



EAST-WEST CHURCH & MINISTRY REPORT

SUMMER 2003

VOL. 11, NO. 3

The Trauma of the Soviet Era

Mark R. Elliott

Editor's Note: Those seeking to bear witness to God's mercy and grace in the wake of the multiple traumas inflicted on the peoples of the Soviet Bloc in the past century must come to appreciate what survivors have endured before they can express meaningful sympathy.

An Immense Tragedy

The immensity of the tragedy of twentieth century Russia almost defies description. As Catherine Merridale notes in "Death and Memory in Modern Russia" (*History Workshop Journal* 42 [1996], 4), practically every family lost loved ones prematurely in World War I and its violent aftermath, with "a pattern that would be repeated several times in the next few decades." Waves of trauma engulfed every generation, without exception: World War I, revolution, civil war, famine, collectivization, political repression including purges, mass arrests, and imprisonments, World War II, and the forced incorporation of Western borderlands after the war. All spelled enormous hardship, destruction, and death. The toll in terms of lives prematurely cut short may have exceeded 60 million. What made these multiple traumas even worse, all talk of death, suffering, and personal injury—physical and mental—at the hands of the Soviet regime had to be suppressed out of fear of reprisals. As Professor Merridale has put it, "Private pain went underground" ("The Collective Mind: Trauma and Shell-Shock in Twentieth Century Russia," *Journal of Contemporary History* 35 [no. 1, 2000], 46-47.)

Mass political repression in the Soviet era typically involved nighttime arrest, interrogation, torture, sham trials, and imprisonment, exile, or death. Inevitably, the ripple effects engulfed family members as well. Spouses, because of "guilt by association," were also subject to arrest or, at the very least, loss of job, while children frequently grew up in orphanages. And the state did not permit public grieving for these horrific, politically induced losses. As psychiatrist Jacob Lindy has noted, "Surviving spouses, denied information or rites of mourning, in turn denied their children any remembrance of the lives of parents and grandparents caught in the purges....Both grief and mourning were arrested" (Jacob Lindy and Robert Jay Lifton, eds. *Beyond Invisible Walls: The Psychological Legacy of Soviet Trauma, East European Therapists and Their Patients* [New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2001], 24).

Those not arrested also suffered from the pervasive Soviet climate of distrust. Fear of political informants undermined trust not only among coworkers and friends, but many times even within families. Children who reported to authorities any unorthodox behavior by parents were idolized as heroes. Consequently, the population became adept at "living a lie," to use Vaclav Havel's expression (*Living in Truth* [London: Faber & Faber, 1979], 52).

People came to accept as normal and predictable the contradictions between political pronouncements and the facts, between what the media said and the truth, and between one's public face and private thoughts. Hypocrisy and deception became normative and some degree of paranoia and schizophrenia was a constant companion to millions of ordinary citizens.

The "Lie" Ends—But Not Uncertainty

Then, beginning in the late 1980s, Gorbachev's glasnost exposed myth after myth, undermining the legitimacy not only of the political establishment, but of parents and grandparents who were seen as co-conspirators in the Lie. Sadly, the suffering did not end with the collapse of Communist regimes. Far from it. Now one could tell the truth, but too often with no job and with an empty belly. Also, old national passions repressed by Communism rekindled into violence and civil wars in the Caucasus and the Balkans.

Psychiatrist Jacob Lindy has taken note of the tremendous scope of the Soviet and East Bloc system's denial of the traumas inflicted upon hundreds of millions in the name of a better Communist future. It "doctored documents, withheld news, and condemned those who complained. On a more personal level, it blocked ritual, destroyed individual memory, and made the telling of stories about the deceased dangerous" (Lindy and Lifton, *Beyond Invisible Walls*, 32). In December 1997 British scholar Catherine Merridale arranged a gathering in Moscow of psychologists, sociologists, demographers, humanitarian aid workers, and an Orthodox bishop

(continued on page 2)

Contributing Editors

Canon Michael Bourdeaux

Keston Institute, Oxford

Dr. Anita Deyneka

Peter Deyneka Russian Ministries, Wheaton, IL

Father Georgi Edelstein

Russian Orthodox Church, Kostroma Diocese

Rev. Viktor Hamm

Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Winnipeg

Dr. Zygmunt Karel

Biblical Theological Seminary, Wroclaw, Poland

Bishop Ruediger Minor

United Methodist Church, Moscow

Miss Sharon Mumper

Magazine Training Institute, Baden-Leesdorf, Austria

Rev. Nick Nedelchev

Bulgarian Evangelical Theological Institute, Sofia

Dr. Peter Penner

International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague

Dr. Walter Sawatsky

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, IN

Mrs. Katya Smyslova

Esther Legal Center, Moscow

Rev. Larry Thompson

Campus Crusade for Christ, International, Budapest

Mr. Larry Uzzell

Jamestown Foundation, Waxahachie, TX

Dr. Alexander Zaichenko

Russian-American Christian University, Moscow

Large numbers did despair, even if suicides and psychoses were successfully hidden from public view.

