance of its leaders against the Church was only enhanced by what they regarded as the Church's bad faith.

Asked what Americans could do to improve the climate of human rights in Russia, Father Borovoy noted that "You will never get a perfect society in this world, ever. But if you Americans can build a good society, a just political and economic order, under the aegis of Christian belief and practice, that is the most important thing you can do for us. Our atheist challengers always say that only they can establish true justice, and they hold up the example of inequity or dictatorship in Christian nations. We would like to be able to prove to our interlocutors that a good, fully human polity can be founded on Christian principles, and be able to offer America as an example."

#### A Hungarian View

Bishop Karoly Toth of Hungary observed that "the human rights is a vital question which concerns all people. But it is often treated superficially, so that there is a real danger of *sloganizing* human rights. We can use the same terms and mean different things, only to find that we are talking past each other. Our thrust should be to try to understand our partner's



Worshippers leave Easter services at the Russian Orthodox monastery in Zagorsk, which also has displayed a huge portrait of Lenin for his 109th birthday.

situation. We should admit that there are authentic moral principles in both western and socialist traditions. Both sides must be open, and not presume that one's own attitude is the only valid one.

"Remember, in both east and west, the churches, until very recently, were not champions of human rights. When they finally did turn to this issue, they were often as not solely concerned with their own institutional survival.

"There are three ways religious communities can promote human rights: first, build an atmosphere of understanding—don't use human rights as an ideological weapon; secondly, include the Third World in the dialogue; thirdly, affirm social principles common to both East and West, and seek their implementation."

#### A Pole's Reminder

Mr. Ketrzynski of Poland reminded the participants how long it took to build a well ordered and humane political life in England, France, and the United States after their respective revolutions, and observed that "Russia and Poland are still young societies, with complex problems, but also with great achievements to their credit, such as mobilizing an entire nation for reconstruction after the devastation of World War II. Now we have to work to give the citizens more rights, and even the government agrees with this, up to a point. We should have a larger measure of political liberty. People should have more opportunities for free expression of their opinion. Freedom of religion should be undiluted. But we must also have a strong

common national effort and unity, especially in the economy. As much as we Christians give to our society, so much can we ask. . . ."

Mr. Ketrzynski discussed the evolution of a *modus vivendi* between Christians and Marxists in his country. He noted that each faith makes totalistic claims, and that each side had been anathema to the other. By their own dynamic of conflict, the two systems could not live together: one must perish. But for the sake of the nation, each party had pulled back from its most global assertions and had recognized the need to co-operate.

Perhaps Bishop Karoly Toth best enunciated the condition of religious human rights in eastern Europe today. He said that "if I were to contend that we have the same freedom as you have in America, I would be lying. But if I were to say that our churches are being persecuted relentlessly, I would also be lying." He commented that his own church in Budapest attracts about 1,500 worshippers each Sunday, and about 2,500 on Christmas and Easter.

#### How to Promote Rights

The question of how to promote human rights in eastern Europe has divided Christians in the west. Alexander Solzhenitsyn has argued, in the plenitude of the prophetic tradition, that one does not compromise with evil, but names it, and exorcises it. He has testified that he views western religious and political leaders to be lacking in spiritual compass, and too ready, in the name of a questionable detente, to break bread with oppressors.

Many dissidents who have recently departed Russia, including Georgi Vins, the evangelical Baptist leader, have testified that continuing American pressure on the Moscow regime makes the difference of survival for many prisoners of conscience. The pleas of the dissenters would indicate that Americans are right to raise forcefully with the Kremlin such matters as free immigration, and the enforcement of the Helsinki accords. Dialogue or detente without principle or moral focus offers only the illusion of peace.

But the search for true ethical witness must first contend with elements of ambiguity: simple moralism, or mutual recriminations, are not a means of taking responsibility, but of evading it. While it would be wrong to keep silence about Soviet gulags or



The first interfaith delegation from Romania visits the United States. Included were Orthodox, Protestant, Unitarian, Jewish and Muslim clergy.

politicized mental institutions, it is surely equally dishonest to overlook the racism, hunger, and poverty which stunt lives in our own nation and in the Third World, and constitute grave infringements on human liberty. The starting point of all ethics is self-examination.

Most importantly, we must distinguish between our attitudes toward the Soviet state, and our relationships with fellow Christians in the East, who are living out their faith in their own particular context. It is true that the dialogue on human rights undertaken by the World Council of Churches over the last few years has fallen short, at times, of ideal justice. Professor Roger Shinn of Union Theological Seminary, who warmly supports these contacts and has participated extensively in them, nevertheless states that WCC conferees sometimes stress more readily abuses in South Africa than in the Soviet Union. This unwritten rule is intended to protect the physical safety of delegates from the Eastern bloc, and to permit their continued participation in the deliberations of the WCC.

#### A New Candor

On the other hand, Dr. Dwain Epps of the World Council of Churches staff in New York, who has played a central role in the opening of East-West church dialogue over the past decade, observes that the dampening down of moralistic rhetoric has actually made possible a greater degree of candor and authentic communication on all sides. He referred specifically to a Moscow interchurch meeting on

human rights, where he had been entrusted to serve as *rapporteur*, in which abuses within the Soviet Union were on the agenda for deliberation.

Dr. Epps also points out that if we cannot listen to fellow Christians from eastern Europe in a spirit of good faith, that the "unity of Christendom is a sham."

In the short term, no new dawn of perfection can be expected to arise from colloquies such as that held in New York last May, or from similar encounters which preceded it, at Geneva, and at St. Polten, Austria. It is obvious that eastern European church leaders are still operating under a good deal of constraint. But it is equally obvious that a new understanding is being forged on the importance of human rights in all societies, capitalist or socialist. And there is general recognition that all of us are under the judgment of our own failures and shortcomings.

Furthermore, one would not dare to underestimate the force and impact of the Church's witness in eastern Europe, and the depth and extent of its faith under adversity. The triumphal return of Pope John Paul II to his native Poland bears graphic witness to this. While the churches of eastern Europe have had to make many accommodations to the established system in order to survive, and in order to regain credibility in a post-revolutionary society, they are clearly winning the battle for hearts and minds. ■

David Dillon is a free-lance journalist and historian.

# A Converted Archbishop

Jorge Lara-Braud

I wept with indignation when El Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero introduced me to a priest who had recently been tortured by Salvadoran National Guardsmen. "We too have wept," said the gentle Archbishop. "As you know, two other priests have been murdered, eleven have been expelled from the country, and many lay leaders have been imprisoned or tortured or killed. That is the price of a church converted to the Gospel."

