

Liberty

Peace Words Flying **SEE PAGE 2**

REPORT FROM RUSSIA

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МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ АКАДЕМИЯ НАУК

ОРБАЧЕ

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Не буду считать, что на этот счет, констатировать, что дефицитом нового мышления ощущают в дофинит сейчас. Не собираюсь сейчас, дакие углубляясь, тотя ситуации, тотя многих, тотя толком

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Adventist delegates to the Peace Forum (from left): Dr. Ray Hefferlin, a molecular physicist and Chairman of the Department of Physics, Southern College of Seventh-day Adventists, Collegedale, Tennessee; Neal Wilson, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists; Roland R. Hegstad, editor of LIBERTY; Jan Paulsen, president of the Trans-European Division of Seventh-day Adventists. With them is Michael P. Kulakov, president of the Association of Seventh-day Adventists in the U.S.S.R.

PEACE WORDS FLYING

by
ROLAND R.
HEGSTAD

Is there evidence of a real shift in the Soviet handling of human rights, or have there been only gestures designed to deceive the West? Our delegation sought answers.



Peace words flew like doves through the crisp air of mid-February Moscow—in Russian, English, French, Bulgarian, German, Japanese, Arabic, Pashto, and a dozen languages even the official translators couldn't handle. One engaging delegate to the Soviet-sponsored International Forum for a Nonnuclear World and the Survival of Humanity persisted in switching from Urdu to Parsi and back again, to the consternation of a volunteer translator. It didn't matter. We met under an emblem depicting the globe as seen from outer space. If for only three days, and even though from some 60 nations, we were one world.

On February 16, from the Grand Kremlin Palace, General Secretary Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev sent his own covey of peace words winging around the world via newspaper, radio, and television. They included "democratization," "new thinking," "verification," "revolutionary changes," and "*glasnost*" ("openness"). I heard the peace words as one of four delegates from the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The general secretary assured the 850 delegates in the Grand Kremlin Palace and a worldwide audience that the "new thinking" on the "humanitarian problem" was already reality. And in a sense, its reality sat only five or six seats from me, in the person of physicist Andrei Sakharov, released from a seven-year Gorki exile only two months before. During the week before the peace forum, 142 dissidents were released from prison camps and, in a few cases, psychiatric hospitals.

Our Peace Words

Our delegation was headed by Neal C. Wilson, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. It included also Dr. Jan Paulsen, president of the Trans-European Division, and Dr. Ray Hefferlin, a molecular physicist, and head of the Physics Department of Southern College of Seventh-day Adventists, in Collegedale, Tennessee.

We accepted an invitation to the peace forum for several reasons. Among them, first, because we believe further proliferation of nuclear weapons is insanity, and

nuclear war unthinkable. Second, because we had something other than the window dressing of tired propaganda to communicate. And third, because General Secretary Gorbachev's call for democratization and *glasnost* emboldened us to speak to a subject addressed by virtually every speaker in the religious section of the forum: How can a climate of trust be created in which the two superpowers can disarm?

Our peace words, however, differed somewhat from many we heard. They included "prisoners of conscience," "amnesty," and "religious liberty." They were set forth in "Proposals for Peace and Understanding," a paper addressed to General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and to the chairman of the Council on Church Affairs, Konstantin Kharchev.

Whether Soviet intolerance was reality or only perception, Wilson said in presenting the proposals, the consequence was the same: "Perception is enough, in and of itself, to frustrate mankind's hope for peace." Western concerns about human rights and religious liberty must be addressed, he insisted, if nuclear disarmament is to become more than a hope phrase.

A paper presented by Dr. Alexander Haraszi on behalf of Dr. Billy Graham also reflected *glasnost*: "We must urge all nations—regardless of size, regardless of ideology—to recognize and respect the freedom of the individual to profess and practice, alone or in community with others, religion or belief acting in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience (Final Act of Helsinki, section VII)."

The Adventist proposals argued that much U.S. mistrust of the Soviet Union originates with believers who find the atheism of the Soviet system repugnant and the persecution and imprisonment of fellow believers intolerable. Defuse this antipathy and provide a basis of trust, the paper urged, by granting amnesty to all prisoners of conscience—Christian, Jewish, Muslim—on or before the 1,000th anniversary (1988) of Christianity in Russia. Wilson asked for revision or reinterpretation of the laws governing religions to permit not only freedom of belief and worship within the church but the right to witness freely. (In the Soviet Union believers do not have equal rights with nonbelievers to promote their faith.)

In conversations with Chairman Kharchev, Wilson included in the definition of prisoners of conscience those whose political "crimes" originated in conscientious conviction, but did not include those who had resorted to violence or threats of violence.

Our proposals suggested several areas of cooperation, and Wilson elaborated on these with government officials, including Chairman Kharchev and Peter Demichev,

first deputy of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

Point of No Return

Mr. Gorbachev's speech in the Grand Kremlin Palace emphasized the horrors of a nuclear conflict. He spoke feelingly of the "point of no return" that man faces. He reminded us that one nuclear submarine carries several times the destructive potential of all the damage caused by World War II. Chernobyl, though of relatively local proportions, Gorbachev said, warned of the tragedy threatened by nuclear warfare. He addressed several problems and then observed somberly: "Nuclear war would leave no problems."

"There will be," he said, "no second Noah's ark to offer refuge from a nuclear deluge." If the contest spreads into space, he added, "the possibility of conflict and destruction increases enormously."

He was not, however, without humor, observing wryly that President Reagan, in the 1985 meeting in Geneva, had said that "if the earth faced an invasion by extraterrestrials, the United States and the Soviet Union would join forces to repel such an invasion. I shall not dispute the hypothesis," he said, "although I think it too early to worry about such an intrusion."

Mr. Gorbachev cited Kremlin arms control initiatives—such as those at Reykjavik—and the new approaches to humanitarianism as examples of the Soviet Union's "new way of thinking." He said that Reykjavik had resulted in an arms control "breakthrough" and that Moscow's 18-month war on nuclear testing "showed the world that a nuclear test ban is realistic."

Of Peace and Evil Empires

Our proposals did not address the technical problems intrinsic in nuclear disarmament, nor, as Wilson observed, did we reflect that "peculiar psychology" of which Mr. Gorbachev has spoken—"how to improve things without changing anything." Instead, we stuck to "constructive proposals and programs within the purview of our Christian commitment and theology." And these proved central to the issue with which all delegates wrestled in one form or another: How can the superpowers be led to trust each other?

Perhaps they cannot. If so, the future is grim—with men crying, "Peace, peace;

Roland R. Hegstad is editor of LIBERTY, A Magazine of Religious Freedom.

Left: "Roland Hegstad" on this pass admitted LIBERTY's editor to the Palace Forum and banquet.

Front cover: Delegates in the Grand Kremlin Palace listen to General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's February 16 speech on nuclear disarmament. There will be "no second Noah's ark to offer refuge from a nuclear deluge," said Mr. Gorbachev.

when there is no peace" (Jeremiah 6:14). To memory come also the haunting words of the apostle Paul: "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (1 Thessalonians 5:3). But this is not the destruction of mankind by nuclear warfare; rather, this is the consequences of the revolutionary establishment of Christ's kingdom: "And in the days of these kings [the prophecy points to our day] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall . . . break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms [of man], and it shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:44). In this transition to a new world order, the Lord of the atom will unleash His own forces. Peter writes of the elements melting with "fervent heat" (2 Peter 3:10). The Greek words picture atoms being torn apart, as every mark of man's rebellion is wiped from the planet.

This future is grim only to those who have not accepted citizenship in the new world. To God's children the verses just quoted are not threats, but promises of eternal happiness. And this is the perspective shared by our Soviet believers. Above and behind me in the Moscow church where I taught the Sabbath school lesson on February 14 is a round stained-glass window. The Russian words on it read "God is love." We who worshiped there love each other. We also trust each other. And we prayed together that our nations might learn the basis of love and trust. As I observed during the lesson: "Hopes for peace might well be enhanced if our nation's leaders would serve each other in that old biblical ordinance of foot washing."

(The previous two paragraphs have an irony not evident in their content, but rather in their place of composition. I write them as I wait to enter the NORAD complex in a mountain outside Colorado Springs.)

The "Evil Empire"

Now three closing observations, all of which in some respect I intend should, in the spirit of Christ, further peace, understanding, and trust:

First, I am not one who echoes the "evil empire" theme promoted by the Christian Right in the United States and adopted by President Reagan. The Communist Party is, indeed, atheist, and it has for nearly 70 years trumpeted its nonbelief with evangelistic fervor. But neither persecution under Stalin nor antireligious propaganda under all the Soviet leaders has destroyed belief. Believers in the U.S.S.R. may number 60 million or more. And observation over 20 years leads me to believe that what survives is not the veneer of religiosity that characterizes much religion in the West, but the essence of vital witness—and the willingness to hold it even unto death.



Sheikh Ghulam Sarwar, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Ulems of Afghanistan, spoke, through his interpreter (right), of the "outside interference" that precipitated Soviet intervention and conflict in his country.

One must ask whether God esteems more a nation that professes Him but whose heart is far from Him, or a nation that masks its sins beneath no pretext of discipleship. Which, indeed, does He regard as more evil? With Jacques Ellul I agree: "There is no truly Christian state."

Until the kingdom of justice and righteousness comes along, and God's judgment reveals the secrets of all men and all nations, it would befit us, who "see through a glass, darkly" (1 Corinthians 13:12), to leave it to God to parse His own degrees of evil.

Second, I do not believe that the Soviet people or their government want nuclear war. We Americans who so easily assume that we virtually won World War II on our own suffered more than 400,000 dead and more than 650,000 wounded on all battlefields of the conflict. A major contribution, indeed, and one written in valor and blood. But in the 900-day siege of Leningrad, one city, more Soviets lost their lives (more than 600,000) than we lost in all of World War II! And in the war as a whole, more Soviets lost their lives (20 million) than our nation has lost in all the wars of its history (1.2 million).

It should be no surprise that most Soviets hate war—just as most Americans do. But to war or not to war is a question seldom left to the people. Which may mean that governments do well to mistrust each other. I would wish any disarmament treaty to contain titanium-clad on-site verification of disarmed missiles. And I would make a suggestion on behalf of the people: Let all nuclear weapons be disarmed on satellite television, with all the world watching the procedures. One for you. One for me. One for all the world. Let us watch. And when we get down to the final 100 on each side, let's tackle the problem of conventional forces. One missile disarmed and one division disbanded for you; one missile disarmed and one division disbanded for me . . .

These are not suggestions made by our delegation. They're dreams of a grandfather who wants his grandchildren to live long and breathe free. I believe that many *babushkas* and *dedushkas* share them.

The Question of Trust

Finally, I return to the question of trust. Does Mr. Gorbachev mean what he says? Or at least mean enough to warrant optimism?

Predictably, views of the International Forum for a Nonnuclear World differ. A British official called the Grand Kremlin Palace meeting a "big bean feast." (Wrong: no beans, but plenty of smoked salmon and beluga caviar. Another evidence of Mr. Gorbachev's reforms: no vodka. Even at the Kremlin banquet,

nothing harder than wine.) NATO nations "welcomed the tone" but "cautioned against." U.S. diplomat and columnist Jean Kirkpatrick proposed "Four Hard Questions About Gorbachev's Reforms." One of them: "Do the 'sweeping reforms' proposed by Gorbachev represent a change of heart or direction in the Soviet system, or are they only a tactic designed to help Gorbachev consolidate and expand power at home and abroad?"

One thing the Soviet policymakers and sponsors of the forum must not miss: the prominence the human rights issue assumed in both the skeptical and "the guardedly optimistic" responses. George F. Will (predictably) linked John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* with Helsinki Article 20: "Everyone has the right of peaceful assembly and association." and Will didn't neglect Helsinki Article 18: "Everyone has the right to . . . manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and obser-

vance."

Jerry Hough, a professor of political science at Duke University and a staff member of the Brookings Institution, observed that the American foreign policy establishment "is finally beginning to accept, after months of exaggerated cynicism, the idea that Mikhail Gorbachev really wants to reform the Soviet Union." U.S. ambassador Warren Zimmermann praised the Soviet Union for "positive actions" in recent months. Zimmermann, the chief U.S. delegate to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, said "fresh winds" had begun to blow in the Soviet Union. He cited progress in improved compliance with the Helsinki commitments and the release of physicist Andrei Sakharov and other "prisoners of conscience."