In Soviet times, strategies and defenses that contributed to survival actually intensified the trauma, as people had to construct "false selves." People lived in paranoia, despair, and had no choice but to live a lie.

Dennis O. Bowen earned a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the Illinois School of Professional Psychology in 1992. He is a missionary with the Evangelical Free Church Mission and lives in Moscow.

The Trauma of the Soviet Era

(continued from page 1)

to explore the present-day impact of Russia's multiple, twentieth century traumas. Perhaps, as Russians widely believe, a native strength of character allowed millions upon millions to endure famine, war, purges, the gulag, and more "without giving way to despair or debilitating neurosis" (Merridale, "Collective Mind," 47). At the same time, newly-opened Soviet archives document that large numbers did despair, even if suicides and psychoses were successfully hidden from public view. As Professor Merridale notes, the Soviet system "was intolerant of invalidity and repelled by psychiatric damage. We do not know



Book Review

***Behind Invisible Walls: The Psychological Legacy of Soviet Trauma, East European Therapists and Their Patients*, edited by Jacob D. Lindy and Robert Jay Lifton (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2001).**

Reviewed by Dennis O. Bowen.

Anie Kalayjian, an Armenian psychologist, came from the United States in 1988 to visit and comfort survivors of the Armenian earthquake. She was frightened one night when a black van with Soviet bureaucrats was waiting for her. She thought, of course, they were KGB agents. She recalled the family stories of how, in that part of the world, the ultimate nightmare always arrived with people in a black van. Her only option was to go with them.

She was surprised later when one of the middle-aged bureaucrats with her began to weep at the sight of the devastation, grief, and casualties. He took her aside and began to tell his story. "I can't let anyone know that I was crying." He told her that he was angry, not only because he had lost his daughter in the earthquake, but because of the Soviet system and its blunders and faceless uncaring mechanical policies that allowed a tragedy of such magnitude, with few ways to provide help to the survivors.

Underneath all the anger at the Soviet system was another secret, the inability to share his happiness on the day Stalin died. When his son came home from school that day in 1953, this bureaucrat shed staged tears of grief to keep from being reported to the authorities. And underneath was the anger that Stalin had allowed the massacres and pogroms against Armenians since 1923.

In their recent book, *Behind Invisible Walls*, Jacob Lindy and Robert Jay Lifton describe two kinds of walls that make up the culture of trauma in the post-Iron Curtain countries of Eastern Europe. There are walls that "unconsciously preserve outmoded ways of adaptation" and walls that perpetuate the denial and silence among the generations of families who suffered these traumas.

We all are familiar with the legacy of the Soviet era in which approximately 60 million people died in the Soviet Union alone. In this book we get a glimpse into the psychological trauma resulting from this dark period. The authors tell us there is virtually no one

how many of the casualties this [twentieth] century has produced have died without care or justice. It is one of the many unexplored obscenities of the Stalinist catastrophe" (*Ibid.*, 54). In response to Western questioning of Russian defenses of silence and stoicism in the face of unspeakable human suffering, the Russian bishop commented, "We have our own ways of dealing with trauma. Perhaps you [from the West] should be considering whether yours would be as effective if your people had shared our history" (*Ibid.*, 55). ♦

Mark R. Elliott is director of the Global Center, Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, Birmingham, AL, and editor of the East-West Church and Ministry Report.

living in the countries behind the former Iron Curtain who did not have a family member who suffered physical, psychological, or political trauma, or death as a result of repression and abuse.

Behind Invisible Walls explores these phenomena by recounting some of the historical data as context. More important, eight therapists from six different former Iron Curtain countries (Hungary, East Germany, Romania, Russia, Croatia, and Armenia) share case studies of their work with 13 patients. These patient-therapist stories bring alive the themes of healing from trauma, but they go beyond simple clinical reports. The vignettes also explore therapists' lives that were also traumatized. They had no choice but to perform their work as a new type of wounded healer.

Soviet-era therapists attempted to find a new language of healing, given the limitations of Marxist, dialectical materialist vocabulary permitted by the state. They learned a little of the psychoanalytic thought that trickled in from the West while they searched for a vocabulary of healing during their careers. Dissident writers provided another vocabulary of healing—a vocabulary of the soul for the therapists. In their struggle to learn how to administer healing to the traumatized, they described finding a "humanistic" vocabulary from dissidents, poets, and writers such as playwright Vaclav Havel. (They use the term *humanistic* in the sense of being life affirming and not part of Marxist vocabulary.) They took this new vocabulary in order to find a language to attempt healing for the traumatized and to understand themselves and their own trauma.