A bit embarrassed but already strangely comforted, I got hold of myself enough to ask him what conversion to the Gospel meant. "As a minimum, to defend the poor as our Lord did," he began to answer. "But in this nation, where a few families are in control of just about everything, that is to question the very foundation of the established order. Understandably, the rich and the military authorities, who claim to be Christian custodians of law and order, are confused. They had never seen the face of a born-again Church. No wonder they treat us as subversives and Marxists. Nevertheless, we forgive them and pray for their conversion."

That was two years ago. I was back in San Salvador last January at the Archbishop's invitation to help with the celebration of the second annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Several hours before my arrival, his flock had suffered another round of assassination. National Guard forces had burst into a Catholic retreat center in a blaze of machine gun fire. It was a pre-emptive strike against presumed guerrillas in training. Killed were a 34-year-old priest and four young men, two in their teens. All were participating in a Christian initiation weekend retreat.

The next day I stood next to the Archbishop on the steps of the national cathedral for a Mass of the Resurrection attended by some twenty-five thousand Catholics and Protestants. Below us were five coffins—a grim reminder of the martyr quality of the Church in El Salvador.

Following my expression of condolence on behalf of the ecumenical community, the Archbishop delivered an hour-long homily. Again he urged fellow Christians to forgive the persecutors and to pray for their conversion.



This time, however, he excommunicated those responsible for the assassination as a prodding to their repentance, and called the government's official version of the killings an outright lie.

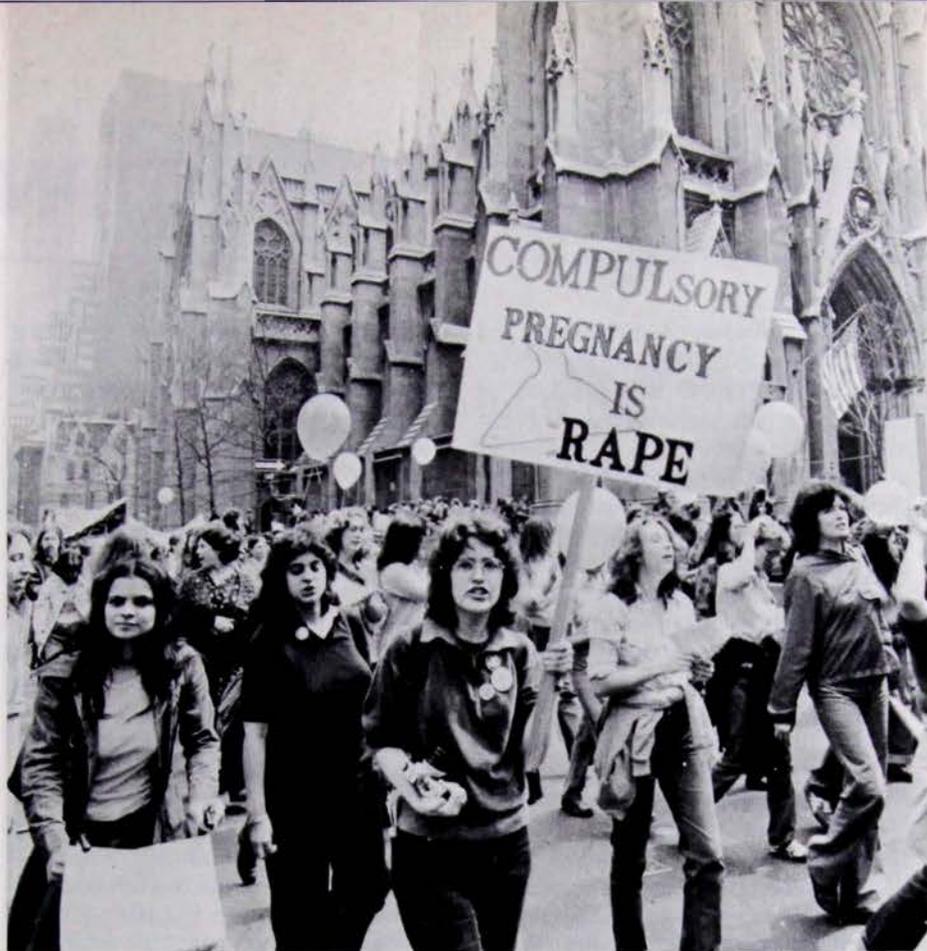
No one could have imagined in February of 1977, when he was consecrated Archbishop of San Salvador, that this shy, conservative cleric, then 59, would emerge as Latin America's most vocal church critic of official violence and social injustice. Recently he has been nominated by 118 British Parliamentarians and 26 U.S. Congressmen for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The U.S. Congressmen's letter to the Nobel Peace Prize Committee states: "In a nation notorious for its disregard of basic human rights, Archbishop Romero stands out as an eloquent and unshakable opponent of oppression and violence . . . [and as] an inspiring example for men and women everywhere who cherish freedom."

Forty-five of the bishops gathered in Puebla, Mexico for the Third Latin American Bishops' Conference last February signed a letter of solidarity with Archbishop Romero, saying in part: "The Lord has placed on your shoulders the pastoral burden of the San Salvador Archdiocese at the beginning of its beleaguerment—a true persecution against all efforts of your church for the Christian liberation of many impoverished and oppressed Salvadorans. Not only have you spoken for them, but also courageously defended their right to their own communities and organizations. We are immensely cheered by the fruit of your liberating action: an ever greater unity among clergy, religious orders and the laity."

The persecution goes on. On May 23 peaceful demonstrators were killed on the steps of the cathedral. A fifth priest was assassinated in June. But the church which Oscar Romero leads can truly say with Paul, "We are often troubled, but not crushed; sometimes in doubt, but never in despair; there are many enemies, but we are never without a friend; and though badly hurt at times, we are not destroyed. At all times we carry in our mortal bodies the death of Jesus, so that his life may also be seen in our bodies" (II Cor. 4:8-10). ■

*Jorge Lara-Braud is executive director, Commission on Faith and Order, National Council of Churches.*



MARCY KERR

## CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ARE CONTROVERSIAL

Among the emotional issues that have been brought into the IYC is the question of abortion.

Children have proved to be more controversial than many people expected.

When the United Nations General Assembly in 1977 designated 1979 the International Year of the Child, many observers predicted a relatively conflict-free observance. How could a year devoted to the young spark dramatic clashes like those of International Women's Year (1975) or the rich nation-poor nation confrontations of World Population Year (1974)? As people celebrated children around the world, it was thought, harmony would prevail.

The observers were wrong. In the U.S., at least, the Year of the Child has inspired much enthusiasm but also some opposition. Criticism centers on charges that the Year is being directed by the leaders of International Women's Year, who are using it to promote such causes as abortion and federal funding for day care and, in the process, threatening the sanctity of the family.