Said Senator Mark Hatfield (R.—Ore.): "Should the Soviets announce an amnesty for prisoners of conscience and a change in

In the Grand KREMLIN PALACE

Novelist's Dream

A novelist Graham Greene may be—and he sounded more like the novelist than the spokesman for the cultural section of the International Forum for a Nonnuclear World, which he was supposed to be in Moscow.

My notes, scrawled on my desk in the Grand Kremlin Palace, where delegates to the Supreme Soviet usually sit, read, "He reported nothing of culture." Rather, the aging and Catholic Greene shared his "dream"—that before he dies, an ambassador of the Soviet Union would be giving "good advice" at the Vatican. Mr. Gorbachev, seated behind and above the novelist, looked amused but noncommittal.


The Real Mrs. Gorbachev

Who wants to look at Yoko Ono or Italian movie star Claudia Cardinale when Raisa Gorbachev is around? Not even the women, it appeared. I got within three feet of Mrs. Gorbachev—close enough to report that she is even more lovely than in photos—but was blocked by a phalanx of females discussing whatever women speak of in the Grand Kremlin Palace following a banquet. Mrs. Gorbachev was dressed in a stylish red silk suit that must have carried a French designer label. But the Soviet Union's first lady would have been a knockout in a Salvation Army giveaway.

The Star That Shone Brightest

They would have to move the Cannes film festival to Moscow or reposition the Milky Way to get more stars into Moscow than attended the International Forum for a Nonnuclear World. The glitterati joined the literati and the scientists, economists, journalists, and assorted bishops in the Grand Kremlin Palace. But all played second fiddle to the gaunt and white-faced Andrei Sakharov, who had more autograph seekers around him than the others combined. In fact, it was likely the crowd around Sakharov that delayed Mr. Gorbachev's entry into the Grand Kremlin Palace for 10 minutes.

If You Do Not First Succeed . . .

Mikhail Gorbachev is five feet ten going on six feet four. The six-plus reflects his commanding demeanor. During his Kremlin speech he seldom raised his voice, a pleasant baritone. There were no threatening overtones, nor did he thump his shoe on his "pulpit" for emphasis. His power was in his ideas—and humor. When the audience did not respond to his call for a treaty banning all weapons in space with quite the applause he expected, he departed from his text to observe, wryly, "I counted on more fervent applause, but that was sufficient." He got laughter—and the fervent  applause.—R.R.H.

the laws regarding religious witness, as Adventist spokesmen suggested, I think the effect on American and Western public perception would be profound."

Peace Words Won't Fly Away

I must say to our forum hosts: *Such peace words as "prisoners of conscience," "amnesty," and "freedom to practice one's religion" are not going to fly away.* And if you really wish to know how intrinsically such "Christian" issues are linked with support for Star Wars, check the religious affiliation of U.S. senators and representatives voting for SDI. (You can probably get the count from any one of several Christian Right organizations with headquarters in Washington, D.C.) Compare the votes of congressmen from Bible Belt states with those elsewhere. Run the results through your computers and pass on the results to all members of the Politburo.

And how does Andrei Sakharov respond to this question: Is there evidence yet of a real shift in the Soviet handling of human rights, or have there been only gestures designed to deceive the West?

Correspondent Bill Keller reported the answer in the *New York Times*: "It's not right to say that it's only propaganda or window dressing. Objectively, something real is happening. How far it's going to go is a complicated question. But I myself have decided that the situation has changed."

Says Keller: "There is a growing sense among dissidents, hard to imagine a few months ago, that with each small step the Soviet leader is earning a degree of open-mindedness, a cautious measure of respect, and even an offer of help in fighting those who resist his program."

I found the degree of self-criticism in the Soviet Union unprecedented in the 20 years I've been visiting there. Never before had I watched riots against Soviet policy on national television. And never before had I read or expected to read an account of police brutality in an official Soviet magazine—*Ogonyok* (little light). An interior minister was fired after the incidents, and two policemen were imprisoned.

Chairman of religious affairs Konstantin Kharchev challenged me to print an article from the *Literaturnaya gazeta* in *LIBERTY* without attribution. He said it was so critical that it would pass in the United States for anti-Soviet propaganda. (I'm waiting for the article.)

Meanwhile, I'll applaud when Mr. Sakharov applauds and concur with Mr. Gorbachev: "Surely, God on high has not refused to give us wisdom to find ways to bring us an improvement in our relations."

As West German Social Democratic politician Egon Bahr said to us in the Grand Kremlin Palace: "It is better to test Gorbachev than to test bombs."

Capitalists and Comrades Mix at MOSCOW BASH

It may have been one of the most diverse guest lists in Kremlin history when Mikhail S. Gorbachev threw a party Monday for delegates to a Moscow peace forum.

For starters, the leader of the atheistic Soviet state was surrounded by more than 200 religious leaders in a variety of black, white, and saffron robes.

There were plenty of capitalists to go with the resident Communists. Also in attendance were scientists and film stars, dedicated doctors, and writers with lots of ego. In all, invitations to the forum were sent to individuals in 80 countries.

For old Moscow hands, the presence of dissident physicist Andrei D. Sakharov at the Kremlin reception was the most surprising. Less than two months ago, Sakharov was in lonely exile in the industrial city of Gorky. Thanks to Gorbachev, however, he was freed, and allowed to return to Moscow and take part in the peace forum.

Sakharov was besieged for autographs in the morning session and overwhelmed by admirers at the reception; he seemed to love every minute of it.

Gorbachev, who reportedly wanted a diversified group of delegates, obviously enjoyed the role of host. He worked his way around the buffet tables, which were loaded with caviar and smoked salmon, to shake hands like a Midwestern politician at his own fund-raiser.

He chatted with Yoko Ono, the diminutive widow of Beatle John Lennon, rubbed shoulders with the mayor of Lawrence, Kansas, and greeted millionaire industrialists Armand Hammer.

Actor Kris Kristofferson, a star of the Kremlin-denounced American television mini-series *Amerika*, had only a bit part in the Moscow production, applauding enthusiastically during Gorbachev's remarks to the delegates.

Writers Gore Vidal and Norman Mailer, both admirers of Gorbachev's audacity in promoting change in Soviet life, praised the session despite their common dislike of "abstract nouns," they said.

"I am intrigued by *glasnost*," Mailer told a reporter, quoting the term Gorbachev had used in calling for greater openness in Soviet governmental affairs.

Former anti-war activist Daniel Ellsberg, *Megatrends* author John Naisbitt, actor Gregory Peck, and Robert V. Roosa, a Wall Street investment banker, were also there.

The Kremlin guests crossed generations. Susan Eisenhower, granddaughter of the late President Dwight D. Eisenhower, had a long talk with Andrei A. Gromyko, the 75-year-old Soviet president. "It was quite a thrill," she said.

Some of the Americans in attendance felt that Moscow was "in" this year now that the relatively youthful (55) and relatively suave Gorbachev was making waves in the world and at home.

Now that Sakharov is no longer in exile, one of the reasons for not accepting a Kremlin invitation has been removed, an American participant said.

"This season it's Moscow that's the hot ticket and not Paris or New York," said one American delegate who asked not to be quoted by name.

Soviet poets Yevgeny Yevtushenko and Andrei Voznesensky, who gave readings during the three-day meeting, were prominent at the party. So were Anatoly F. Dobrynin, former Soviet ambassador to Washington, who is now a top Kremlin adviser, and foreign minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze.

Gorbachev's wife, Raisa, was very visible in a bright-red jacket. The usually staid official news agency, Tass, admired Italian actress Claudia Cardinale, describing her as "this elegant woman . . . with boundless energy . . . no less popular in Moscow than in Italy."

Albert Sabin, inventor of a polio vaccine, took part in the medical panel. John Kenneth Galbraith, the economist and former U.S. ambassador to India, towered over Gorbachev during a long conversation at the reception.

The party itself illustrated the "openness" that Gorbachev is advocating.

"He went over very big with this crowd," said one satisfied American delegate.

Six of the 19 members of the Politburo attended Gorbachev's reception, according to Tass. The news agency said the Kremlin chief had a "lively exchange of views" with Petra Kelly, of the West German Greens party, British actor Peter Ustinov, and Donald Kendall, board chairman of PepsiCo.

"The reception was held in a friendly atmosphere of ease and frankness," Tass reported, which is Moscow jargon for one heckuva good party.



Neal Wilson, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (left), chats with Konstantin Kharchev, Chairman of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, at a banquet hosted by Russian Orthodox Church representative Pimen, Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia. Listening are Dr. Alexander Haraszi, Billy Graham's spokesman at the Peace Forum (background), and Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation.

Proposals for PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING

The text of the Seventh-day Adventist paper presented at the International Forum for a Non-nuclear World and the Survival of Humanity, Moscow, February 13, 14, 15, 1987.

As the delegation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we are honored to be guests at a peace conference in a nation which suffered so sorely in the Great Patriotic War. Suffered, moreover, not only for itself, but for all peoples threatened by the armies of Nazi Germany. Scribed deeply into our memories are great battles and tragic losses—of our fathers, sons, relatives, and friends who died on foreign shores.

But not forgotten are those who died unknown to us on the Eastern Front: During the desperate attempts of the Soviet Fifty-fifth and Eighth armies to break the German ring at Kolpino and Dubrovka in defense of Leningrad; on Defense Commissar Zhdanov's "Road of Life" across the ice of Lake Ladoga. Not forgotten are the heroic defense of Stalingrad and the sacrifice of Rodimtsev's guards that saved the city in September 1942. Not forgotten are the names that Zhukov's resistance bequeathed to history: the "Red Barricade" ordinance factory, the "Red October" metallurgical works, the "Dzerzhinsky" tractor works, the "Lazur" chemical works—the "forts" of Stalingrad.

In scores of Soviet cities great monuments speak eloquently, and yet so inadequately, of the patriots who died by the millions resisting Fascism. Nonbeliever, believer—they died side by side so that our world might live in peace. And so we come, this time not to lay wreaths at memorials to the fallen, but to give voice to our hope for peace and its requisites: justice, moral integrity, the dignity and freedom of the individual—for all those humanitarian and spiritual values for which mankind hungers.

We come to add our voices not to the "window dressing" of tired propaganda, nor to that "peculiar psychology" of which General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev has spoken—"how to improve things without changing anything"—but rather to constructive proposals and programs within the purview of our Christian commitment and theology.

We represent the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a worldwide body of believers who witness in 190 nations and more than 600 languages and dialects. Some live among you—believers who uphold the right of their neighbors not to believe and who love their country, treasure its history, its culture, and its humanitarian aspirations. Believers who pray for their officials, work productively for their nation, and seek to fulfill the commission given them by Jesus Christ—to "preach the gospel."

The gospel is "good news." And preaching it means above all else to reflect the character and teachings of Jesus Christ. Today, we call to memory messages of peace—He inspired not alone peace among

nations, but peace between neighbors, peace of mind, and serenity of spirit.

"On earth *peace*, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).

"So then, we must always aim at those things that bring *peace*" (Romans 14:19, TEV).

"So Christ came and preached the Good News of *peace* to all" (Ephesians 2:17, TEV).

"Blessed are the *peacemakers*" (Matthew 5:9).

The Apocalyptic Vision

But the Bible speaks not only of peace but judgment, and that too we shall remember at

cannot serve God without also serving our fellowman. Not only in His incarnation but in His ministry to us we see an example of how we should relate to a choice between conflict and peace. On one occasion in a Samaritan village, Jesus and His disciples were not well received. Two disciples, James and John, said, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" And Jesus answered: "You don't know what kind of a Spirit you belong to; for the Son of man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9:51-55, TEV).

I have visited the Kazan Museum in Leningrad and the Museum of Religion in

the Soviet Union is to achieve these objectives.

I refer to the widespread belief that religious freedom in the Soviet Union means something different from its meaning in many other countries, particularly those in the West.

Will our gracious hosts misunderstand me if I speak frankly of this perception? And of why, in the interests of peace, it must be addressed?

As a Christian, I find it painful to admit that the emerging Communist state had reason to remember with distaste the church-state alliance that had oppressed the Russian people. And even, sad to say, set it an example of persecution, in the way it treated its religious minorities.

As a Christian, I find it painful to admit, further, that the great pogroms of history have come most often not from bad people trying to make other people bad, but from good people trying to make other people good. Well our prayer might be, "Lord, save us from the saints."

Philosopher Jacques Ellul has astutely observed:

"Whatever the position adopted by the church, every time she becomes involved in politics, on every occasion the result has been unfaithfulness to herself and the abandonment of the truths of the gospel. Every time . . . she has been misled to act treasonably, either toward revealed truth or incarnate love. . . . It would seem that politics . . . is the occasion of her greatest falls, her constant temptation, the pitfall the prince of this world incessantly prepares for her" (Jacques Ellul, *Fausse Presence Au Monde Modern*, pp. 105-111).