In the emotional climate of Soviet times, strategies and defenses that contributed to survival actually intensified the trauma, as people had to construct "false selves." People lived in paranoia, despair, and had no choice but to live a lie. Psychiatry and psychology were themselves victims of the oppressive system and also were required to become perpetrators of trauma.

This book is essential reading for anyone planning to work in the social services in any post-Soviet state. It is also recommended for those needing additional depth of understanding regarding the cultural and personality characteristics of people who lived through the Soviet era. Therapists and their patients speak to us of the determination and the creativity of the human spirit in a time of utter spiritual darkness. ♦

Coping With Crisis

Nabi Abdullaev

One in every five Russians needs psychological assistance, but a lack of psychologists and the stigma of being labeled mentally disturbed have prevented many from seeking help, according to mental health professionals. "Years of drastic social and economic change and a jump in extremism in Russian society have seriously affected the mental health of the Russian people," Vasily Yastrebov of the Health Ministry's Scientific Center of Mental Health said in a telephone interview. His center's estimates show that 20 percent of the population needs occasional counseling, but only a fraction are finding a sympathetic ear—usually in medical institutions.

"In Russia, psychiatry was traditionally separated from other medical and rehabilitation services," said Valery Krasnov, head of the Psychiatric Scientific Research Institute of the Russian Academy of Medical Science. In Soviet times, human rights activists often accused psychiatrists of being the

Communist Party's obedient tool to punish dissent. The reluctance of Russians to seek psychological help is a legacy of that era, when a person labeled mentally disturbed could see his career ruined and end up a social outcast. The suicide rate has more than doubled over the past few decades to become one of the top in the world, soaring from 12.1 deaths per 100,000 people in 1965 to 43 per 100,000 in the late 1990s, while the number of drug addicts has skyrocketed by 1,100 percent over the past ten years. There are about 300,000 registered drug addicts, but experts believe the actual number is about ten times larger. ♦

Nabi Abdullaev is a staff writer for The Moscow Times.

Edited excerpt from "Experts: 1 in 5 Needs Counseling," The Moscow Times, 17 December 2002.

The Editor Recommends the Following Reading on the Psychology of Marxist Repression

Hochschild, Adam. *The Unquiet Ghost: Russians Remember Stalin*. New York: Penguin, 1994.

Milosz, Czeslaw. *The Captive Mind*. New York: Knopf, 1953.

Koestler, Arthur. *Darkness at Noon*. New York: Macmillan, 1941.

Orwell, George. *Animal Farm*. New York: Harcourt, 1954.

Conscientious Objectors in Eastern Europe Through 1989

Lawrence Klippenstein

Conscientious objectors view the taking of arms in military forces as an unacceptable form of serving one's country. Pacifism and conscientious objection have tended to spring more readily from the Protestant side of the post-Reformation church spectrum, and more specifically from what has come to be known as the "free church" tradition. Where state and church have cherished century-long and close cooperation, as has often been the case in the Catholic and Orthodox experience, such dissent has not come to the fore in the same way.

Conscientious objectors (COs) rose to prominence in Eastern Europe only after World War II. In six of the regime's nine nations the question of conscientious objection came to be a matter of public debate, calling for government action and resolution. Military legislation of Marxist regimes typically included very stiff penalties for those who refused to fulfill their "sacred duty to the Motherland" and to "uphold socialist peace."

Roots of Russian Pacifism

In Russia, several sectarian bodies that came into being during tsarist times showed fairly strong pacifist leanings. For Dukhobors and Molokans, such inclinations could be traced back to strong antimilitarist sentiments expressed as early as the eighteenth century when those groups were formed. In the nineteenth century when some of their members converted to the Stundists, Baptists, Evangelical Christians, and later, Pentecostals, they sometimes took their pacifism

with them. The influence of philosophers like Grigorii Skovoroda and Leo Tolstoy caused others to accept the pacifist point of view. Only Mennonite colonists, immigrants from Poland and Prussia in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, managed to negotiate a legal alternative to service in the armed forces in 1874. These arrangements, effective from 1880 on, permitted young Mennonite recruits to fulfill their state duties in special forestry camps and hospital work.