"If radical anti-family forces have their way," United States Senator Orrin G. Hatch has written, "this UN-sponsored program is likely to become an all-out assault on our traditional family structure." Hatch cites government-supervised family planning, legalization of homosexual

marriages and a government takeover of all responsibilities concerning children as the goals of antifamily "experts."

"A variety of groups . . . are exploiting IYC as a propaganda forum," Nick Timmesch, a syndicated newspaper columnist, charges. He accuses child advocates of wanting children to have a "Bill of Rights" which would include the right to sue their parents, to be eligible for the minimum wage for performing chores, to have the right to choose their own family, and to have birth control devices and abortion without parental consent.

In fact, the U.S. National Commission for IYC, headed by Jean Young, educator and wife of U.S. Ambassador to the UN Andrew Young, is comprised not of feminist leaders but of people with extensive experience in matters concerning children. Its 25 members, appointed by the President of the Senate, Vice President Walter Mondale, and the Speaker of the House, Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr., include experts in education, juvenile justice, social work, religion and the arts.

The National Commission is promoting only the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, a very different document from the Bill of Rights Timmesch describes. Adopted by the

UN in 1959, it affirms the family's primacy, stating that the responsibility for the child's education and guidance "lies in the first place with his parents." Its provisions include the right to adequate nutrition and medical care, the right to special care if handicapped, the right to an education and the right to be among the first to receive relief in times of disaster.

On abortion the National Commission has taken no stand at all. Each country is free under UN guidelines to choose its own focus for the Year, and the U.S. group decided to concern itself with the child from birth until the "age of accountability," which varies with each child's physical and mental development. "The whole abortion issue is not part of the Year of the Child," says Dr. Lenora Taitt, Program Director of the New York IYC office, "and it would be nonprudent to get involved in it."

Although the National Commission sees a need for more day care facilities for the children of parents who work, it has made no recommendations on the question of federal funding.

Jean Young counters critics' blasts with a simple statement of IYC's goals. "The sole purpose of the Year of the Child in America," she says, "is to foster the well-being of our children, knowing that if we cannot eradicate

the problems of the young, we can, at least, reduce them."

The National Commission works with state and local groups, encouraging them to identify their children's problems and to find their own solutions to them. Jean Young points out that the Year of the Child has already resulted in 17 states' requiring auto safety devices for children, in the appropriation of \$1 million for new children's programs in Delaware, in a special task force in the District of Columbia to reduce the capital's high infant mortality rate. The issues the U.S. must confront, she believes, are those of "juvenile justice, child abuse, hungry children, young females stunted by sexism, the treatment of children in prisons, how children are denied basic rights."

Many American children do not enjoy the rights codified in the Universal Declaration, statistics show. Access to adequate medical care is among them, yet President Carter announced that in 1977 10 million American children had never received any medical care at all. The right to education is taken for granted, but nearly two million Americans aged 7-17 are not enrolled in school. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, 11 percent of 1977's high school graduates were functionally illiterate.

All children are entitled to affection, love and understanding, says the Universal Declaration, but in 1977, according to President Carter's figures, one million children were physically abused by their parents and others. In New York City alone, according to *The New York Times*, physical abuse in 1976 caused the deaths of 83 children.

The right to develop in freedom and dignity is another right of the child with which few people would argue. Yet the U.S. has nearly one million incarcerated children who are frequently subjected to drugging, restraints and solitary confinement. The majority of them are not guilty of crimes but are status offenders, youngsters who committed minor infractions such as truancy and running away from home.

Can the U.S. improve its children's rights record? "Even if we cannot achieve utopian circumstances for our young people," Jean Young says, "we must, nevertheless, work to change conditions, attitudes and policies that adversely affect them." ■

*Marcy Kerr is a free lance writer living in New York City.*

## DILEMMAS IN RELIEF AND

What do Food for Work programs in Haiti, wheat for Vietnam, medicines for Eastern Europe and vocational training for Palestinians have in common?

They are all examples of church-sponsored relief or development work in politically-repressed areas. They also are examples of work that leave Christian service agencies here and abroad open to charges ranging from propping up undemocratic regimes to pacifying the people in aid-receiving countries who might otherwise work toward fundamental social change. With the Palestinians, it raises the question of whether the aid given frees up Palestinian money for attacks against Israel.

No matter how Christ-centered the motives are for giving aid, there is no such thing as "pure" charity. Every decision to help or not to help carries with it political, social or economic ramifications.

"If we were only to help countries where there are ideal societies and no infringements of human rights, we would be down to about a half-dozen countries," says Dr. J. Harry Haines, head of the United Methodist Committee on Overseas Relief (UMCOR). "There are no ideal situations."

Haines administers a \$9 million budget for work in 62 countries on six continents, the majority of them in less than democratic circumstances. He also is chairperson of Church World Service (CWS), the relief and development agency of the National Council of Churches.

Haiti, one of the poorest countries in the world, is traditionally short of food. Through CWS, American churches collectively work with Haitian colleague agencies on Food for Work projects, where laborers are paid in food for work rendered, usually building farm-to-market roads or digging wells. The churches also support community development, nutrition and family health projects. In addition, UMCOR maintains the only rural teacher training college in the country, where 80 percent of the children have no school to go to and are condemned to a permanent level of illiteracy unless the problem is turned around. There

are some who say that to assist the people of Haiti is to help keep the right-wing government of "Baby Doc" Duvalier in power.

"If people are hungry and in dire need, it doesn't matter where in the world they are or what kind of government they are living under," says Dr. Eugene L. Stockwell, NCC associate general secretary for Overseas Ministries. "If they can be helped to eat and to live, they should be helped. But we must recognize the political implications of that help, insofar as we can. By having close supervision of the distribution, we can be quite sure that the food will not go to prop up a military regime, but will actually go to the poor who need it."

Church-sponsored aid goes to counterpart church-related agencies in the receiving countries that can verify its distribution to those for whom it is intended. Assistance is given to people rather than governments. If the country involved has a government to the right or the left of the political spectrum, the aid raises questions just the same.

In the spring of 1978 CWS shipped 10,000 metric tons of wheat to Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) as a people-to-people gift of reconciliation to help heal the still-smarting wounds of war between the U.S. and Vietnam. The day the wheat arrived, a CWS team was dockside to greet the ship-



# DEVELOPMENT: NO EASY ANSWER

FAITH  
POMPONIO

ment. The team remained long enough to see the early distribution of the wheat that was filmed by a U.S. crew.

In this instance, there was no counterpart Christian agency to oversee the full distribution. However, there was a written agreement between CWS and the Vietnamese government that covered the specific use of the wheat, as bread and noodles for orphanages and institutions for the aged in the South of Vietnam, where the U.S. was formerly allied. Once the Americans left, it was always possible to verify where the food went, through U.N. and other international personnel in the area. The Vietnamese government knew that. Since further assistance is needed, CWS was reasonably assured that Vietnam would not jeopardize the possibility of future aid by diverting the food to the army, as sometimes happens in U.S. government to government shipments.