I say, then, that while the Christian world cannot condone the persecutions of the Stalinist era and, to a lessening degree, afterward, it should understand them. In addition, I am compelled to admit that, unlike their status under the czar, all religions have equal standing before the law.

And certainly, as leader of a world church, I would not wish to leave the erroneous impression that restrictions on religion are a monopoly of the Soviet state or of Eastern Europe. The most severe restrictions today, as historically, are imposed by countries dominated by fundamentalist religions.

Why, then, must I speak of Soviet policy toward believers, particularly at a conference that seeks unity on issues of peace?

Simply stated, because Christians of the Western world, and especially the United States, who are disturbed by the circumstances of their colleagues in the Soviet Union, translate their concerns into influence and support for defense alliances and strategic defense initiatives.

It is really not necessary that our hosts and we agree on whether the Christians I

*"Relations between our two countries
are continuing to deteriorate, the arms race
is intensifying, and the war threat is not subsiding.
Surely, God on high has not refused
to give us wisdom to find ways to bring us an
improvement in our relations."*

—GENERAL SECRETARY MIKHAIL GORBACHEV,
Time, vol. 126, No. 10, Sept. 9,
1985, pp. 22-29.

this peace conference, for the Apocalypse, the "Revelation of Jesus Christ," says that in time when man has at last gained the capacity to destroy his world, God will judge mankind and "destroy them which destroy the earth" (Apocalypse 11:18).

Has mankind now this potential? As General Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev reported on behalf of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union:

"There is . . . a qualitative leap in means of destruction, in the military sphere, 'endowing' man for the first time in history with the physical capacity for destroying all life on earth" (CPSU Report, p. 11).

Thus, said the general secretary, "the changes in current world developments are so deep-going and significant that they require a reassessment and a comprehensive analysis of all factors. The situation created by the nuclear confrontation calls for new approaches, methods, and forms of relations between the different social systems, states, and regions" (*ibid.*, p. 5).

Our Christian commitment compels us to reappraise the contribution we may make to peace and the social justice intrinsic to peace. In the person of the God-man who walked among us as one of us, we see divinity and humanity combined. Thus we

Lvov. I have seen the tableaux of Christians torturing fellow Christians to bring them into God's "tender" embrace. I have seen the evidence of rich and corrupt churches allying themselves with rich and corrupt governments to oppress the poor. I have seen the unscrupulous preying on the credulous—all this in the name of Christ! And history witnesses to the truth of the exhibits.

But such exhibits show the perversion of Christianity, not its seminal purity and idealism; but other systems, too, have suffered at the hands of those who reduced lofty idealism to selfish ends. I ask only that you recall the crimes that have been done in the name of Lenin—and testified to by Soviet leaders from Khrushchev on. I note the anguished admissions of "contradictions" in General Secretary Gorbachev's report to the 27th Party Congress. But as Lenin said: "Our strength lies in stating the truth."

A Perception to Address

In fact, it is General Secretary Gorbachev's frank call for "radical reform" and "democratization" of Soviet society, the February 7 release of 42 dissidents, and his program for peace that encourage me to speak of a perception that must be faced if

refer to reflect reality or perception. For perception is enough, in and of itself, to frustrate mankind's hope for peace and, as General Secretary Gorbachev more specifically defines it, the building of "an all-embracing system of international security" (*CPSU Report*, p. 92).

As Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, which sponsored Chairman Konstantin Kharchev's U.S. visit, observed: "It is important for him [Kharchev] to understand the impact that . . . American believers have on our domestic and foreign policy" and "to know about their concern for fellow believers in the Soviet Union."

That concern embraces not only the right to worship within a church or synagogue or mosque, but the right freely to witness to one's faith in society—a right that, many believers hold, is given to His children by God Himself, and that therefore is not rightly man's to withhold.

A Constructive Proposal

Will I be misunderstood if I make a constructive proposal? Perhaps one that no churchman, given the history of ecclesiastical intolerance, has the right to ask? I ask it, I believe, on behalf of many who respect not only this great nation's sacrifice for peace in the Great Patriotic War, but also the idealism that motivated the Leninist experiment in equality. And I dare to ask it because I believe that coupled with General Secretary Gorbachev's initiatives for democratization and for a nuclear-free world must be a meaningful change in Soviet policy toward its religious minorities.

I believe that delegates to this conference should do General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and Chairman Konstantin Kharchev the honor of believing that the democratization they promote is something more than "window dressing." That the paper on religious tolerance and peace that Chairman Kharchev presented in Minneapolis, Minnesota, U.S.A., October 1986, foreshadowed further advance toward religious freedom; that the report presented by General Secretary Gorbachev to the 27th Party Congress does reflect a new idealism as well as a new reality in confronting "contradictions" in Soviet society. (If I understand that word "contradiction," it's what we Christians refer to as "sin," which comes from a Greek word meaning to fall short of the mark.)

The changes in policy toward religious minorities in the Soviet Union that I have personally observed may be made progressively, little noticed by the world; or they may be made dramatically, with maximum impact on the world, and consequently, with maximum impact on detente and nuclear disarmament and world peace.

I suggest, then, that on or before May 1, 1988—the 1000th year of Christianity in Russia—the Soviet government witness to its greatness and generosity of spirit by declaring an amnesty for all "prisoners of conscience," a gesture that would arrest and grip the attention of the world.

I have faith to believe that this dramatic gesture of goodwill shall be followed by further democratization of relationships between the Soviet state and Soviet believers.

I suggest further, and do so with problems in my own country on my conscience, that this democratization include new commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

I would think it particularly helpful should this commitment include the following:

1. Respect for religious holy days. This means, in part, that Orthodox and other believers observing such a holy day as Easter may do so without discrimination. This means also that believers observing the seventh-day Sabbath may do so without penalty at their place of employment. Respect for religious holy days means also that the children of Sabbathkeepers will not be required to be in school on Sabbath, an accommodation made in most nations.

2. Not only freedom of worship (within the confines of a church building) but freedom to practice one's religion, to "witness."

I ask consideration for these proposals not contentiously, but respectfully, in the spirit of peace. In these proposals our delegation shares with you what General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev has called a "Leninist answer"—that is, that "Communists want the truth always and under all circumstances." And the truth is that believer concerns must be addressed if democratization and nuclear disarmament are to receive credibility. Our proposals, then, are milestones on the way to peace; milestones that must be traversed on the way to what Secretary Gorbachev has called "an all-embracing system of international security."

This system includes, as he said in his speech to the 27th Party Congress, not only the military sphere, but the political, economic, and humanitarian as well. In the latter, he called for "cooperation in the dissemination of the idea of peace, disarmament, and international security; greater flow of general objective information and broader contact between peoples for the purpose of learning about one another, reinforcement of the spirit of mutual understanding and concord in relations between them" (*CPSU Report*).

Our proposals serve these objectives and thus, we believe, the national interests of the Soviet state, as well as the interests of all humanity.

Areas of Cooperation

Though not sharing the Communist vision of present reality and the future hope of mankind, we do not participate in that "unreality" that dismisses mankind's woes and needs as objectives to be met only in some future paradise. Rather, as a world church, we seek to reflect, as best we can, Christ's selfless service to the poor and the oppressed.

Therefore, we would like to explore the following areas of cooperation that fit within Mr. Gorbachev's humanitarian sphere—science, education, and medicine.

1. We are very actively involved in anti-drug and anti-alcoholism programs. Through the International Commission for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, we work with many governments. We would be happy to help train people who could reduce absenteeism, accidents, and other alcohol-related problems in industry and elsewhere.

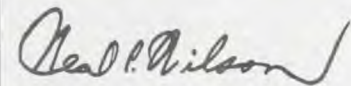
2. In our hospital system—including some 500 hospitals and clinics worldwide—we have pioneered certain methods that are being used successfully in major medical centers. Among them: heart catheterization, angiography, transurethral prostatectomies, and proton-beam acceleration. We are also giving special postgraduate training at our Loma Linda University Medical Center, near Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

3. We seek further participation in cultural exchange programs.

4. We would welcome opportunity to sit down and discuss any of the above technologies, procedures, specialties, and programs—as well as others—that might be of mutual benefit.

Whatever the field, and however small our contribution, we welcome opportunities to enhance understanding and aid humanity in its social, moral, physical, and spiritual needs.

God Himself has commissioned mankind to hold back the night of nuclear annihilation. With General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, we are convinced that indeed "God on high has not refused to give us enough wisdom to find ways to bring an improvement in our relations."



Neal C. Wilson, President
General Conference of Seventh-day
Adventists
February 10, 1987





“*The Arm of the* DEVIL”

BY LITA BRUSICK JOHNSON

*That's what some preachers called the IRS
when the agency decided to define which church functions
were religious. The Lutheran Council took a more
charitable view, but they also took
the IRS to court.*

The Internal Revenue Service may not be, as one fundamentalist preacher declared, “the arm of the devil.” But when the agency announced it could decide which church functions were religious, many religious groups thought the action fiendish.

A proposal the IRS issued in 1976 elicited a firestorm of response. Eighty denominations and related organizations, including the Lutheran Church bodies through the Lutheran Council, filed formal opposing comments. No testimony was given in support of the measure.

Though taking a more charitable view of the IRS, the Lutheran Council determined that it was not government's task to define *religion* and *church*. And so began a protracted struggle of church-state interests, negotiation, legal pressure, and compromise over the definition of an obscure term—*integrated auxiliary*.

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The story began during a 1969 revision of the tax code. It reminds us now, in the throes of a new tax reform effort, that the "jots and tittles" that escape scrutiny when a bill is enacted can create unanticipated and long-standing problems.

As part of the 1969 tax bill, Congress removed the tax exemption for unrelated business income of churches, a move supported by mainline religious groups. Under the bill, a church that raised money by operating a vineyard and marketing wine across the country was taxed on this activity because it was not even peripherally related to why the church was tax-exempt.

Also in 1969 Congress required more organizations to file annual returns to ensure effective taxation of unrelated business income. These Form 990 reports covered income, expenses, activities, officers, and major contributors.

At first the House Ways and Means Committee wanted to require all nonprofit groups, including churches, to file the forms. But some religious organizations, reacting quickly and strongly, argued that such monitoring would represent unwarranted—and unconstitutional—governmental intrusion into their affairs.

The Senate Finance Committee approved a church exemption, and Senator Wallace Bennett (R-Utah) got the committee to increase the number of religious organizations that would not need to file by also exempting church *auxiliaries*. This term is used widely in his denomination, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The committee did not define the term, but suggested that "among the auxiliary organizations to which this exemption applies are the mission societies and the church's religious schools, youth groups and men's and women's organizations, and inter-church organizations of local units qualifying as local auxiliaries."

In the conference committee and final bill, at the request of the Treasury Department, the phrase *integrated auxiliaries* replaced *auxiliaries*, but no additional definition was provided.

On to the Treasury

To the Treasury Department and its Internal Revenue Service fell the unenviable task of specifying just which organizations are auxiliaries of a church, which are integrated and which are not.

The IRS found that while the term *auxiliaries* had ecclesiastical meaning within the Mormon Church, it had no clear legal meaning. The legislative intent of Congress also was unclear, and the IRS could not just pick up the Mormon definition since doing so could be construed as establishing a particular religion.

This wording accommodated some concerns of religious groups but failed to defuse opposition. In their "final" regulation, published in 1977, the IRS defined *integrated auxiliaries* as "tax-exempt organizations affiliated with a church whose principal activity is exclusively religious." While educational, literary, or charitable activities were considered exempt, church-related hospitals, orphanages, homes for the elderly, colleges, and universities were explicitly excluded from the definition and had to file Form 990.

The IRS had avoided the constitutionally sticky question of defining *church* by taking a negative approach, essentially saying that if the organization has secular counterparts and could qualify as a nonprofit (501)(c)(3) organization on other than religious grounds, it must not be exclusively religious and thus not an integrated auxiliary of the church.

But in a united response, the churches challenged the regulation, charging that the measure would effectively provide all religious groups, despite their varying tenets and structures, with a single narrow definition of religious mission. In practice, the IRS would tell a church which activity is not exclusively religious and, by implication, not as integral to its mission as the men's and women's clubs specified by Congress to be integrated auxiliaries. The churches accused the government of trampling on their First Amendment rights by determining whether a men's club is more integral to the church's mission than a soup kitchen or whether a youth group is more important than a parochial school.