Soviet Suppression of Christian Pacifism

In January 1919, Lenin signed a special decree establishing people's courts to which conscientious objectors could appeal their call-ups to military service. During the Russian Civil War this decree allowed tens of thousands of Evangelical Christians, Dukhobors, Baptists, Tolstoyans, Seventh-day Adventists, and Mennonites to be freed from military service obligations on grounds of religious convictions. About two years after Lenin's death in 1924, the exemption decree was revoked in practice if not in form. All pacifist-oriented groups had been pressured prior to this date to review their positions on military service and enunciate explicit statements of loyalty to the new government. By 1926 both Baptists and Evangelical Christians had issued official conference statements rejecting pacifism. Arrests of ministers, the closing of churches, and general repression directed against all religious bodies seemed to crush all resistance, even among Mennonites, by the mid-1930s.

(continued on page 4)

Military legislation of Marxist regimes typically included very stiff penalties for those who refused to fulfill their "sacred duty to the Motherland."

In significant ways the Evangelical Church championed the cause of conscientious objectors throughout the 40-year history of the East German state.

Conscientious Objectors in Eastern Europe

(continued from page 3)

East Germany

Following the westward advance of the Red Army at the end of World War II, Communist regimes came to power in Eastern Europe in the late 1940s, and military forces dominated by the Red Army remained a crucial element in the survival of these governments until their demise in 1989-1990. The German Democratic Republic (GDR), founded with Stalin's blessing in 1949, was the first of the subjugated areas where conscientious objection became a public issue in the postwar period, partly because of the largest church body in the GDR, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany (Evangelische Kirche Deutschlands, or EKD). In significant ways the Evangelical Church championed the cause of conscientious objectors throughout the 40-year history of the East German state.

The Soviet Union

Opposition to the state's policies on religion easily became a psychological and spiritual "home base" for conscientious objectors in the post-Stalin era. In the sixties and seventies a growing number of Soviet COs appeared among unregistered Evangelical Christians-Baptists (ECBs) and other similarly illegal and dissenting groups. Notably represented among these objectors were independent Pentecostals who had not joined or who had left the state-sanctioned ECB union, dissident True and Free Seventh-day Adventists, and Jehovah's Witnesses, who were often targeted in press attacks for their "exceedingly intransigent" pacifist stance.

In the early 1970s clandestine publications began to mention increased harassment and mistreatment of young believers serving in the army. The violent death of 20-year-old CO Ivan Vasilievich Moiseev, a member of an ECB church in Moldavia, was widely publicized in Western media. Moiseev had refused to take the military oath for reasons of conscience. Quite a few of the new conscientious objectors, especially those from unregistered Baptist communities, launched their protest with a refusal to take the military oath. Punishments typically included imprisonment for three to seven years in times of peace and possibly the death sentence during wartime.

Hungary

After the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, COs also began to come forward in Central and Eastern Europe. Around 1975 a small Protestant minority group, commonly known as Nazarenes, and an even smaller Catholic "base" community calling itself *Bokor* (The Bush), brought Hungarian conscientious objectors into the limelight. Pacifists in neighboring Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Poland may have drawn inspiration from a struggle for alternatives that was headquartered in Budapest. The 150-year-old Hungarian Nazarene community locates its pacifist roots in the teachings of Samuel Heinrich Froehlich,

founder of the Swiss Neutaeufer (New Baptizers), who was strongly influenced by Mennonites. Hungarian Nazarenes finally regained official recognition in 1977. With it came the privilege of exemption from military service. The concerns of the present-day body of about 3,500 members have not, however, been widely publicized in the West. The granting of such an exemption in Hungary in the late 1970s was, however, also significant for other groups. Hungarian Jehovah's Witnesses appear to have received their exemption about the same time as the Nazarenes. The government was granting both groups a form of noncombatant service, something that Nazarenes could accept with appreciation but that Witnesses, who reject any form of military service, would not. Refusal to serve almost invariably meant imprisonment for two to three years. Hundreds of young men from Witnesses congregations sat in Hungarian jails during several decades.

The growing number of Catholic conscientious objectors and the publicity they generated increasingly exacerbated church-state relations in the late 1970s and 1980s. "Basic communities" led by Father Görgy Bulányi manifested a profession of nonviolence and Christian pacifism that helped create the first Hungarian Catholic COs. In 1985 Hungarian prisons were holding about 150 persons for their pacifist convictions. Most came from smaller churches, but at least a tenth were Catholics.

Poland and Czechoslovakia

In Poland, 22-year-old Maciej Glebocki helped to force the issue when he refused military service in 1982. He was sentenced first to three years imprisonment, then had the sentence extended by another 30 months. In 1986 the difficult case of imprisoned Jehovah's Witnesses began to gain attention in the West. Some 300 to 500 Jehovah's Witnesses served prison sentences in Poland as conscientious objectors.