This project involved American farmers who donated some of the wheat, as well as individuals and churches who helped pay to send it. It did represent dealing with a former enemy with whom we have not yet re-established ties as a nation, and for some that was objectionable.

"As an agency involved in relief and development you have to be pro-people, pro-humanity, not pro-government, either side," says the Rev. Paul F. McCleary, CWS director and initiator

of the Vietnam wheat shipment.

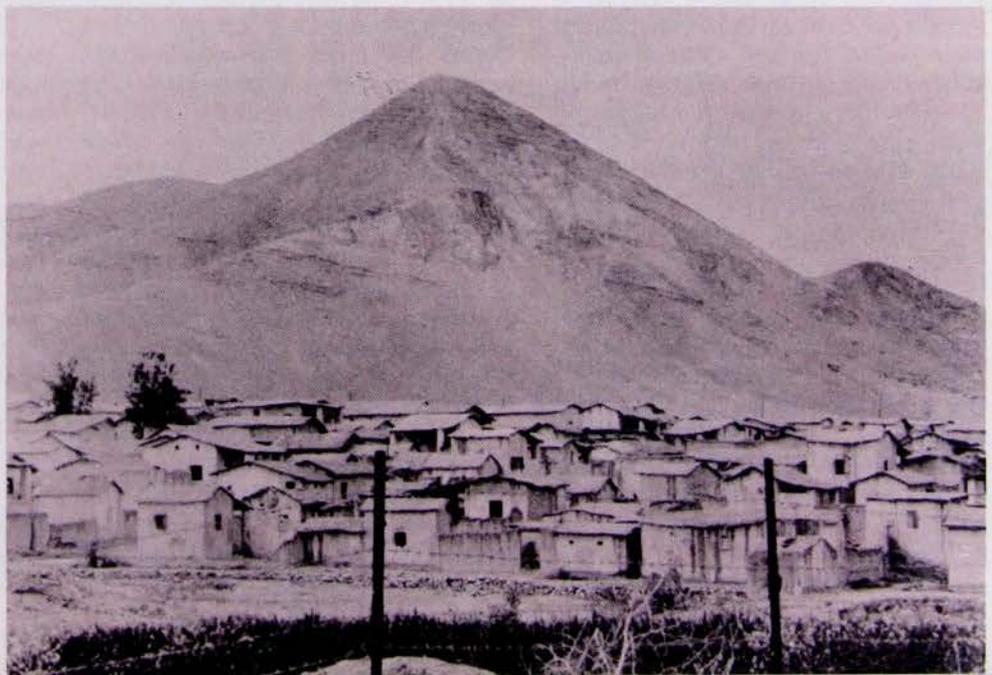
"Wherever people are going through social change, that's the point at which they are under most stress, physical and psychological," he says. "The people in Vietnam are going through that kind of stress, just as much as those who make the conscious decision to leave that country. Where social transition is taking place, the church must be present, just as it is in the last rites or at confirmation."

Situations vary from one socialist country to another. In Eastern Europe, vestiges of the cold war live on. In one Iron Curtain location that will go unidentified to protect the work, UMCOR runs an underground assistance program "that makes James Bond seem like pretty tame stuff," according to Haines. Consisting largely of medical assistance, the aid is routed through three other Eastern European countries, and would be cut off immediately if detected by the authorities in the receiving country. UMCOR files on this project are coded to shield the operation and those who benefit from it.

The Middle East has another set of dilemmas. J. Richard Butler, CWS Middle East director, states that, "When churches provide vocational training to Palestinians, there is no way to be 100% sure that it's not freeing up Palestinian money that could be used to buy weapons for attacks against

**"No matter how Christ-centered the motives are for giving aid, there is no such thing as 'pure' charity."**

Haiti (left) and Arab refugees in occupied West Bank (below) are among the programs where dilemmas exist.





Precious wheat supplies are guarded in a warehouse in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Israel. However, we can be sure that sources of money for Palestinian arms are not interested in providing vocational training. The fact is, by developing and maintaining a program for Palestinians for the last 30 years, the churches have helped keep the Palestinian issue alive," Butler explains.

#### A Case of Development and Justice

If relief and development assistance to politically repressed countries pacifies the people and keeps them from working for social change as some critics believe, then Nicaragua is a notable exception. Following the 1972 earthquake that destroyed much of Managua, the U.S. church agencies were able to supply disaster relief and then longer-range reconstruction aid through a partner agency in Nicaragua, the Evangelical Committee for Disaster Response (CEPAD). Outside assistance of considerable magnitude did not pacify Nicaraguans away from their desire for self determination. When civil strife broke out, the church agencies had a proven channel for aid that could work on both sides of the lines. After the change in government, CEPAD was still the key to relief work in Nicaragua.

#### The Great Unsolved Problem

In Africa, yet another type of repression exists that is what Haines calls, "the great unsolved problem" of the continent—tribalism. National boundaries cut across tribal boundaries. One African tribe found itself under five different governments, particularly in Zaire and surrounding countries.

Haines believes that in addition to

political ideology, much of the problem between Zimbabwe Rhodesia's Prime Minister Abel Muzorewa and the Patriotic Front relates to tribal animosities. He also attributes much of Africa's burgeoning refugee problem of 3½ million to intense tribal rivalries. When Idi Amin ruled Uganda, he is believed to have executed some 300,000 people, none of them from his own tribe. Economic and climatic problems—such as those in the Sahel—also plague Africa, as well as the ideological struggles that go on in places like Angola, where one group has Chinese backing, one Russian backing and one the white South African government. None of these factors can be overlooked by the relief agencies as they conduct towel and basin ministries in needy areas.

Another type of repression that has ramifications for church agencies can be seen in the resurgence of extreme Moslem governments that has all but closed out relief and development work in countries such as Iran and Afghanistan and has seriously complicated it in places like Pakistan, where Christians are a harassed minority.

#### The American Dimension

There is a sobering third world view of church aid that is part indictment and part plea for help. "Trade not aid" is a simple way to phrase a complex dilemma. "Justice instead of charity" is another way to put it.

U.S. church aid, given with the best intentions and good will of the American people, cannot be separated from the American system, believes Fr. Sergio Torres, a Chilean Roman Catholic priest who directs Theology in the

Americas, a New York-based program related to justice issues.

The American system is part of the developed world's perpetuation of poverty and hunger in the developing world. This is done by forcing low prices for the raw materials of the poor countries—petroleum being the exception since the rise of OPEC—and then selling the products manufactured from those materials back to the poor countries at high prices.