John Baker of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs summed up the church's position in 1977. "Congress," he said, "affirmed that it lacks both the constitutional and the theological competence to prescribe or proscribe the role and mission of the churches. If Congress lacks the power to define the mission of the churches, an agency created by Congress, such as the IRS, also lacks the power."

The Churches Respond

While individual denominations, especially Lutheran and Baptist, continued to challenge the IRS regulations on a variety of fronts, the National Council of Churches organized a coalition to weave the individual efforts into a common approach. The coalition kept communications open with the Treasury Department and in 1981 initiated contacts with the new Reagan administration. When the administration established a task force on regulatory relief, the coalition made a special appeal for a review of the onerous regulation. However, despite the administration's antiregulatory fervor, no immediate relief was



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offered.

A Lutheran consultation in 1979 ("The Nature of the Church and Its Relationship With Government") played an important role in solidifying the response of the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The IRS, they said, "seeks to impose on the churches a definition of 'religious' and 'church' which the churches cannot accept theologically, one which constitutes an unwarranted intrusion by the government into the affairs of the churches."

"Our churches would probably not object to the disclosure of most of the information required by Form 990 by those agencies and institutions of the church whose ministries appear to have counterparts in the public sphere if such requirement of disclosure were not predicated upon a denial that those ministries are an integral part of the churches' mission," the consultation declared. "But the churches object on principle to having any of their ministries, including their agencies and institutions, be treated as 'not religious.' These agencies and institutions perform ministries which are essential to the churches' mission and must not be put in a different category from the strictly sacerdotal functions of the churches."

Lutheran strategy encompassed a two-pronged approach: try to change the law that started the whole controversy, but at the same time select several social service agencies and institutions to initiate a court test of the IRS definition.

Unfortunately, the legislative approach did not yield results, so the Lutheran bodies began the long, expensive, and convoluted legal process to challenge the regulation. The lead agency was Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota, which the IRS definition required to file Form 990.

Months turned into years as the agency and the IRS did a legal dance. First the agency filed its form two months after the deadline, and the IRS assessed a \$700 penalty. The agency paid the penalty and then requested a refund as an organization exempt from filing. The IRS refused, and a lawsuit was initiated.

The Lutheran churches were initially dealt a serious blow when a district court supported the IRS against the agency. The churches decided that the principle and precedent warranted the effort and expense of an appeal.

Meanwhile, a case involving the Southern Baptist Convention and its network of children's homes in Tennessee proved successful. A case involving the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and its Concordia College in Milwaukee was inconclusive.

The IRS Makes a Move

In 1984 Congress amended the Social Security Act, allowing churches or related organizations to make a one-time choice to exclude their employees from Social Security coverage. After debating the "exclusively religious" test, Congress approved a "functional test" to determine which church organizations could opt out of Social Security. The twin elements used were: whether the organizations offered goods or services for sale to the public and whether they received income from the government or sales to the public.

Shortly after passage of the Social Security amendments, the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs received a call from the IRS's exempt organizations unit, asking for a meeting. This overture was the first from the Treasury Department to the office since the regulation was finalized in 1977.

At the meeting the IRS suggested that the new Social Security procedure might be applied to resolve the integrated auxiliary impasse. Because the new test used a functional rather than a doctrinal test, a compromise seemed possible.

This meeting and separate IRS approaches to the NCC intensified efforts of the coalition of national religious groups. Formal and informal negotiations followed as representatives of the IRS and the churches struggled to reach an agreeable solution.

In the midst of this process, the Eighth U.S. Court of Appeals overturned the district court ruling and found that Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota was, in fact, an integrated auxiliary of its three parent church bodies. Judge Donald Ross noted that "LSS is substantially connected with the Lutheran faith, and it performs functions of the church bodies to which it is related by satisfying the tenet of the Lutheran faith which requires the stimulation of works of mercy through social action ministries developed to promote human welfare."

Organizations classified as integrated auxiliaries—men's and women's clubs and youth organizations—were no more "exclusively religious" than LSS; thus, Ross wrote, the IRS exceeded the legislative intent of Congress when it demanded that the activities of an integrated auxiliary be "exclusively religious."

A Solution

Though the ruling was binding only in Minnesota and the circuit's six other states, the court victory speeded negotiations. Also contributing to the quickened pace was the pending departure of the current IRS commissioner, whose staff wanted to avoid repeating the process with a new chief.

Facing a tremendous backlog in the regulation revision process—440 projects would be ahead of this one—the churches

agreed to a more easily implemented revenue procedure that would, in IRS practice, supplant the existing regulation. This procedure would include:

- An affiliation test by which churches have the prerogative of listing the organizations they consider to be related to them, including a "group ruling" by which churches annually file a list of related organizations entitled to tax exemptions.

- A supports test giving the IRS a "mechanical" way to determine degree of relationship rather than which activities are or are not religious. Church-related organizations would have to file Form 990 if they offer goods and services for sale to the general public and normally receive more than 50 percent of their support from outside sources such as government grants and receipts of sales.

The new procedure provides immediate relief, even though the disputed definition is still on the books. This compromise should ensure that the offensive "exclusively religious" definition is not picked up and applied in other legislative or administrative circumstances—a major fear of religious groups.

To provide long-term relief, the IRS announced the start of the formal process of rewriting the regulation. But removing the offensive "exclusively religious" definition from the regulation could take another decade!

A Retrospective

Was the outcome worth the time and energy? The religious groups' hard work has not produced many tangible results. In fact, under the new procedure LSS of Minnesota will probably file Form 990. But as the 1979 Lutheran consultation noted, filing the form is not the issue: the issue is the church's right to define its ministry.

Also, Lutheran churches and other mainline groups did not consider the IRS an arm of the devil, determined to oppress them. Rather, this classic example of tension between church and state arose out of government's pursuit of a legitimate goal—to ensure that those who should pay taxes do so. But the means chosen by the IRS would have allowed government to drive a wedge between the church and its ministries.

This time the burden placed on organizations categorized as "not religious" was light—filing an informational form. Next time the burden could be heavier—perhaps even keeping churches from engaging in activities integral to their mission.

The solution reached by church and state reduced the "precedent impact" of the regulation and will likely ensure that neither the IRS nor Congress will use a "religious test" in the tax code—or other federal laws—again.



Ironically, those who seek to exclude religion from politics may end by inciting the dangers they fear. For there are some whose vision of America yields nothing in dogmatic certainty to the opposing vision of the secularists, and who, no less than the secularists, misunderstand the character of our constitutional order. There are those in America today who believe, like Samuel Adams, that America should be a "Chris-

This is bad scholarship as well as dangerous politics. In the days of the Puritans, Massachusetts may, indeed, have been an intolerant Calvinist theocracy. But as the "church covenant" evolved into a "halfway covenant," so the Calvinist theocracy gave way to a constitutional democracy. By 1787, the Founders were determined at all costs to prevent the national government from establishing any form of religious orthodoxy.

and political equality are long and deep. On August 17, 1790, in the first years of our constitutional government, the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, wrote to President George Washington, expressing thanks that the government of the United States gives "to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance." This was President Washington's reply:


"The Citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for having given to mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy: a policy worthy of imitation.

"All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights."

And President Washington added, in beautiful words:

"May the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants, while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and fig tree, and there shall be none to make him afraid."

So to those today who make others afraid by calling America a "Christian nation," this is my reply: You are wrong. Sam Adams was wrong. We are not a "Christian Sparta." But Justice William Douglas was right when he said, "We are a religious people." The democratic ethic and the work ethic flourish in the context of the Judeo-Christian ethic, from which they take their original shape and their continued vitality.

Let me be clear. The virtues of self-discipline, love of learning, and respect for family are by no means limited to the Judeo-Christian tradition alone, or to any religious tradition. My point is that, in America, our civil virtues are inseparable from our common values. And values such as courage, kindness, honesty, and discipline are, to a large degree, common to almost all religious traditions. But it is the Judeo-Christian tradition that has given birth to our free political institutions; and it is the Judeo-Christian tradition that has shaped our national ideals. Although we should never forget the contributions of a host of people from other religions and cultures who have come to our shores in search of freedom and opportunity, we should also acknowledge that freedom and opportunity have flourished here in a political and social context shaped by the Judeo-Christian tradition. 

William J. Bennett is United States secretary of education. This article is excerpted from an address he gave at the University of Missouri at Columbia. Reprinted with permission from the Washington Post. Copyright 1986.

BY WILLIAM J. BENNETT

RELIGIOUS, Yes, SECTARIAN, No

tian Sparta." They properly deserve the name "sectarian" rather than "religious." For though they sometimes speak in the name of religion in general, they would promote their own particular brand of religion into a favored position in public life. Not content to bring religious values into the public square, they would deny the government's constitutional obligation to be neutral among particular religious communities.

Like their secular antagonists, these zealots suffer from a misreading of history. If the secularists assert, wrongly, that the Founders meant to exclude all public support of religion, then the sectarians assert, wrongly, that the Constitution was designed, first and foremost, "to perpetuate a Christian order." One scholar argues that Christianity was the primary cause of the American Revolution. He calls for a "Christian historiography and a Christian revisionism" to foster a "return to the Protestant restoration of feudalism." A newspaper columnist insists that the Founders intended that all schoolchildren should be taught to acknowledge the divinity of Christ.

A public figure recently said that Christians feel more strongly about love of country, love of God, and support for the traditional family than do non-Christians. This sort of invidious sectarianism must be renounced in the strongest terms. The vibrant families and warm patriotism of millions upon millions of non-Christian and nonreligious Americans give it the lie. Its narrowness would have disappointed the Founders. And its intolerance clashes with the best traditions of our democracy.

The same public figure was on much firmer ground when he later observed: "I don't think we should invest any candidate with the mantle of God." This point is crucial. On the one hand, religion should never be excluded from public debate. On the other, it should never be used as a kind of divine trump card to foreclose further debate. Those who claim that their religious faith gives them a monopoly on political truth make democratic discourse difficult. Disagree with me and you're damned, they seem to suggest. In doing so, they insult the common sense and the tolerant spirit of the American people.

In America, the roots of religious liberty

Cracks in APARTHEID'S Foundation

BY NED TEMKO



According to Eugene Terre Blanche (arms outstretched), head of the Afrikaner Resistance Movement, the future of South Africa will be decided by blood, Afrikaner and Black: "I offer people the possibility of greatness . . . of being Boer generals."

It's as if you bring up your kids, day after day, on a clear set of principles. Then all of a sudden you turn to them and say: 'No. It's not that way at all.' That is what our government has done to us."

The speaker, in his late 30s, looked like no one's kid. His necktie, dress slacks, and blow-dried hair belied his support for the neofascist Afrikaner Resistance Movement, which has taken the lead in opposing race-policy reforms in South Africa. But moments after he spoke he joined a mob that barred an appearance by Foreign Minister Roelof Botha, scuffled with government backers, and retreated only under a tear-gas barrage from police.

The protester, a businessman from a town in the rural Transvaal province, is one of hundreds of thousands of Afrikaners set adrift by the gradual demise of a dream called apartheid. Some have swerved right, others left. Most seem simply to be groping for anyone or anything capable of restoring the sense of unity, direction, and certainty that apartheid once seemed to provide.

Where Afrikaners once sought assurance, they now find confusion.

The National Party, which rode a platform of apartheid—forced racial segregation—to power in 1948 and has ruled ever since, is split by wholesale defections on its right flank.

The Dutch Reformed Church, which

preached apartheid as God's word, is riddled with ministers who reject it, though most don't seem sure what to preach in its place.

The Afrikaner Broederbond, or Band of Brothers—which promoted Afrikaners' separate identity and acted as think tank and mass propagandist for National Party governments—is split like the party. Once shrouded in secrecy, it is harried by leaks. Once self-confident, it seems as confused as

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those it embraces.

And many at Stellenbosch University—Afrikanerdom's Oxford, and the ideological wellspring of apartheid—now treat apartheid as if it is a dirty word.

One thing still seems to unite Afrikaners. It is a sense that unless they come to terms with South Africa's Black majority, not only Afrikaner dominance but also Afrikaner survival is threatened. "It is fear that determines political thinking today," said Professor Willem Kleynhans, who rejected apartheid before rejection came into fashion and was ostracized for it. "The fear," he added, "is growing by the day."

But the dream of apartheid is slowly dying. The Afrikaner leaders who came after the slain Hendrik Verwoerd, apartheid's grand ideologist, lacked the intellect, single-mindedness, and personal authority to keep the dream pure against political and economic realities at home and opposition from abroad.