The escalating struggles of Polish conscientious objectors probably made an impact on related groups in neighboring Czechoslovakia. That country, however, had taken some earlier initiatives of its own. At the outset these initiatives flowed in large measure from the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren (ECCB). There is clear evidence, though, that some of the smaller religious groups, particularly Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses, were adding significant numbers to the objectors' groups as well. In the late seventies, documents from Czechoslovakia stated that "an increasing number of young people have refused to serve as conscripts in the army." Ales Brezina's case was widely publicized in the West. A member of the ECCB and a signator of the human rights document, Charter 77, Brezina was tried in June 1977 and sentenced to 30 months imprisonment for attempting to evade military service. In November 1983 an ECCB general synod formulated a broad resolution in which it called for arms reductions and for the right of COs to do alternative civilian work.

Yugoslavia

In the 1980s the Ljubljana Peace Working Group

began to publicize the cause of conscientious objectors in Slovenia. Most of the cases brought to light were Jehovah's Witnesses reluctant to campaign politically on their own behalf. Resentencing had become the specific issue for a number of individuals who had received a second or third prison sentence. The matter had become a point of debate in churches as well. An April 1986 petition of the Church of the Nazarene protested "the breach of Tito's decree ruling out the practice of repeated sentences." In May 1987 Peace Group lawyer Slobodan Perovic took the issue to the Constitutional Court, stating that compulsory military service was contrary to their beliefs and to the freedom of religion guaranteed in the Yugoslav Constitution. The court's ruling, handed down on 27 November 1987, was that no one could be exempted from military service on religious grounds. At least a dozen COs, all members of religious groups, remained imprisoned in Yugoslavia during 1988, including eight Jehovah's Witnesses from Slovenia and Vojvodina, one Serbian Seventh-day Adventist, and one Nazarene. Also in this group was Father Don Andro Ursic, the first Yugoslav Catholic and priest to refuse military duty on grounds of conscience.

Romania and Bulgaria

During the seventies and early eighties, the West became aware of Romanian and Bulgarian conscientious objectors, especially Jehovah's Witnesses, Nazarenes, Pentecostals, and Seventh-day Adventists. Some were able to obtain noncombatant military assignments. Romanian authorities claimed that some religious groups were being granted exemptions, although it seemed they were granted in an arbitrary fashion.

A few cases of sentencing Bulgarian COs came to the attention of the West. One was that of Emil Kalmakov, a Pentecostal from southeast Bulgaria who was imprisoned five times for refusing to serve in the Bulgarian army. He was first arrested in 1979 and during the following six years served a total of four and a half years in prison. A subsequent term of three years ended when the authorities announced his release in December 1988.

1988-89: Easing Up on COs

In July 1988 the Polish *Sejm* legalized alternative service. Not many days after the *Sejm's* action, 86 Jehovah's Witnesses and 13 Freedom and Peace activists serving sentences for refusing military service were released from prison. All those released had agreed to exchange two years of military service for three years of civilian alternative service. A government spokesman admitted that several hundred Jehovah's Witnesses and about a dozen or more Freedom and Peace workers remained in prison.

In 1988 COs still in Hungarian prisons included 146 Jehovah's Witnesses, six Catholics, one Nazarene, and one Adventist. In February 1989 Justice Minister Kalman Kulcsar announced all conscientious objectors remaining in prison would

have their sentences suspended. In August of that year 209 of 31,800 new army recruits had asked for exemptions. Of these, 14 were Jehovah's Witnesses and two were Nazarenes. Two other Nazarenes and 27 Jehovah's Witnesses had refused to perform either civilian or military service.

In June 1988 a leading legal expert, Valeri Savitsky, deputy director of the Institute of State and Law of the USSR Academy of Sciences, announced the possibility of ending criminal prosecution of COs in the Soviet Union. At that point the majority of religious prisoners listed in Western publications such as *Keston News Service* and *War Resisters' International Newsletter* were COs. During this period 16 members of a new, formerly Baptist group in Estonia that called itself "Word of Life Church" all refused to join the Soviet army. Chief of Staff Mikhail Moiseyev told *Pravda* later that 6,647 men had evaded the draft call-up in 1989 compared with 1,044 the previous year. About 90 percent of these were "ethnic objectors"—conscripts from the Baltic republics, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and other national groups who considered conscription into the Soviet Red Army a violation of their national sovereignty. Local authorities often refused to cooperate, so most of the evaders were never prosecuted. Reports of more arrests continued to reach Western research centers, mostly concerning Jehovah's Witnesses. A prisoners' list released in March 1990 revealed that at least eight Christians and 17 Jehovah's Witnesses in a larger group of 67 were in prison as COs.