In addition, prime agricultural land in third world countries that could be used to feed the hungry there is used instead by the agri-business industry to grow export crops for high prices in the richer nations. That same industry manipulates the U.S. food chain and drives up prices for consumers here.

The churches in developed nations invest their money in corporations that exploit third world countries overseas. When the churches then use that money for aid and development in these countries, they are perceived by some to be doling out part of the profits that were unfairly extracted from their countries to begin with.

As helpful and as necessary as material aid from the churches of the world are to the developing countries, Fr. Torres would rather see the churches concentrate on convincing their governments to be more just in their trade practices with the third world nations. The people of developed countries need to be helped to understand what really is done overseas in their name and presumably for their benefit.

"The problems of the poor countries will not be resolved because the churches send money or food," says Fr. Torres. "That is generous of the churches, but does not get at what causes the problems there."

McCleary agrees and believes that it doesn't have to be either church aid or working toward better government policies, it can be both. "Churches by and large realize that their contributions in and of themselves will not resolve problems," he says. "We hope our contributions would cause people in developing countries to organize themselves in new ways to deal with their own problems. At the same time that we provide overseas assistance, we also press the U.S. government to re-examine its policies." ■

*Faith Pomponio is Director, Special Services, Office of News and Information, National Council of Churches*



## LETTERS

### A CRUCIAL TIME

We were delighted to see a copy of the June issue of your "New World Outlook" special issue on the Middle East.

We believe this issue will be very much appreciated by people who have a particular interest in the Middle East, in general, in Lebanon in particular and more specially in the Armenian people.

His Holiness Catholicos Karekin II extends his deep appreciation for bringing the case of the Christians of the Middle East into focus particularly at this crucial time of Middle Eastern history.

Vazgen Chougassian  
Secretary, Armenian Catholicosate of  
Cilicia  
Antelias, Lebanon

### NOT TRUE TO REALITY

I have just returned from the Holy Land, now Israel. I travelled Israel from one end to the other, including the West Bank and Gaza Strip. During this three week trip, I had the opportunity to speak to Arabs as well as Christians and Jews.

We Christians—and especially the Arabs—never had it so good in Israel—and in the so-called occupied territories. The same territories which Jordan took by force many years ago and no one in the whole world raised a protest.

The Arabs who live in the West Bank work in Israel—their pay is better than any Arab in other countries. Their schools are excellent. People talk about the poor Palestinians. All the other Arab countries could have absorbed them long ago, but no, better to have them suffer so that they can tell the rest of the world how bad they are off. If the PLO should get the West Bank, the only gainer in the long run will be Russia, and eventually all the Arab lands will be under Russian domination. Saudi Arabia is very well aware of it. And then we certainly will have no oil in this country.

As long as there is a strong Israel, the only democratic State in the Middle East, neither Christians nor Muslims will have to worry.

The articles in your June issue are biased and not true to reality.  
(Rev.) Dan Marshall  
Biscoe, N.C.



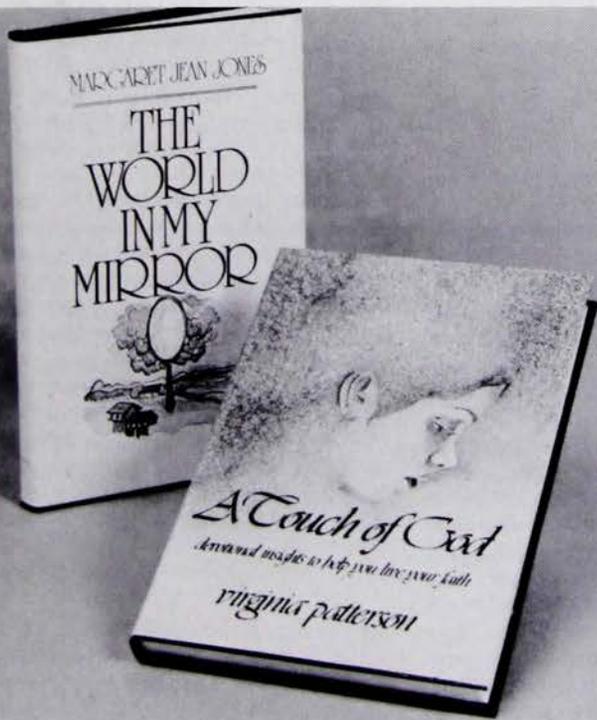
## BOOKS

**LORD, HAVE YOU GOT A MINUTE?** by Kenneth Wray Conners, Valley Forge, PA. 1979: Judson Press, 127 pages, \$4.95, paperback.

In these pages Kenneth Wray Conners opens his mind and heart to the Lord about living the Christian life in today's world. Addressing the Lord is for him a mode of self-examination. In praying out loud, he causes his readers to examine with him the hypocrisies and contradictions so characteristic of current lifestyles, personal and corporate.

The author points to the self-indulgence of "this narcissistic age" . . . the groping for meaning along will-o'-the-wisp paths. He scores the quest for "theological tranquilizers" and trends to conformity that mark so many affluent and middle-class congregations. There is humor and

# Reflections of Faith



### The World in My Mirror

Margaret Jean Jones suffers from nearly total paralysis, and can see the world only through a hand-held mirror. But she has Jesus in her heart, and this is her testimony of what He has done for her. Margaret's story will inspire you and give you hope. \$7.95

### A Touch of God

*Devotional Insights to Help You Live Your Faith*

Virginia Patterson says you can't have a touch of God in your life without that touch making a difference. Writing primarily for women, she gives an honest presentation of how she has learned to *live* her faith. \$6.95

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irony in his thrusts. This is a book that will cause wincing and smiles of recognition as it strikes home.

The gathered community of Christ's family is affirmed while its shortcomings are confessed. Deftly the author draws us back to the basic tenets of our faith for direction in the midst of uncertainties.

Each chapter is rooted in a biblical quotation as an opening. Conners then develops his commentary on the contemporary scene with the cogency of an essay and the felicitous phrasing of poetry. The combination makes these prayers valuable for individual devotions and ideal for a leader to read aloud as a meditation or group discussion starter on the subject of discipleship. Pastors and church leaders will especially appreciate this book which is as refreshing as it is disturbing.

Kenneth Wray Conners is an active layman with membership in First United Methodist Church, Germantown, PA. He has been a public relations executive for many years and has studied theology at Oxford and St. Andrews Universities.

Betty Marchant

*Betty Marchant is Promotion and Utilization Director for the Education and Cultivation Division.*

**REVOLT AGAINST CHIVALRY, Jessie Daniel Ames and the Women's Campaign Against Lynching, by Jacquelyn Dowd Hall. New York, 1979: Columbia University Press, 266 pages plus index, \$14.95.**

Just reading Jacquelyn Hall's book—"A Revolt Against Chivalry"—was a "refresher" both painful and exciting. I was reminded of my growing up era in Mississippi during the early decades of this century. Lynchings were commonplace in the response of many adults of that time, but devastating to so many children, who overheard adult conversations with no understanding of the "why"! Nightmares in early childhood so often turned into racism and/or fear with continuing manifestations of violence by whites as they grew into adulthood. Even unto this "enlightened" day the new upsurge of the KKK symbolizes that violent racism is alive and well in many places.