The retreat began on tiptoe at the end of the 1960s. Prime Minister John Vorster, by agreeing to the inclusion of a non-White on a visiting rugby team, sullied the Verwoerdian principle that all racial mixing was heresy.

This was only the beginning. At Stellenbosch, Afrikanerdom's intelligentsia took a hard look at the ideology its fathers had helped devise and discovered it didn't, couldn't—even shouldn't—work. Professors began questioning or rejecting its tenets in the 1970s.

Many students and most parents were enraged. "There was, and still is, a profound conservatism, nationalism, and authoritarianism in Stellenbosch students," one student said. But in the seventies, he added, "intellectually, there was growing admiration for the professors who challenged apartheid."

Another student, Hilgard Bell, did not take part in such admiration. His father had reared him to practice apartheid, not undo it. But his professors, he recalled, "taught us to question, to probe." Before joining the Broederbond, he questioned its ideology, and "I realized that the members accepted values that I could not live by," he said.

In the church others reached the same conclusion. Beyers Naude, a minister whose father was a founding light of the Broederbond quit the organization in 1963. For years he was a pariah. But by 1970 a few began to follow.

Nico Smith, a professor at Stellenbosch's theological seminary and a Broederbond member, recalled: "Often I would come home from meetings feeling that I could not participate any longer. But I could not bring myself to leave. It would have amounted to committing social suicide."

One evening in the late 1960s, he finally stood up at a Broederbond debate and said,



Afrikaners will share a public bench with blacks, but not power, if it means "upsetting the apple cart of Afrikaner political dominance."

"I can't stay in this organization." The others implored him to stay, but he walked out. "I had such an enormous sense of freedom that night."

But similar change was hard to find among other citizens. The Afrikaner revolution had succeeded too well. Before 1948, only some 30 percent of white-collar workers were Afrikaner. By the 1970s, the figure was more than 60 percent. Many of them worked, directly or indirectly, for the government.

In private business, however, the Afrikaners' tribal identity began to erode. They became acquainted with the doctrine that economic growth thrives on a free labor market, something apartheid abhors.

In 1976 came the rudest jolt yet to the Verwoerdian view that apartheid was just and workable. A Black revolt sprouted among the students of Soweto, a township near Johannesburg. Violence spread to townships countrywide, leaving some 575 dead in battles with police. Barely had a semblance of peace been restored when the government's bungled attempt to secretly fund a friendly newspaper forced Prime Minister Vorster to resign and elevated Pieter W. Botha in his place.

Botha set out to pull the Afrikaner people back together. He hoped to co-opt some of Afrikanerdom's doubting intelligentsia without losing many others he suspected still opposed changes to apartheid.

In church and university he struck a responsive chord. Willie Jonker, then dean of Stellenbosch theological seminary, explained: "The outlook here had changed. There was a readiness for a new approach, a feeling that as Christians we must admit we had made many, and big, mistakes . . . and that it was partly the fault of the church that criticism of apartheid didn't start earlier."

In a departure from the National Party's suspicion of "Anglo-dominated" private enterprise, Botha wooed businessmen. Part of his strategy was to end aspects of apartheid that were uselessly offensive or didn't work, while generating enough economic growth to co-opt some Blacks into the country's mainstream.

But the Afrikaner intelligentsia doubted the change would go far enough, while the right wing feared it would go too far.

When Botha proposed bringing non-Whites into the political system by creating separate parliamentary chambers for Asians and people of mixed race, Bell was head of Stellenbosch's student council. He rejected the idea, sensing that much more was needed. Bell's father was aghast: "The idea, for an Afrikaner, of questioning the wisdom of authority, of the state president, was unthinkable."

But father and son agreed to disagree. The elder man joined Andries Treurnicht, an apartheid theologian and National Party

figure, and others in rejecting Botha's strategy and leaving the party and the Broederbond.

But Blacks, excluded even from the new parliamentary setup, wanted much more than a rejection of Botha's reform plan. In late 1984, just as the new constitution was put into effect, violence erupted in Black townships. It escalated, defying the imposition of a state of emergency. More than 1,600 people, most of them Black, have died in the continuing upheaval.

Botha's reform continues as well, chipping away at the structure of apartheid, brick by brick. First he legalized Black trade unions. He also has ended so-called petty apartheid, such as bans on interracial marriage, sports, beaches, and, in some areas, movie theaters. More recently he has taken steps once unthinkable to Afrikaners. He has scrapped the hated pass-law system, which determined where Blacks could live and work, and expressed a readiness to restore South African citizenship to millions of Blacks redefined as belonging to tribal "homelands" under apartheid.

Botha says he is intent on exploring some form of power sharing with Blacks. But his retreat from apartheid has come step by step—the gait irregular, the destination unclear. This—combined, since 1981, with the country's worst recession on record—has accentuated, rather than removed, the political confusion and divisions in Afrikanerdom.

A small but growing minority dismisses the reforms as mere tinkering with apartheid. "From its point of view, the government has come an enormous way," Naude


said. "But power sharing, as the government understands it, means not upsetting the appellation of Afrikaner political dominance."

Also growing is support for the extreme right, which is convinced that Botha's reforms are the first steps toward Black rule and believes that Afrikaner survival lies in Verwoerdian purity.

The middle ground is occupied by others. Some want reform, others do not. Virtually all ache for the kind of certainty Verwoerd once afforded. There is a groping for answers among Stellenbosch students and Broederbond members.

One Pretoria businessman said, "I have several relatives in the Broederbond. . . . They don't know where to turn; the Nationalists aren't Nationalists anymore, and the broeders aren't sure what will or should come in its place."

Herman Giliomee, a professor who pioneered the questioning of apartheid at Stellenbosch, said: "There has been a complete collapse of Verwoerdian ideology. There is a completely new set of concepts—chiefly the idea of power sharing with respect to Blacks. . . . But for Afrikaners, you can't start tampering with the system unless you supply an alternative ideological framework."

Amid the confusion, the extreme right seems to offer at least the impression of certainty. According to Eugene Terre Blanche, head of the Afrikaner Resistance Movement, the future of South Africa will be decided by blood, Afrikaner and Black: "I offer people the possibility of greatness . . . of being Boer generals." 

The Theology of APARTHEID

Right after the beginning, God created apartheid.

So preached a generation of twentieth-century clergymen in the White branch of South Africa's Dutch Reformed Church. They taught Afrikaners, God-fearing Calvinists, that race segregation was more than desirable. It was God's will.

It began with the Tower of Babel, says F.J.M. Potgieter, a retired professor who pioneered the "theology of apartheid." Citing Genesis, he says God created men as a single race. But after Babel, God "scattered them over the face of the whole earth" (Genesis 11:9).* "He divided all mankind, [and] he set up boundaries for the peoples" (Deuteronomy 32:8). "He determined the times . . . and the exact places where they should live" (Acts 17:26).

In the 1960s, Dr. Potgieter's colleague

Andries Treurnicht, took the credo a step further. He preached a "theology of ordination," whereby each of God's nations was bestowed a special dynamic. To be true to it was a divine duty. Dr. Treurnicht now leads the Conservative Party, the breakaway right wing of the president's Nationalists.

Potgieter, a prominent supporter, says that as a "conservative Christian" he accepts some reforms as consistent with the golden rule. And he sees the implicit violent protest of the extreme right wing as violating Calvin's opposition to rebellion against the state. But the central tenet of "national separation" must stand.—Ned Temko.

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T H E ♦ U R S U L I N E

OUTRAGE

*In the shadow of Bunker Hill,
bigots perpetrated an atrocity that showed a
shocked nation that the fires of the
Reformation still burned
in the New World.*

BY CARMINE A. PRIOLI



On a sweltering Monday afternoon in July 1834, Edward Cutter, of Charlestown, Massachusetts, was startled by the sudden appearance of a woman in his house. Her hair was closely shorn, she was clad only in a flimsy nightdress, and she was muttering incoherently. Cutter probably surmised that she was from the Ursuline convent a few hundred yards up the hill, then known as Mount Benedict.

Sure enough, before long, a carriage was dispatched from the convent and the deranged woman was quietly escorted back there by the mother superior and the Right Reverend Benedict Fenwick, bishop of the Boston diocese.

Later, Cutter learned that the woman who had so unexpectedly descended upon him was indeed a nun; in fact, she was Sister Mary John, the mother assistant of the Ursuline community, which operated the Mount Benedict school for girls. Her bedraggled appearance and nervous disorder were, the mother superior explained, the symptoms of a "brain fever" brought on by the suffocating heat and the stress of a heavy academic workload. Following her return to the convent, Sister Mary John's condition was reported as significantly improved under the care of the Ursuline sisters.

Before long, however, Charlestown bristled with rumors: a girl had tried to escape from the nuns at Mount Benedict but had been captured and was imprisoned at the Catholic school. Several daily newspapers ran sensational stories about the "mysterious lady" who was held against her will, maybe tortured, perhaps murdered by the Catholics. On August 8, 1834, the *Boston Mercantile Journal*, under the heading "Mysterious," ran the story of her alleged imprisonment. Three days later the same paper published a small retraction: "The Bunker Hill *Aurora* says that the version we lately gave of the 'mysterious' affair at Charlestown, is materially incorrect." But it was too late: the flames of bigotry already had been kindled.

At the time of the American Revolution, there were about 100 Catholics in Boston. Predominantly French, Irish, or Spanish, they had no church organization or regular place of worship. Priests were transient, and it was not until 1790 that

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the superior of Roman Catholic missions in the United States ordered one of his ablest men, the Reverend John Thayer—a former Congregationalist minister—to strike northward from Baltimore for the “hub” of the Protestant universe. Services in Boston for the next decade were held in a rented Huguenot chapel, but it was not long before the Catholics outgrew their humble origins. They were skilled artisans and shrewd businessmen who adjusted well to the Protestant work ethic, and by the turn of the century they numbered around 1,200 and enjoyed two assets for continued success: influential friends and money. In 1799 they commissioned Charles Bulfinch—fresh from his work as chief architect of the Massachusetts State House—to build their exquisite cathedral. In 1808 even Rome began to take notice, and Pope Pius VII designated Boston an episcopal see. So by 1820 it seemed natural that the Catholic community should have an elegant school for girls.

The Ursuline curriculum included basic courses in “plain and ornamental Writing,” arithmetic, geometry, chemistry, and botany. Natural and moral philosophy, rhetoric, logic, and “the use of the Globes” were also taught along with “Ornamental Needlework,” “Japanning,” and drawing “in all its varieties.” Finally, almost as an afterthought, for an additional \$20, students could “attend to Cookery.”

Established in 1820 on Franklin Street, the first Ursuline school prospered so quickly that in 1826 the mother superior, Sister Mary Edmond St. George, moved her community to a larger building in Charlestown at the foot of “Ploughed Hill,” directly across from Bunker Hill. The name of the property was changed to Mount Benedict, after the presiding bishop, and construction began on the new convent school.

The completed building was, for the 1830s, most elaborate—a brick structure 80 feet long and three stories high, with wings on either side, an enclosed courtyard, and terraced gardens. Years later, Louise Whitney, a student at Mount Benedict, recalled that “nearly the whole of Mount Benedict was inclosed for the use of the Convent; there was a lodge, a Bishop’s house, several terraced walks, and grounds tastefully laid out, for the recreation of the pupils. No such elegant and imposing building had ever been erected in New England for the education of girls. Picturesque on the summit of the hill . . . , its many windowed facade, glowing in the light of the setting sun, [it] was a sightly object to the good citizens of Boston, returning from their afternoon drive in the suburbs.” Unfortunately, the good citizens of Boston were not the only ones eyeing the new building.

To the Protestant workers toiling throughout Greater Boston, the hilltop edifice typified a religion whose presence signaled economic strife. They failed to distinguish between the small, affluent religious community that sponsored the convent and the masses of poor Irish Catholics now settling in Boston, willing to provide the cheap labor that threatened the livelihoods of thousands of Yankee workmen. By the 1830s scuffles between Protestants and Catholics were commonplace.

To make matters worse, the exotic quality of the building and the nuns who moved through it piqued local curiosity: “[The] whole establishment,” said Louise Whitney, “was as foreign as the soil whereon it stood, as if, like Aladdin’s Palace, it had been wafted from Europe by the power of a magician.”

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*convinced that the “Romish
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Although the school was run by Roman Catholics, fewer than 10 of the 50 to 60 students enrolled in 1834 were of the Catholic faith. The remaining majority were mostly daughters of upper-class Boston Protestants, cultured and successful parents who wanted more for their young women than the public schools then provided. (For the first 150 years of Boston's existence, only boys were permitted to attend public schools. Girls were not admitted until 1790, and then only for six months a year.) Thus, opposition to the convent school came, in part, from other Boston Protestants, and especially from conservative clergymen like the Reverend Lyman Beecher.