In Czechoslovakia imprisonments continued into 1989, even as events were moving rapidly toward the "Velvet Revolution" at the end of the year. One CO case had to do with the 14 June sentencing of 19-year-old Libro Frank, who belonged to the Hari Krishna community. Frank later agreed to serve in the armed forces.

In Eastern Europe the struggle for freedom of conscience registered significant successes. The majority of former Marxist regimes adopted alternative service legislation. With foreign domination gone, serving in the army of one's homeland may seem less onerous, and eventually no longer a problem.

Protestants were not alone in standing with COs, nor always necessarily the most aggressive. Groups like the Mennonites of the Soviet Union, holding to a centuries-old pacifist tradition, tended to seek at least some accommodation, desiring exemptions from carrying arms within the framework of the army itself. Jehovah's Witnesses, not clearly part of the Protestant ethos, have demonstrated perhaps the most consistently radical position, while Czech Brethren and German Lutherans often rooted their pacifism in the varied objectives of the larger peace movements of Eastern and Western Europe. Baptists and Pentecostals sought their rationale in a very personal, and in some ways simple, conviction that killing humans is wrong, and that too is a principle that changing politics and economics do not really affect. ♦

In Eastern Europe the struggle for freedom of conscience registered significant successes. The majority of former Marxist regimes adopted alternative service legislation.

Lawrence Klippenstein, retired historian/archivist of the Mennonite Heritage Center, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, is the author of "Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in Russia: A Case Study in Church-State Relations, 1789-1936" (University of Minnesota Ph.D., 1984).

Edited excerpt reprinted with permission from *Protestantism and Politics in Eastern Europe and Russia: The Communist and Postcommunist Eras*, edited by Sabrina Petra Ramet (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992).

Conscientious Objection in Post-Soviet States

Katy Morrow Stigers and Mark R. Elliott

Government policies among former Soviet Bloc states range from full acknowledgement of conscientious objector (CO) rights and provisions for civilian service to outright repression and persecution.

Conscientious objection is recognized as a fundamental human right by the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the European Union (EU).¹ The EU requires its members to provide alternatives to military service and many EU states have eliminated conscription. Government policies among former Soviet Bloc states range from full acknowledgement of conscientious objector (CO) rights and provisions for civilian service to outright repression and persecution. Post-Soviet Bloc states have had just over a decade to come to terms with the CO issue that, until the collapse of Communism, was rarely given serious consideration. The region's new governments soon recognized the challenge of both ensuring military security and respecting conscientious objection as called for by the United Nations, OSCE, and the EU.

With no existing protection for religious rights, these nations sought to adopt Western legal norms for freedom of religious expression. But decades of religious repression, as well as a particularly authoritarian understanding of church-state relations, has caused tensions. For example, the required registration of religious organizations creates a hierarchy of religious groups, alternative service is implemented in a punitive manner, and COs are persecuted in many countries through outright harassment and imprisonment. In particular, Jehovah's Witnesses, who discourage loyalty to the state and reject military service, are the target of persecution for their CO stance.²

In the Baltic region (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), attitudes toward COs are benign and accommodating, with low levels of persecution for those who choose civilian service. The same is true in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Poland, whose accession into the European community as well as NATO involved close Western scrutiny. Balkan states, rocked by civil war for a decade, have made little headway with religious tolerance and spare little sympathy for pacifists. Many Serbs, for example, who fled to Hungary to avoid military service are unable to return because they were classified as deserters.³

The strongly nationalistic countries of Ukraine and Georgia have followed the model of their former master, Russia, acknowledging COs officially, but in practice and through additional legislation restricting religious groups due to fears they might undermine the authority of the state. Ukraine, however, may soon end the draft as it draws closer to joining NATO. In Central Asian countries, COs have had the most difficult situations due to a variety of factors including significant Muslim populations, lack of legal institutions empowered to enforce existing

laws, and cultural prejudices against Christian groups.

The status of conscientious objectors is monitored throughout the world by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and such non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as War Resisters' International, Amnesty International, Keston Institute, and Norway's Forum 18 News Service. The information that follows concerning the current status of conscientious objectors in each former Soviet Bloc state reflects the work of human rights journalists, government publications, and NGOs and religious groups supportive of COs.