Hall's timely and disturbing story brings new and previously unpublished data on the dimensions of the role Jessie Daniel Ames played not only in the history of anti-lynching efforts by southern women, but also in her significant leadership in the woman's suffrage movement, especially in Texas during the period of effort toward the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution granting women the right to vote (1920).

Following her husband's death in 1914, Ames became "an aggressive and effective

leader" not only in the women's movement of that day but also "as a proponent of justice for the blacks"—one of the very few visible links "between a tradition of social feminism and the twentieth century struggle for black civil rights."

Her concern during her activist years in Texas, according to Hall, encompassed a broad perspective including a major emphasis on education of women, their working conditions and their legal rights.

She also had a deep concern for the rights of children. Hall writes that "a state (Texas) child labor act prohibited employment of children under 15 in factories and businesses, but made no provision for farm labor. Since almost 7 out of 8 (Texas) children employed in 1920 were engaged in agricultural pursuits, the law's impact was minimal."

Hall further defines the Ames motivation and mission in the following statement:

"Ames, herself, in flight from what Jane Addams called 'the family claim' neither admired nor exemplified the traditional feminine virtues, and she sometimes viewed with contempt the concerns of the female sub-culture. The expansion of women's rights, she believed, demanded a change she associated with education, discipline, and logical thought . . . A well trained mind was the first pre-requisite for emancipation . . . The essence of Ames' feminism lay in her rejection of the ideologies of domesticity and paternalism . . . Her own life had taught her to fear dependency . . . Public acclaim, financial independence, the opportunity to affect the course of public events—these were the goals of her personal struggle . . . the measure of female emancipation."

As the Hall story unfolds, Jessie Daniel Ames—the concerned and competent "organizer", the ambitious worker for women's rights, the life long advocate and "practitioner" of states' rights, the disappointed politician, and the supporter of justice for blacks—came to Georgia from her years of struggle through personal tragedy and political frustration in her native Texas.

She moved into a less familiar crusade—from women's rights to rights of blacks. The concept of real interracial "cooperation" was scarcely sprouting in its bed of "racism", a term unheard of in those days. Church women—Negro and white—were beginning to talk a little, mostly about education of black women and children. Women of the all white Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were in the majority among the conversation groups. The so called joint efforts of black and white women were buried in a paternalism, which over these many decades has continued to manifest itself as visible evidence continuing racism across the nation in both church and society.

Jessie Daniel Ames continued to confront sexism in many ways as she began her work in the early twenties as director of Women's Work in the Commission on Interracial Cooperation. Dr. Will Alexander, the founder and director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, needed women to share in the program, at his own pace and following his plan. This was not the Ames way. She made the plans and neither men nor women influenced the process to any great degree. One example had to do with work for Federal Anti-Lynching legislation in the thirties and forties after she had organized the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching. Her "States Rights" conviction kept her adamant toward such federal control of state behaviour. Even so the effort went forward through many women and their agencies. In the decade of the forties this Federal Anti-Lynching Law was a special priority in most Methodist Women's conferences in the South and in the Woman's Division of The Methodist Church. Southern U.S. Senators filibustered this legislation over many years. By 1950 the lynchings had declined to zero. Other issues of justice were on the desks of the tireless filibusters.

In Chapter 5 of Hall's story the vigilante justice of the "Lynch Law" is described in all its terror as it grew out of the culture of the South, and became the wall of fear that separated white from black and made economic and social oppression of blacks the key plank of political candidates seeking white votes. The Civil Rights era of the sixties with the voting act of 1965 seemed so long coming.

The unconscious but overt racism of Jessie Daniel Ames expressed itself too clearly when she ruled that black women could do no good as members of the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching. Even without official status as members, many black women worked along with the whites to try to end the practice of mob violence among them.

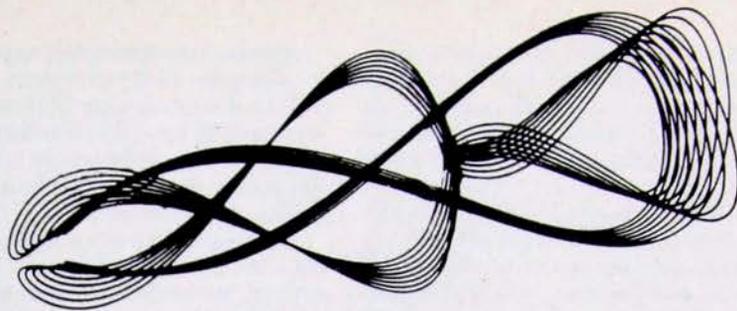
In 1944 Jessie Daniel Ames was replaced by Dorothy Tilly, who became the "one woman power" in the last years of the Anti-Lynching Era and into the new day of the "Fellowship of the Concerned" with its focus on justice in the courts, school integration and the civil rights issues.

Jessie Daniel Ames retired to her "Wren's Nest" in North Carolina! There she helped register black voters and plan a precinct organizing campaign—and "wrested control of the Democratic Party from the courthouse gang."

Thelma Stevens

*Ms. Stevens for many years was Christian Social Relations secretary for the Women's Division and was actively involved in the struggle against segregation. She now lives in Nashville.*

# THE MOVING FINGER WRITES



## WCC BACKS RELIGIOUS LIBERTY CAMPAIGN OF TAIWAN CHURCH

Support for local voices upholding religious liberty in Taiwan was provided by an August 13 cable to President Chiang Ching-Kuo from Dr. Philip Potter, general secretary of the World Council of Churches.

The appeal is in response to the intensive local and international campaign being undertaken by the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan to preserve its human right to religious freedom. The campaign follows the announcement of new regulations for shrines, temples and churches that have serious implications for church-state relations and religious freedom, should they become law.

Article 19 of the 26 article text says that if a shrine, temple or church is against national policy or is in contravention of its established aim or against the public interest, the government may take the following action: (1) give a warning; (2) nullify any resolution which was made; (3) order its reorganization; (4) dissolve the legal entity.