Beecher was convinced that the "Romish heretics" meant to subvert the United States government and deliver America squarely into the pope's despotic hands. Deluding the cream of Protestant youth was the first step, and papist propagandists had gotten a foothold in—of all places—Boston, the bulwark of American Puritanism. Pulpits rang with clamorous accusations, and always there were the questions: Why were the Catholics meddling with *our* children? Why were they not uplifting their own miserable offspring from their lamentable poverty?

The sisters of the Order of Saint Ursula were primarily educators, and their mission in Boston was to provide a superior education for young women, whatever their religious denomination, whose parents could afford it. Few could have foreseen that by 1834 the Catholic population would increase tenfold to more than 20,000 souls, most of them indigent and uneducated. With their distinguished history of charitable works, it is unlikely that the Ursulines would have adjusted their mission to meet the growing social need. But they never really had the chance.

The riot that broke out on the night of August 11, 1834, was precipitated by rumors of the "mysterious lady," combined with tales of depravity and torture professed by a girl, Rebecca Teresa Reed, who claimed to have escaped from the convent in 1831. The workmen of Charlestown confused the mysterious lady with young Rebecca, and the story became more fanciful and grotesque with each telling. On Sunday morning, August 10, placards were found posted in several parts of Boston, saying: "To the Selectmen of Charlestown! Gentlemen: It is currently reported that a mysterious affair has lately happened at the Nunnery in Charlestown; now it is your duty, gentlemen, to have this affair investigated immediately; if not, the Truckmen of Boston will *demolish* the Nunnery Thursday night—August 14."

Convinced trouble was brewing, the selectmen enlisted Edward Cutter and on Monday afternoon were permitted to inspect the convent. Their guide was none other than Sister Mary John, the mysterious lady herself, now happily recovered from her "brain fever." No dungeons, torture chambers, or improprieties of any kind were uncovered, and the selectmen went home to draft a statement assuring an aroused public that nothing unusual was going on at Mount Benedict. This statement was to appear in Tuesday morning's papers and might well have saved the convent. But even as the selectmen wrote, events overwhelmed them.

The siege of Mount Benedict began around 8:00 p.m. when a mob gathered at the front door of the convent shouting for the release of the mysterious lady. At least part

of the responsibility for what followed must be borne by the mother superior, a headstrong woman who did little to conceal her contempt for the workmen. Hadn't the innocent sisters already endured enough slanderous abuse? Hadn't she opened her doors—just a few hours ago—to an inspection committee and hadn't they left completely satisfied? What would it take to convince these vulgar blockheads that there was nothing here for them? Exclaiming that "the bishop has 20,000 of the vilest Irishmen at his command," she threatened the Protestants with ferocious retaliation.

Sister Mary St. George's declaration enraged the mob, whose spirits already had been enlivened with rum. Her threat was answered with two pistol shots, apparently meant as signals to others milling at the foot of the hill. Lucy Thaxter, a student at the school, said: "I could keep still no longer, but getting up, went to a window from which I had a distant view of the convent gate. There I could see a dense black mass apparently moving up the avenue towards the house, and the sound of their prolonged hurrahs came upon my ears like the yells of thousands of fiends."

Soon the noisy crowd swelled as hundreds of spectators joined the core of rioters. Tar barrels set ablaze brought firemen from surrounding communities, but when they arrived on the scene they did nothing. Two days later the *Mercantile Journal* reported that "from 150 to 200 [men], disguised in various fantastic dresses, and with painted faces, immediately commenced breaking open the doors and windows of the Convent. . . . The number of persons assembled as actors in this scene of destruction, or spectators, has been computed at from many thousands. But no attempt was made to restrain the mob in their acts of violence. Not a Magistrate nor Police Officer was to be seen. Engines from Charlestown, Boston, and we believe from Cambridge, were on the spot, but no effort was made by the firemen to extinguish the fire."

As the rioters crashed through the front doors, the nuns and schoolgirls were quietly slipping out into the back garden, where a high wooden fence blocked their escape. They took refuge in front of a mausoleum containing the bodies of several Ursuline nuns. There the terrified nuns and children hid as the assault on the convent got under way.

Once inside, the mob quickly overran the convent from garret to cellar. First the rioters ransacked the basements, where they hoped to uncover the fabled dungeons and torture chambers. Finding none heightened their anger to frenzy. Huddled in the garden with her schoolmates, Louise Whitney heard their voices sounding like "the hoarse growling of a pent-up sea."

With the mausoleum at their backs, the refugees watched the destruction of their school. The darkened windows came alive with torches. Story by story, fantastic silhouettes ascended, upending furniture, smashing pictures and china, stealing what could be carried. Occasionally the din would give way to a brief silence; suddenly a window would clear, and a large piece of furniture would fill the gap for a minute and then crash to the pavement below, followed by cheers and laughter.

Despite their terror, none of the girls cried out even as smoke began to drift from the convent. "We were shut up in that garden," Mrs. Whitney wrote, "as closely as if we were in prison, with no place even of temporary refuge from the

rioters but the tomb, and the poor girls held the tomb in as much horror as they did the rioters."

Within minutes they heard footsteps on the other side of the fence. Beset by new terror, the children rushed toward the mother superior, trying to stifle their screams lest they be heard. Suddenly the footsteps stopped and hands began to tear down the fence. Louise Whitney heard "the deep breathing of men intent on hard work": it became clear that escape was impossible. "I looked at the superior anxiously; brought to bay at last, she opened her mouth to call out, 'Who is there?' I hastily interrupted her, now knowing *what* might happen if her voice was heard, and, taking the word from her lips—with a desperate effort of courage, I confess—I called out, 'Who is there? What do you want?'" A horrible moment of silence, and then a suppressed voice answered: "'We are friends; don't be afraid, we have come to save you.' The superior knew the voice and exclaimed joyfully, 'It is Mr. Cutter, and his men are with him. Oh, God be thanked!' she added fervently."

As the nuns and schoolgirls were spirited away, the carnage continued. While flames roared through the convent, rioters looted and fired surrounding buildings, including the bishop's house and library. Then they broke into the mausoleum, opened the coffins, and mutilated the remains of the dead.

When news of the convent's destruction became known, everyone expected reprisals by bands of enraged Irishmen. Even Bishop Fenwick feared the worst, and in a letter to his brother he confided: "Certainly some lives will be lost in case of another attack, for our good Irishmen are now wound up to a point where if you go one step further the cord will snap."

But the reprisals never came. How Irish-Catholic emotions were kept in check is still a mystery; the bishop's pleas for restraint alone could not have been enough in light of continued Protestant outrages. On August 12, the night after the Mount Benedict riot, another mob marched through Boston intent upon burning the Catholic cathedral. When confronted with armed guards, the mob returned to Mount Benedict, where they proceeded to finish the work begun the night before, setting shrubs, vines, fruit trees, and fences ablaze. The rampage was resumed yet a third time on Wednesday, August 14, with another attempt to "pull down" the cathedral. Again confronted with armed guards, the mob set out for Charlestown and was detained only when the Boston drawbridge was raised against it.

Not all responses to the burning, however, were anti-Catholic; loud expressions of outrage and disgust came from Protestant circles. Even Lyman Beecher, who the night before the riot squeezed in *three* anti-Catholic sermons, denounced the mob action from his pulpit the following Sunday, while another clergyman put it to his congregation this way: "Do you wish to introduce a Protestant inquisition to establish a religion by law—crush all dissenters from the legal faith, and bring back the age of persecution for opinion?" An investigative committee made up of respected citizens, among them Harrison Gray Otis, later U.S. senator and mayor of Boston, subsequently vindicated the Ursulines of the alleged wrongdoings and provided evidence leading to the arrest of 13 men.

Their trials began in December 1834, and lasted nearly six months. The first and most sensational was that of the ringleader, John R. Buzzell, a brawny six-foot-six brick-maker with a reputation for street fighting. Over the objections of Attorney General James T. Austin, who claimed that prosecution witnesses were being threatened with death, Buzzell's trial began on December 2. Two indictments were brought against him—one for arson, one for burglary—both hanging offenses in 1834.

But to most observers Buzzell's acquittal was a foregone conclusion, even though his guilt was never in doubt. One illustrated account published in Boston within days after the trial refers in its title to Buzzell as "The Leader" of the rioters, even though this account concludes with the jury's verdict of innocence. The decision, we are told, was received with "thunders of applause by the audience," while outside the courthouse Buzzell "received the congratulations of thousands of his overjoyed fellow citizens."

As each of the accused came before the judges and was acquitted, the Catholics realized how hopeless their cause had become. Although the evidence against the 13 defendants was overwhelming, all but one went free. Only Marvin Massey, a footloose 16-year-old, was convicted for his mock auction and burning of the bishop's books. He was sentenced to life imprisonment at hard labor, but at the request of 5,000 citizens, including Bishop Fenwick (whose name headed the list) and the mother superior, Massey was pardoned.

The triumphant Buzzell was doubtless less delighted by an unexpected outcome to the burning: it bolstered the Catholic cause as few other events could have. One unidentified Protestant writer who remained staunchly anti-Catholic deplored the burning for its obvious cowardliness, but more because it rallied popular sympathy where none should have been afforded. "The Propaganda of Rome," he fumed in 1835, "and the founders of the Leopold fund in Austria, to convert heretics in America, could not have found better missionaries for their purpose, than the scoundrels who burnt the Convent."

Such a view was shared by at least one Catholic writer who saw the destruction of the convent as inspired by Providence. In 1887, Sister St. Augustine, a member of the Ursuline community who witnessed the burning, wrote that a few years after the event she was visited in New Orleans by "two ladies from Boston," one of whom "consoled me by saying that the destruction of our convent might well be considered the seed of Catholicity in Boston, just as the blood of the early martyrs was styled the seed of Christianity."

When the Massachusetts general court assembled in January 1835, Bishop Fenwick petitioned for indemnification to help rebuild the convent school. But opposition from the Protestant press and within the legislature was furious; after a series of debates in March, the legislative votes were cast: 67 for, 412 against indemnification. An editorial writer for the *American Protestant Vindicator* had tersely summarized the issue when he wrote: "Any man who proposes, or who would vote for the measure, which would rob the treasury of the descendants of the Puritans to build Ursuline Nunneries . . . as the headquarters of the Jesuit Fenwick and his '20,000 vilest Irishmen' must be a raving lunatic."

But some perceptive members of the community saw that

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there was more at stake here. As the lawyer George Ticknor Curtis argued: "The state that does not protect the rights of property . . . , especially against open and public violation, loses sight of its own highest policy, and breaks its contract with the individual, and weakens that of all its members." On the night of the riot, all property, not just that owned by Catholics, was at the mercy of the mob.

Several days after the vote was taken the general court did pass a short, face-saving resolution which declared "its deliberate and indignant condemnation of such an atrocious infraction of the laws." This was something of a moral victory for the Catholics, but the resolution said nothing about compensation.

Bishop Fenwick, however, had crossed political swords with the Protestants before and he was not easily discouraged. He knew that no effort for compensation could be successful until the excitement had abated, and the issue was not brought before the legislature until 1841. By that time the general court had passed more stringent riot laws, which, among other things, mandated that local municipalities were financially liable for property destroyed by mobs. Nevertheless, in 1841 a petition headed by the poet John Greenleaf Whittier was submitted and rejected. Subsequent attempts for compensation in 1842, 1843, and 1844 were unsuccessful. In 1846 a sum of \$10,000 was approved by the legislature but was rejected by the Catholics, who estimated the total loss of real estate and personal property at 10 times that amount. In 1853 another bill for indemnification narrowly missed passage by nine votes; but the same bill was defeated the following year by a resounding 160 votes, permanently dashing Catholic hopes for reparation.

The convent ruins stood for nearly half a century, grim evidence that Reformation fires of intolerance still smoldered more than 200 years after they were brought to America.

The hill upon which the Ursuline convent stood is now part of Somerville. By the turn of the century Mount Benedict had been leveled, its soil used for landfill. Nothing remains of the convent except some bricks which form the arch of the front vestibule of the present Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston.

For citizens who were able to rise above popular prejudice, the convent riot had a special, malign significance: a travesty of human rights had been committed adjacent to Bunker Hill, where the blood of American patriots had flowed while defending those rights. The monument commemorating America's legendary stand against tyranny was well under construction in 1834, and soon it rose to tower above the blackened walls of the gutted convent. But those walls would stand on their hill for nearly half a century, and in time they too became something of a landmark, a cautionary counterpoint to Bunker Hill's proud spire.