Albania

Albania does not recognize the right of conscientious objection to military service and makes no provisions for substitute service. It does exempt from military service those who pay the equivalent of \$4,000 (US), which is beyond the means of the vast majority of young men. In 1996 four Jehovah's Witnesses served four to six month prison terms for refusing military service.⁴

Armenia

Armenia's 1991 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations allows for implementing legislation for conscientious objection status and alternative service, but in practice, neither is permitted. Up to 1995 the military allowed some COs to perform non-combat duties, but that has become less frequent in recent years. Still, some Seventh-day Adventists have been granted the right to perform unarmed military service.⁵ When Armenia joined the Council of Europe (COE) in 2001 it agreed to provide for alternative service before the end of 2003, but the pending legislative draft calls for a punitive term of service (42 months, versus 18 for military service). The COE and Armenia disagree as to whether the government is obliged to release COs currently in prison in anticipation of a new law on conscription. As of December 2002, Armenia was holding 25 Jehovah's Witnesses in prison for refusing military service.⁶

Azerbaijan

In 1991, while still part of the Soviet Union, the Azerbaijani Parliament passed a law permitting alternative service specifically for religious reasons. But this law was never publicized, never implemented, and presumably no longer is applicable.⁷ The 1995 Constitution recognizes freedom of religion and the right to conscientious objection, but despite joining the

Council of Europe in January 2001, the government continues to place restrictions upon freedom of conscience and to deny CO status in practice. COE membership requires that CO alternative service legislation be passed by December 2003.⁸

Belarus

The 1994 Constitution makes provisions for alternative service for COs, but no implementing legislation has been passed. In some cases, military commanders have placed COs in construction battalions.⁹ In 2002 the UN's rapporteur for human rights pointed out the government's lack of recognition of CO status, but noted that a new draft law was in progress.¹⁰ The new 2003 Belarus law on religion is widely regarded as one of the most repressive in Europe.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

The 1996 Law on Defense allows for CO status on religious grounds. Applicants given CO standing are required to perform two years of unarmed military service.¹¹

Bulgaria

The 1991 Constitution and the 1998 Law for Alternative Service provide for CO status.¹² The 1998 law specifies alternative service of two years, more than twice the length of regular military service, and sets an annual quota for COs. Most imprisonment for refusal of unarmed military service involves Jehovah's Witnesses.¹³

Croatia

The 1990 Constitution provides for CO status on religious and moral grounds. Some COs have been taken to court for refusing service,¹⁴ but alternative service is an option and was recently reduced from 15 to 9 months, versus 6 months for regular military service.¹⁵ The European Bureau of Conscientious Objection considers Croatia and Slovenia the closest in the Balkans to European standards for treatment of COs.¹⁶

Czech Republic

Up to 1990 the state disallowed any right of conscientious objection. Nevertheless, informally, three years of service in subway construction or five years of work in coal mines were allowed to serve as substitutes for military service. As of 1989 approximately 50 Jehovah's Witnesses were in jail for refusing to bear arms. Following the collapse of the Communist regime in 1991, the government received 38,000 applications for CO status, most of which were granted. 1993 legislation continued provisions for CO status, but greatly tightened the process. Alternative service, when permitted, extends for 18 months, compared to 12 months for regular military service.¹⁷

Estonia

The Constitution and the 1994 Law on Military Service provide for CO status on religious and ethical grounds. The term for alternative service is 12 months, the same as for military duty.¹⁸

Georgia

The 1992 Law on Military Service includes a provision for non-military alternative service,¹⁹ but a 1997 law permitting alternative service was not implemented for lack of finances. Corruption contributes to inconsistent application of the laws and a weak legal system impairs legitimate challenges. Journalist George Geguchadze suggested in the European Bureau of Conscientious Objection newsletter that if the legal infrastructure were in place to implement alternative service, desertions would decrease.²⁰ In recent years authorities have avoided public CO protests by calling up few Jehovah's Witnesses, a practice that is bolstering the group's popularity among draft-age men.²¹

Hungary

Conscientious objection is not an issue in Hungary, particularly as the state moves closer to the EU and NATO.²² The former Communist government disallowed CO status, but informally since the 1960s, some religious COs were permitted to opt for unarmed military service, including Seventh-day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Nazarenes (not the U.S.-based church). At the same time, hundreds of religious COs served prison terms for refusing to perform unarmed military service. In the 1970s and '80s, Roman Catholic base communities advocated refusal of military service, with 30 members being imprisoned in 1979-89. In 1988 those imprisoned for refusing military service included 148 Jehovah's Witnesses, six Roman Catholics, and four objecting on non-religious grounds. The 1997 Civilian Service Law provides for CO status for religious and ethical reasons. Substitute service lasts for 15 months compared to nine months regular military service. Nine months of unarmed military service is also an option.²³

Kazakhstan

The government does not recognize the right of conscientious objection and makes no provision for substitute service. However, imprisonment of COs who are Jehovah's Witnesses ended in 1997 when the state ruled that all members of this religion were "persons in holy orders" and therefore exempt from service.²⁴

Kyrgyzia

While the Kyrgyz Constitution does not provide for CO status, the 1994 Law on Alternative Service does, if objection to service is based on religious grounds. 2001 legislation shortened alternative service from 36 to 18 months and regular military duty from 24 to 12 months.²⁵

The European Bureau of Conscientious Objection considers Croatia and Slovenia the closest in the Balkans to European standards for treatment of COs.