Article 20 says if a board member or religious propagator belonging to a shrine, temple or church breaks the law or acts against the interests of the shrine, temple or church or its constitution, the government authorities, apart from discharging him from his job, may also fine him.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, on July 4, filed an official petition to the legislative Yuan maintaining that the proposed regulations were both unconstitutional and illegal. The petition requested the government to explain its motives for proposing the new regulations. Some ecumenical observers believe the initiative is aimed at disrupting the corporate unity of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan which has consistently challenged government policies and which remains the largest organized body of social conscience in the country. When the Church adopted a Declaration on Human Rights last year, the Department of Interior Affairs told the Church to change the language of the declaration. The church refused. (EPS)

## LAO EVANGELICAL CHURCH STRUGGLING TO STAY ALIVE

The Laos Evangelical Church, which six years ago had about 10,000 members and

some 40 pastors, is today a very small church, according to news of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA).

Almost 70 percent of the Church's membership was drawn from the Meo tribe and most of them have left Laos. Sunday services still continue. CCA keeps in touch with the church, and members of staff have visited them on several occasions.

The Rev. Saly Kounthapanya, President of the Church, was for several months at one of the many re-education camps in the country. He was released recently, and has now resumed his responsibility as President of the Church. The general secretary is the Rev. By Thao, a graduate of the Chiang Mai Theological Seminary.

One of the latest to leave the country is Mr. Chantone Kounthapanya who was acting as President of the Church. He was in Bossey, Switzerland, at the conference center of the World Council, and is known in ecumenical circles. At present he is at the Nongkhai refugee camp in Thailand.

At the Nongkhai refugee camp there is a Laos Evangelical congregation now with some 38 families among its members. The Rev. Mr. Moun is in charge. He was at one time serving one of the Vientiane churches.

(CCA NEWS)

## BRITISH METHODISTS APPEAL FOR S.A. BLACK MINISTER

British Methodist leaders have asked the government of South Africa to restore the passport it confiscated recently from a leading black African Methodist theologian.

The British Methodists said that travel rights of the Rev. Gabriel Setiloane had been suspended on his recent return from neighboring Lesotho, where he had been assisting in the establishment of a new theological college.

The Rev. William Gowland and the Rev. Kenneth G. Greet, president and secretary of the British Methodist Conference, said that unless the travel ban was lifted, Dr. Setiloane would be unable to accept an appointment as a visiting professor this fall at West Germany's Bochum University.

The African clergyman, who lived for some years in the Bristol, England, home of Charles Wesley, the founder of Methodism, had previously angered the government by refusing to accept citizenship in

one of the country's black tribal "homelands."

Under South Africa's apartheid (racial segregation) policies, all of the more than 18 million blacks in the country have been "assigned" to a Bantustan, or homeland, even though they were not born there or even live near there.

Two of these homelands, by South African fiat, have been declared independent nations, though no country in the world except South Africa has given them diplomatic recognition.

The point behind the South African racial policy is to be able to claim that all blacks have their political rights in their own tribal areas and consequently do not need political rights in the so-called white areas of South Africa.

Dr. Setiloane refused a request to work with the government of Bophutatswana—a tribal homeland declared an independent nation in 1977—on the grounds that he had no connection with the area and wanted to maintain his rights as an urban black citizen in South Africa.

(RNS)

## SIMPLER LIFESTYLE NEEDED FOR EFFECTIVE EVANGELISM

Leaders of religious orders of men in the Roman Catholic Church in this country say that a return to a more simple lifestyle is essential for effectively reaching people—especially the poor—in evangelization efforts.

"Many of us (religious) live by standards which often lead in practice to a consumerist mentality and to great material security," the priests and monks said in a statement.

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Such a situation, they continued, "makes it difficult for us to find solidarity with the poor, or to be effective in evangelizing all classes in society, no one of which is exempt from structural injustice."

The admission came in the final statement issued by the annual assembly in Atchison, Kansas, of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, a national organization of the regional superiors of male religious orders and congregations. The assembly addressed itself to the theme:

"Metanoia (change of heart)—An attitude for domestic social change."

The assembly attracted 225 participants, representing some 55 different orders, the largest turnout in the history of the group. There are some 100 Catholic religious orders of men in the U.S.

The religious leaders acknowledged that thus far there has been a "limited response" among their groups to previous commitments for increased efforts on social justice issues.

They resolved in their final statement to

encourage workshops to increase sensitivity to the social causes of injustice, move toward corporate social responsibility in their investment practices, make a concern for justice a central issue in their training programs, and promote increased personal contact with the poor on the part of the members of their orders.

Earlier in the assembly, Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Francis, S.V.D., of Newark, in a keynote address challenged the religious leaders to become "agents of change in a period . . . when the activism of the 60s and early 70s has faded into a mood of conservatism." The former president of the conference said that Pope John Paul II "is calling us to change attitudes (in collaboration) with the poor and powerless of the world."

(RNS)

### NICARAGUA ADOPTS A BILL OF RIGHTS

Nicaragua's new Junta of National Reconstruction has promulgated a bill of rights, proclaiming a broad range of liberties for all citizens.



November will feature a plea for a more African theology by a churchman from Ghana, a Nome pastor's struggle to reform the "Sin City of the Arctic," more Mission Means entries, an interview about China, a "seaponic" farming project in Newburgh, N.Y., and much more. Also in November, we begin a series on mission issues that will come to General Conference.

## Children suffer the most.

All members of a society suffer when confronted with civil strife, but children suffer the effects most severely. They are the most fragile, defenseless and innocent. In the Middle East, where hundreds of families have been uprooted, many children have lost a parent and have special needs.

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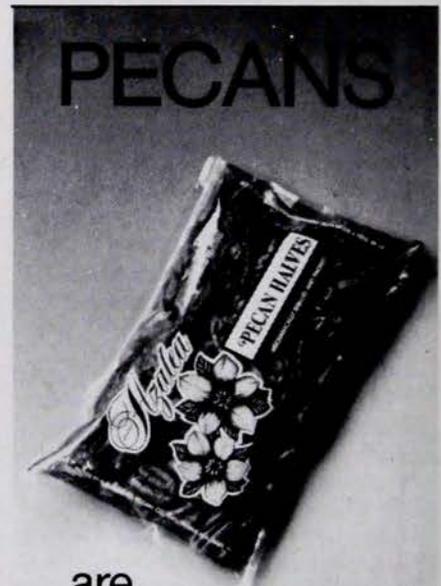
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The bill of rights guarantees religious liberty and prohibits the use of compulsory methods of changing thought or religious belief. The new bill also bars discrimination based on race, sex or religion "or any other social condition."

Asserting that "the right to life is inviolable and inherent to a human being," the bill abolishes the death penalty. Nicaragua thus became the tenth Latin American country to abolish capital punishment. The others are Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela.

The majority of the 52 articles in the new bill of rights deal with the administration of justice.

A court order is needed to detain a person "except in cases of flagrant crime." Accused persons are given the right to know the charges against them, and to be arraigned within 24 hours or released. The use of torture is prohibited. The violation of the civil rights of prisoners was one of the principal charges frequently leveled against the deposed regime of President Anastasio Somoza.