Attorney General Austin was prescient enough to see this bleak irony taking shape, and in his closing statements at Buzzell's trial, he asked the jury: "Where will be the pride of your American feelings when you take the stranger to Bunker's heights and show him the slowly rising monument? . . . Where will be the pride of your American feelings when that stranger points to the other monument of ruins that frowns so gloomily on the adjacent eminence? The chills of 50 winters would not send such an ice bolt through your hearts."



The middle-aged monk walked with dignity into the courtyard of White Horse Temple in central China's Henan Province. My American tour group had cameras ready, and they snapped away as he reached the center of the vine-covered courtyard. He stopped, reeling slightly from the clicking and flashing. Soon the abbot of the oldest Buddhist monastery in China regained his



New Day DAWNING

BY GILES PENNINGTON

The dark night for China's religions is past, but all religions are still an arm of the government.

composure. He spoke to us of China's religious freedom as he self-consciously straightened the folds of his saffron-colored robes. This important Buddhist monk seemed resigned to show himself, like some museum piece, to ordinary tourists.

A dignified-looking old man confided to me as we walked through a city park, "Oh, I am a Christian. I was educated by Americans from Oberlin College in the 1930s." I asked if he continued to practice his religion today. "No," he stated simply, "to practice my Christianity openly might be dangerous." Suddenly he appeared disturbed by his own thoughts. After a pause he continued, "Being a Christian caused me

much trouble during the Cultural Revolution." I asked if he'd heard that the new constitution assured him freedom of religion. The old man only smiled and adroitly changed the subject.


A woman in her 60s, in clear, educated English, spoke with me in front of the main Protestant church in Shanghai. "We are all free to practice our Christianity now," she said proudly. I pressed her on the point: Won't such behavior as attending church hurt a person's advancement at work? She smiled and quickly answered, "Oh no," and then offered an amendment. "Of course, some work leaders may be biased still, but such behavior is against government policy." She reinforced this statement with some startling facts. The Chinese Bibles printed by her Shanghai church were made of encyclopedia paper donated by the government, and the sanctuary was restored with a grant from that same Marxist government.

Such encounters underscore the difficulties I faced trying to assess the religious situation in the People's Republic. My thoughts were dominated by two questions: Why is the stridently Marxist Chinese government not only encouraging a rebirth of religion but often paying for it? And in a country where every organization is an arm of the state, just how free are the churches and temples?

Some background is necessary to even begin to answer these questions. Soon after the death of Chairman Mao Zedong in 1976, the more moderate elements of the Chinese Communist Party took control of the central government. A great reversal of domestic policy took place. The "four modernizations," in industry, science, education, and government, were stressed over the previous emphasis on doctrinaire Marxism. People were encouraged to excel, and money was held out as a reward for a job well done. Farmers were allowed to sell part of their crops in the "free markets." Other private enterprise was allowed so long as wealth was not accumulated.

To convince people to accept this "new line," a massive reeducation drive was launched, attacking Mao's policies for the 10 years of "Cultural Revolution," from 1966 to 1976. During those years of chaos Chairman Mao and his followers tried to destroy all vestiges of traditional Chinese culture and what was left of Western influence. Many people lost property and position; some lost their lives. Now for the

Giles Pennington holds a master's degree in religious studies from Manhattan College. He has taught religion and philosophy, including Chinese religion at Albuquerque Academy for the past 13 years. He spent time in China in 1979 and 1982, studying Chinese religions.

A large, ornate golden Buddhist statue, likely a Bodhisattva, is seated in a meditative posture on a high, decorative pedestal. The statue is highly detailed with intricate carvings and a bright golden finish. In the foreground, two men are visible: a young Buddhist monk on the left, wearing a simple grey robe and having a shaved head, and an older man on the right, wearing glasses and a dark jacket over a light-colored shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing other parts of the temple interior.

Young Buddhist monk at a temple in Hangzhou.

*Opposite page: Ten thousand Longmen
(miniature Buddhas) guard the
entrance to the Dragon
Gate Cave in Loyang,
central China.*

Roman Catholic cathedral in Beijing.

Inset; Peasant Lamaist practitioners at Yonghe Palace Temple in Beijing.



LIBERTY

first time people were encouraged to talk to one another about their sufferings during those terrible times. Workers, leaders, college professors—everyone spent hours in group sessions, exorcising the horrors of those years. The scapegoats for all the pain, all the economic and educational disruptions, were labeled the “Gang of Four.” The whole reeducation program climaxed with the great national spectacle of the trial of the “gang” in 1980. By this time the new government, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, was in firm control. Mao’s Cultural Revolution stood condemned, and Mao himself was posthumously demythologized.

The years of Mao’s Cultural Revolution were particularly difficult for people of all religious beliefs. Christian churches and Buddhist monasteries were closed, their priests, ministers, and monks forced to join the workers on the farms and in the factories. The abandoned churches and temples were vandalized by young people carrying the sayings of Mao and shouting slogans against the “four olds”: old ideas, old culture, old habits, and old customs. Even important Buddhist shrines, considered national treasures by the vast majority of Chinese, were attacked. The rampage against the churches and temples was eventually tempered by such powerful figures as Premier Chou En-lai and the state council itself. In some cases, the people took the initiative and placed guards around their local temples and shrines. While most religious buildings and properties were eventually protected, they remained closed to the people until at least late in 1976.

Gradually the new government allowed increased religious freedom until in 1978 the Fifth National People’s Congress declared religious freedom a constitutional right in China. Adding some teeth to the declaration, the Commission of Legal Affairs later made it a criminal offense to “infringe [upon] the freedom of belief in religion.” The law was backed up by as much as a two-year prison term. That same year, 1978, a delegation of Buddhist monks was allowed to attend an international Buddhist meeting outside China, something the Buddhist world hadn’t seen in 12 years. In March 1979 the Central Committee of the party reinstated the arm of government that controls religious groups, the Religious Affairs Bureau. A year later, on Christmas Eve, the main Protestant church in Shanghai was returned to its congregation. Its ministers were allowed to leave their factory jobs and reorganize the church. The Shanghai Catholic Cathedral of Holy Mary, Mother of God was also allowed to reopen.

By the spring of 1981, the people of Peking witnessed an amazing sight: the two

active Catholic churches in the capital held an Easter service for more than 7,000 faithful, complete with an outdoor procession. In five years the religious climate of China had changed dramatically. Buddhist monasteries throughout the country began to receive young novices. At White Horse Monastery, for instance, of the 13 monks in 1982, four were under 20 years of age. In Peking the famed Tibetan Buddhist monastery, Yonghe Gong, had 26 young men from Inner Mongolia studying to be lamas. The Catholic cathedral in Shanghai had made more than 50 converts in the first six months of 1982. The mosque in Xian, though run-down and still damaged from the Cultural Revolution, was open and well used that same year. Even Confucianism, which the Communists have always attacked as feudal and backward, was in early 1983 reported to be on its way back to official recognition. All of these developments are sure signs that the government is serious about allowing China's religions to revitalize. The question remains, why?

First, we have to be sure of one fact: the Marxist government feels in no way threatened by the resurrection of these faiths throughout the country. Actually, the newly revived religions serve both domestic and foreign policy well. To allow religion to thrive supports the government's claim to be miles away from the near fanatical antireligious policies of Chairman Mao. The government is saying, "A new day really has dawned. We really intend to liberalize; trust us." And for people who have suffered through one changing line after another for the past 20 years, such assurances are necessary. If the Chinese leadership wants modernization by the year 2000, it needs the support of the people. That support was severely eroded during the long years of the Cultural Revolution. Allowing the free practice of religion is one way to regain lost confidence.

Even more important to modernization are the foreign policy considerations of renewed religious practice in China. Last year, in a moment of unusual candor, a guide admitted to me that freedom of religion was mostly for foreign consumption. He was sure, for instance, that free and open mosques are vital to China's relationship with Arab countries. Of course, the same can be said of Buddhism and Christianity. Certainly China's relationship with the United States is helped by reports of thriving Chinese Protestant and Catholic churches. Again, the contrast to China under Mao is obvious: during the height of the Cultural Revolution, China's relationships with nations throughout the world were almost destroyed. This new line about freedom of religion can only help China in her quest for foreign capital and technologi-

cal exchange.

Just how free are these reestablished churches and temples? The question is tricky and must be answered carefully. As I visited several leaders of active churches and monasteries, I had the feeling that a working compromise had been reached. The churches and temples may operate in more or less traditional fashion within their walls. The government, on the other hand, requires that all religions be regulated by state-controlled organizations such as the Catholic Patriotic Association. The results are churches and temples that are open and filled with devout believers and religious leaders who are supportive of the government and its policies.

For instance, Father Li, an old priest at the cathedral in Shanghai, maintained that the church was allowed to administer the sacraments. What else, he asked, should be demanded of the government? "China is no Poland," he said through an interpreter; "the church in China does not fight the government." He saw no reason to force Catholics, as he put it, "to choose between their religion and their country." The church should not inject itself into politics; its only purpose is to serve the spiritual needs of the laity.

A different argument was presented by Dr. Han, one of the lay leaders of the Shanghai Community Church. He explained that all Protestant churches were required to belong to the "Three Self Movement." That is, they must be self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating; hence, independent of all foreign control. Such an arrangement, Dr. Han felt, allowed the church in Shanghai to prosper. The morning I visited, the church was filled with young and old Chinese singing and praying with obvious fervor.

A grizzled old monk at the Jade Buddha Monastery across town described the working arrangement the monks had with the government. They were free to provide the faithful with the traditional services, including study of the sayings of Buddha. The government was allowed to set up a tourist shop on the monastery grounds and bring in foreign visitors. While the situation may seem awkward to an outsider, the monks were happy that believers could worship again. The old monk seemed particularly proud that many young men were now in training.

These examples highlight the position of religion today in China. There's a kind of freedom of belief within the context of this highly controlled state. After all, China is a country in which even the most personal decisions—to have an abortion or get a divorce, for instance—are made by a person's party leader or by a committee. In such a society, to be able to choose and practice one's religious beliefs must seem

an important freedom indeed.

How shall we evaluate the religious situation in China? Clearly, Chinese Christians and Buddhists are better off now than they were only a few years ago. Perhaps they face a brighter future than at any time since the establishment of the Marxist state in 1949. Though a tiny minority of a vast population, they may provide another set of ideas and ideals for Chinese who have lost

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faith in Marxist ideology. What seems to a Westerner to be a "puppet religion" surely appears to the average Chinese believer as something quite different. I saw Chinese exercising the religious option: young and old Catholics, hands folded, returning from the communion rail with obvious devotion; Protestant Christians, their eyes moist with emotion, singing loud and strong on a Sunday morning; an old peasant woman placing a burning incense stick in front of a huge golden statue of Buddha in a dark, silent temple. Such experiences point to a reality beyond the state, virtually the only reality beyond the state available to the Chinese people.





Is the Constitution what the Supreme Court says it is?

How valid is it to use the oft-repeated question "What were the Founding Fathers' original intentions?" as a guideline today?

Does America really want separation of church and state?

These and other questions are explored in 1787—Summer of Destiny, a bicentennial tribute to the 55 men who wrote the U.S. Constitution. Hosted by It Is Written's George Vandeman, the half-hour documentary features location footage taped in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., and a lively discussion with LIBERTY editor Roland Hegstad (facing).

Hegstad shares insights on several of today's constitutional issues—school prayer, abortion—and also describes his recent Moscow visit with Konstantin Kharchev, chairman of the Soviet Union's Council on Religious Affairs.

1787—Summer of Destiny will air nationwide the weekend of June 28. Viewers should check local listings for "George Vandeman."

Perspective

1994—A Letter to Home

BY MICHAEL P. THOMPSON

A peek into the future reveals possible results of the court's prohibition of religion in American public life.

October 31, 1994

Dear Mom and Dad,

Hi, how are things? I'm getting along pretty well here at State University if I can keep up with the homework. It's kind of a different life from back there.

Dad, that history course you told me you enjoyed so much isn't offered anymore. I asked the dean about it, and he says it was dropped in 1991 after a court decision prohibiting the mention of religion by anyone who ever accepted money from the government for any reason. Maybe when I come home for National Holiday break (we get out December 21) you can tell me what religion is. None of my professors are allowed to mention it because of the "constitutional wall of separation." I've heard of this Constitution thing, but they don't have one around here for us to look at, so I don't really know what that means.

Did you know that there used to be schools where people could study about their religion and speak openly about what they believed? Some of the people who live in our dorm told me their parents went to schools like that. One guy said that his mom and dad used to preach to people on the streets. They used to think that freedom of speech applied to all kinds of speech, not just what the government says is OK. Isn't that archaic? Lucky for us we've got the government protecting us from that kind of threat to our freedoms. It's kind of scary to think about people being able to say and think anything they want, isn't it?

By the way, the State (blessed be it) saved me from a difficult situation in the library yesterday. I saw a picture of something called a church in one of the books. It looked just like a regular building, except it had a symbol kind of like a plus sign on the roof. I asked one of my professors what the significance was. He told me it was

something very private and one person couldn't talk about it to another. The next day, when I looked through the same book, the picture was gone. I'm glad the State (praise its statutes and ordinances) was able to save other people from the possibility of infringing on each other's privacy like I almost did with that professor.

I wonder if churches have anything to do with that religion stuff. We aren't allowed to talk about either one. I really shouldn't question the will of the State (hallowed be its institutions) like that. Whatever religion is, it must be pretty dangerous, or we wouldn't have to be protected from it. I guess we can be very proud of our hardworking public servants for keeping us safe from such threats.

That's all for now. Try to send some money when you can—they raised the tuition for the fourth time this term. They tell us it's because we deserve quality education; isn't that thoughtful? Oh, by the way, don't spread this around, but I met a guy here who knows how to read (his parents taught him when he was little; isn't that a laugh?). He says he might show me some of it sometime. He knows some stuff called math and science, too; you meet all sorts of weird people here.

Well, time to turn off the old transcriber and get to the rumpus room. It's almost time for my 10:00 class in exploratory relationships (we just call it "touchy-feely" for short).

Your son,

598314

Michael P. Thompson is a resident of Golden, Colorado. He wrote this satire in response to an article we printed in the September-October 1986 LIBERTY entitled "1994: A Memo From the Principal."

Letters

"A Case Fraught With Hazard"

Judge Harry A. Ackley raises some thoughtful questions. The following facts, however, may provide some helpful balance and clarification.

The article (January-February 1987) raises many issues surrounding the question of medical intervention by the state on behalf of a child and concludes that such intervention should be sanctioned. But this confuses the actual issue in this case. The California Supreme Court has *not* been asked to rule on the question of intervention in the *Walker* case. The question facing the court is whether parents should be *prosecuted* if their child dies after they have chosen Christian Science treatment in lieu of medical treatment. This is a wholly different legal issue from the intervention question, though it has been sometimes confused by the public.

Ackley seems to assume that there is a conflict between the Constitutional right to the free exercise of religion and the right of a child to have proper care. But the two do *not* have to be in conflict if the child is being provided a responsible form of spiritual treatment. The passing of the Walker child was as great a tragedy as the passing of any child, whether under medical care or not. But it was totally unrepresentative of the extensive and well-documented Christian Science healing record. Nor should manslaughter and child felony abuse statutes in California or elsewhere be applied to parents practicing a reasonable and responsible form of spiritual healing, especially when many fatalities from the same illness have occurred under medical care.

Adherents of Christian Science have practiced spiritual healing for more than 100 years and have found it effective in caring for themselves and their children. The accounts of healing regularly published in church periodicals since the late 1800s total in the tens of thousands. These are only a fraction of the healings that have taken place. And they cannot be written off as merely psychosomatic cases. A survey of a recent 10-year period shows that more than 40 percent of the published testimonies concerning a specific physical disorder involved conditions that had been medically diagnosed. Approximately 10 percent of these healings had been confirmed by a follow-up examination.

Christian Science healing involves neither faith cure nor miracles, as the article implies. Rather, it is based on the conviction that spiritual laws underlie New Testament healing and those same laws can

be understood and practiced systematically today. This leads to a radically different approach to healing from that of those who maintain that healing depends on one's personal faith or God's willingness to intercede miraculously as He chooses.

Christian Science care is not a matter of doing nothing, as some who are unacquainted with a credible approach to Christian healing may have assumed. Christian Science practitioners—individuals who have established a record of healing others and who devote themselves full-time to the healing ministry—are available to give specific treatment. Those relying on Christian Science healing can also call on the services of Christian Science nurses to clean and bind wounds as well as care for other physical needs. There are nearly 30 Christian Science sanitariums and nursing homes in the United States and Canada where Christian Scientists may receive such non-medical nursing care. Virtually all major insurance companies offering group health policies provide a choice between Christian Science and medical care.

It simply isn't accurate to imply that medicine can ensure children will grow up healthy to an age where they can make their own decisions, as thoughtful medical people have acknowledged and as parents who have lost children to children's aspirin, reactions to vaccinations, misdiagnoses, etc., will readily admit. This is not to be critical of medicine, but to suggest that it's unrealistic to proceed as if there's a guaranteed method of healing that sets the standard by which Christian Science can and should be judged.

Numerous people, including children, have been healed through Christian Science after their cases were given up as incurable and terminal by modern medicine. Who would want them to have been told there was only one legalized approach to healing? Decisions between reasonably effective approaches to health care should be a matter left to individuals and their families—not legislated by others. To turn such decisions over to the government is sacrificing a freedom fundamental to the Bill of Rights and our nation—a freedom that is significantly denied in totalitarian countries.

NATHAN A. TALBOT, Manager
Committees on Publication
First Church of Christ, Scientist
Boston, Massachusetts

"And You, Too, Brutus!"

I was saddened by Robert Nixon's article. Your readers should have been given some hint that the article was not objective reporting, but one person's view.

Yet, even as opinion, there is a journalistic responsibility to be factually accurate. Nixon's article leads the reader to a wrong conclusion concerning some facts.

Having followed this case—read court documents, talked to Dayton reporters covering the case, read Dayton newspaper articles and editorials concerning the case, talked with Linda Hoskinson, and attended the U.S. Supreme Court hearing—I find Nixon's article lacks understanding of the legal issue involved.

Far worse (from a journalist's perspective), his article implies that Mrs. Hoskinson sued her church school employer against a clearly stated "biblical chain of command" theory. Both "facts" are wrong.

Court documents state, and school officials themselves admit, that the chain of command theory is not clearly stated anywhere, and was not explained to Mrs. Hoskinson until after she was fired. (Sort of a "well, you should have done such and such" parting shot.)

The fact is that the school sued the Ohio Civil Rights Commission to stop it from investigating the termination of Linda Hoskinson. Mrs. Hoskinson did not file a lawsuit.

The school sued, and litigated the suit through the court system to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Instead of stating this clearly, Nixon wrote: "The school responded by asserting that the religion clauses of the First Amendment prevented the commission from exercising jurisdiction." Few lay readers would understand that this meant the school sued, not the other way around.

Mrs. Hoskinson has not filed any lawsuit against her school, or anyone else, for that matter. But the school filed a lawsuit, despite their "chain of command." (Does the chain apply only to employees the school fires?)

How leaders who claim Bible passages prohibit such suits and reconcile all their legal maneuvering with their personal and corporate theology is beyond me.

And how a journalist could create such a

blatant misrepresentation of facts, and an editor pass it through to publication, is appalling.

SUNNY MERIK, Editor
Los Altos Town Crier
Cupertino, California

Dear Meri-K:

Roland Hegstad, editor of *LIBERTY* magazine, asked me to respond to your letter concerning what you consider inaccurate reporting in my article "And You, Too, Brutus!" which reports on the Supreme Court's decision in *Ohio Civil Rights Commission v. Dayton Christian Schools, Inc.*

In short, you indicated that I lack legal understanding of the legal issue involved and that "far worse" I implied Mrs. Hoskinson sued her "employer against a clearly stated 'biblical chain of command' theory. You stated that sources outside the decision itself show that theory isn't clearly stated anywhere.

The problem is that in your letter you infer things that I did not imply. You are reading into the text things that are not there. As a writer, I am—to use two of your words—surprised and saddened.

The goal of my article was to show that the Christian Right probably has misplaced its reliance if it thinks the new conservative Supreme Court justices will automatically adopt their political agenda (thus the article's title, introduction, and conclusion) and to report the basic point of the decision, that, as I put it, "religious schools are not above the law even though the Constitution may offer them important protections." The facts as stated in my article are based on the Supreme Court's findings of fact, not some other person's views of what the facts should be.

You say the theory of the "biblical chain of command" was not clear. The Supreme Court said the school board has "elaborated" certain required biblical beliefs "to include a belief in the internal resolution of disputes through the 'biblical chain of command.' The core of this doctrine, rooted in a passage from the New Testament, is that one Christian should not take another Christian into courts of the state." There is no hint in the Supreme Court decision that this "doctrine" is unclear or ambiguous. Of

course, Mrs. Hoskinson may think it unclear, but the Supreme Court apparently either didn't accept her view or thought that point not important to its decision.

As for who sued whom, I think my article speaks for itself. Mrs. Hoskinson pursued state administrative remedies, and the school pursued legal remedies. My key sentence says, "While the state was pursuing its administrative remedies, the school asked an Ohio federal district court to issue a permanent injunction of the state proceedings."

No writer can claim to be perfect, and I don't make any such claim. But in my 17 years of writing about Supreme Court decisions for *LIBERTY* magazine, I have set a high standard for myself. My goal in writing about Court decisions is to base my articles on the decisions themselves, to be as objective as possible, and to make my articles highly readable and interesting for readers. I always will adhere to those goals.

Finally, I have a question: Wouldn't it be fairer to *LIBERTY* readers if you used your real name and not a pseudonym, so they could judge your objectivity, too?

Robert W. Nixon

"The Christian Right—Will It Bring Political Pentecost to America?"

Although Clifford Goldstein is consistently one of the best of your excellent contributors, he included a remark in his article on the Christian Right (November-December 1986) that raised my eyebrows and a hackle or two. "... even a secular humanist," he wrote, implying that secular humanists are somehow on the fringes of decency.

It's surprising that this intelligent, knowledgeable writer seems to have fallen for the Far Right propaganda about secular humanists, which is as vicious and false as it is paranoid. If he and you would investigate, you'd find that secular humanists are as ethical, caring, and idealistic a group as you could find anywhere.

It should be pointed out, as well, that if America is turning into a "moral out-house"—which is regrettably the case with sexual morality and TV, I agree—this has occurred at the same time that religious

belief and church attendance are five or six times as great as they were in the good old days. Which weren't really all that good when you stop to consider that we had slavery until the end of the Civil War, segregation for another century, child labor into the 1930s, discrimination against Jews and women, and a host of other ills, which we are gradually overcoming. The news isn't all bad.

As for morality, you don't find secular humanists burning crosses or threatening opponents of school prayer with scurrilous letters and phone calls and even property damage; you don't find secular humanists trying to get the government into religion, in the public schools or elsewhere, or bombing abortion clinics for Jesus or sidestepping the law, the Congress, and the Constitution with a Byzantine plot involving arms and Iran and contras. In fact, you don't find secular humanists doing any of the things Goldstein points out that Jesus didn't do.

I have too much respect for your publication to let that slur pass.

BETTY MC COLLISTER, Secretary
Humanists of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

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The Editor's Desk

The Moscow Peace Conference—An Editor's Perspective

Historically, peace conferences have been forums through which the guilty reassured the gullible. A place for dropouts from spy school or for the gullible—the frocked moralists, the earnest idealists, the clutched at the coattails of power. You could fit a bushful of bishops into each category: churchmen, who once used politicians, in turn being used. And there were always the promises, the flattery; but only if one looked quickly, the covert and contemptuous look.

So I ended up at a peace conference. And not in Prague or New Delhi. In Moscow—headquarters. I thought you ought to know why. First, because my church had something meaningful to say. Not only about peace but about human rights and religious liberty. Second, because I had confidence in our delegation chairman, who combines finesse and frankness to an unusual degree. Neal Wilson, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, is nobody's fool and nobody's tool.

Third, because of General Secretary Gorbachev. Over the past 20 years I was in the Soviet Union a number of times. Twice in February, which means I wasn't there for

the weather. And as far as believers' rights were concerned, it was winter year-round. Even after the Helsinki Agreement. And the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights. And the U.N. document on religious liberty.

And then comes Mr. Gorbachev and peace words flying—"glasnost," "democratization," "revolutionary changes." I decided to give him a hearing. As West Germany's Egon Bahr said: "It's better to test Gorbachev than to test bombs."

That happens to be the punch line of my article. If you didn't read it there, forget you heard it. Just remember why I went to a peace conference.—R.R.H.

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