The bill affirmed the right to hold private property but said the right was not absolute and could be limited for reasons of security, public interest or utility, social interest, national economy or agricultural reform.

In other action, the junta expelled from Nicaragua some 60 Latin American Trotskyists, radical leftists mainly from Argentina, Colombia and Chile.

Nicaragua Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto said that none of those expelled had fought in the revolution. He described them as "hotheads who try to capitalize on problems."

The radical leftists had promoted a workers' demonstration, accusing the new government of falling into the hands of the bourgeoisie.

(RNS)

### PLANNED PARENTHOOD CLINIC DAMAGED BY ARSON ATTEMPT

A deliberately set fire which caused about \$1,000 in damage to the offices and clinic in St. Paul, Minnesota, of Planned Parenthood of Minnesota has been denounced by United Methodist Bishop Wayne Clymer.

It was the fourth such attack in two-and-a-half years that Planned Parenthood has occupied the building in a residential area of St. Paul. The organization offers birth control and family planning services, and abortions are permitted in the clinic.

A \$2,000 reward is being offered by Planned Parenthood and the Minnesota Arson Award Information Committee.

In his statement, Bishop Clymer said, "We deplore the continual harassment and recent arson attempt of the Planned Parenthood clinic. These vicious attacks are a violation of every principle which recognizes the sacredness of human life. The privilege of every citizen to make known his or her religious and political views should be respected.

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for social change provided in this nation, but are also a throwback to a barbarism which must be unmasked for what it is."

In Minneapolis, meanwhile, bottle rockets were put through a mailchute in the office of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life (MCCL), but caused no damage.

David O'Steen, MCCL executive director, called the incident at Planned Parenthood "unfortunate."

"There is every indication that it has no relationship to MCCL," he said. "We're non-violent. We're trying to end violence, not start it," he said.

### KHOMEINI ORDERS TROOPS TO CRUSH KURDISH REVOLT

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the de facto ruler of Iran's newly proclaimed Islamic republic, ordered government troops into Kurdistan in northeastern Iran in an all-out effort to crush a rebellion there.

Kurdish rebels, in turn, have vowed to wage "all-out war" to make the Kurds' autonomy-minded province "the graveyard" of Iran's "reactionary regime."

The four million Kurds in Iran, together with 8 million other Kurds in neighboring Iraq and Turkey, have long dreamed of an independent state.

Most Kurds are Sunni Muslims, members of the largest branch of Islam. Ayatollah Khomeini and most of Iran's Persian majority belong to the Shi'ite branch of Islam, which broke with the Sunnis in a dispute relating to the successor of the Prophet Mohammed.

Kurds, though related to the Persians, form an ethnically distinct people with their own language and culture.

The Kurds have been fighting "intruders" for more than 2,000 years, including

the Persians, the Mongols, the Turks, the Crusaders, the Arabs, and the British.

In Iran, Kurdish leaders had hoped for autonomy after the revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini toppled Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi last winter.

### DRINK IS "GREAT EXCEPTION" TO FEDERAL PROTECTION EFFORTS

The Rev. Harvey N. Chinn, pastor of the Faith United Methodist Church of Sacramento, California, told the annual convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) that alcoholic beverages constitute "the great exception" to federal efforts at consumer protection and regulation.

"While pressure is being applied to other segments of America's corporate life, the federal government has made a great exception of the alcohol beverage indus-

try," he said.

Citing examples of how government agencies have forced product manufacturers to correct misleading advertising and adopt safety devices, Mr. Chinn commented that "the federal government makes a great exception in the damage done to consumers by the use of alcoholic beverages."

He said that last year the California state legislature actually passed a law to exempt the manufacturers and dispensers of alcoholic beverages from liability for the misuse of their products.

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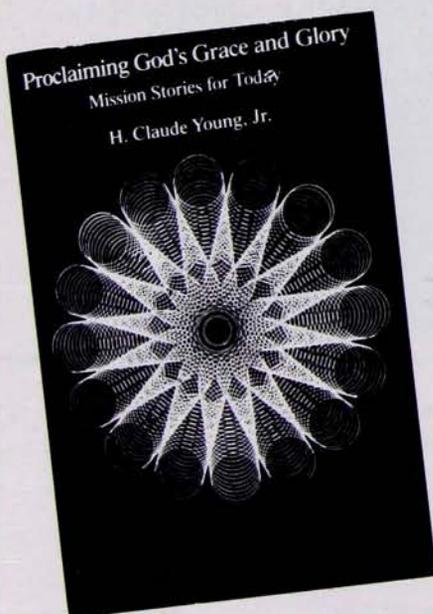
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## Mission Resources

# "HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER"

For Christians, solidarity with poor and oppressed people is a biblical mandate. This study considers the historical setting for human rights and points to violations occurring in our time.

**Paradox and Promise in Human Rights.** By Peggy Billings. In this basic book the author traces sources of human rights, events leading to the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and developments of the last three decades. \$2.95.

**Of Life and Hope: Toward Effective Witness in Human Rights.** Fourteen contributors have assisted compiler Mia Adjali in focusing on how to achieve full rights for all persons. This process book has guidance sections accompanying the short, easy-to-read chapters. \$2.95.

**Principalities and Powers and People.** By 18 Mission Interns. Essays on Human Rights and the International Order, based on experiences of 18 mission interns who worked in Africa, Asia, Middle East and Caribbean. \$2.50.

**Human Rights of Women Packet.** Resource packet with reprints of articles representing the situation of women around the globe. Emphasizes employment, health care, legal rights, physical abuse, housing and involvement in power structures. \$3.95.



## Audiovisuals

**Sounds in Struggle: Experiences in Human Rights.** 30-minute cassette presenting experiences of persons and groups who have struggled for human rights. Accompanying booklet gives guidance for discussion. \$3.50.

**Human Rights Slide Set.** Includes 20 color pictures relating to the fundamental economic rights of food, housing, health care and employment as well as social and civil rights. Pictures situations in USA and abroad. \$6.00 each; \$5.00 when five or more slide sets are ordered.

**As We Sow.** 16mm. motion picture. Gives a Christian perspective on human rights. Issues introduced are corporate responsibility, torture, Korea, racism, Native American land rights, and handicapped persons. 28 min. Rental \$15, from United Methodist Film Service, 1525 McGavock Street, Nashville, TN 37204.

**Step by Step.** 16mm. Animated film by Faith Hubley for the International Year of the Child. Depicts cruelty to children, problems and possibilities of childhood, and rights of the child. Music by Elizabeth Swados. 11 min. Rental \$15.

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Materials listed may be ordered from Service Center, 7820 Reading Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45237, unless otherwise indicated.