(continued on page 8)

Chaos reigns in [Russian] government policy towards conscientious objectors.

Latvia

Latvia passed a Law on Substitute Service in 1990 while it was still part of the Soviet Union, but this legislation does not appear to apply today. Amnesty International reported that a bill introducing a civilian alternative to military service was under consideration in 2001, but limited its scope to clergy or students preparing for ordination.²⁶ Seventh-day Adventists remain at odds with the government over their pacifist beliefs and objection to military service.

Lithuania

In theory, Lithuania's 1990 Law on Alternative Service appears to still be in effect, but practice is another matter. The 1990 law allows for CO status for members of "pacifist or religious organizations that forbid its members to bear arms." But the military insists that no such organizations exist in Lithuania. Very few citizens have applied for CO status since 1991. The 1992 Constitution also recognizes the right to conscientious objection, but again, implementation has not allowed for free exercise of this right.

Macedonia

Under the 1992 Defense Law, those who oppose bearing arms on religious grounds are permitted to perform unarmed military service for a period of 14 months.²⁷ Nevertheless, the country has come under scrutiny of the Macedonian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, which includes CO status among its concerns.²⁸

Moldova

The 1991 Alternative Service Act, passed while Moldova was still a part of the Soviet Union, appears still to be in force. It provides for substitute service on religious, pacifist, and political grounds. Many conscripts apply for and are permitted to perform substitute service for two years, twice the length of regular military duty.²⁹

Poland

Conscientious objection status, which has had legal recognition since 1988, presently is granted under provisions of the 1992 Law on Civilian Service. CO status is permitted on religious and moral grounds, but in practice, only about 60 percent of CO applicants are allowed to perform alternative service. Enrollment commissioners for the military find that defining the constitutional standard of "religious conviction" and "professed moral principles" is very difficult and leads to abuse. Therefore, authorities are reluctant to grant applications, according to scholar Paul Marshall.³⁰ A War Resisters International study notes that the "Roman Catholic Church, which is very influential in Poland, does not approve of conscientious objection and in 1993 Bishop Orszulik said that conscientious objection on

religious grounds was impossible and incompatible with Catholic beliefs. This attitude makes it very difficult for Roman Catholics to get CO status."³¹

Romania

The 1996 Law on the Preparation of the Population for Defense permits alternative service for conscientious objection exclusively on religious grounds. However, implementation was delayed for years, is punitive in length (24 months versus 12 months for military service), and strictly limits eligibility.³² Since 1990 some conscripts opposed to bearing arms on religious grounds have been permitted to serve 24 months in non-combat units of the armed forces. A network of NGOs established the Coalition for Alternative Service in 1998 to promote alternative service for COs.³³ According to Amnesty International's 2002 report, COs are still threatened with imprisonment. Of the 16 Jehovah's Witnesses imprisoned for refusing to bear arms as of 2001, 13 have had their sentences overturned in court. A number of COs have appeals pending before the European Court of Human Rights.³⁴

Russia

At present, chaos reigns in government policy towards conscientious objectors. The 1993 Constitution provides for "alternative civil service" for COs. However, most courts have tried and sentenced objectors to prison in the absence of consistent implementing legislation. On the other hand, War Resisters' International reports that "some individual judges have decided to use the provisions of the constitution directly and dismiss criminal charges brought against COs." In 1996 the Russian Supreme Court ruled that "refusal to perform military service for religious convictions does not constitute a crime." But also in the 1990s lower courts sentenced at least 700 COs to two years' imprisonment for refusal to bear arms. Most COs come from large cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg where NGOs such as Soldiers' Mothers and the Antimilitaristic Radical Association counsel conscripts and offer legal support in a climate of growing weariness of the war in Chechnya. WRI reports that in some cases, COs have been permitted to serve in unarmed military units even though, in the absence of implementing legislation, this is not an actual right. COs assigned to construction battalions find themselves serving alternative service under especially brutal conditions in units often led by persons with criminal records.³⁵

Legislation signed by President Putin in July 2002 makes provisions for alternative service. However, built-in military advantages, such as unarmed service in military forces being shorter than civilian alternative service, has led human rights groups to dub the legislation "the law on alternative slavery."³⁶ The Labor Ministry currently is gathering lists of alternative service work assignments from other government ministries in anticipation of the law going into effect 1 January 2004.³⁷ In response to growing antipathy toward military service, authorities have begun to include Orthodox priests on local

draft boards because the Russian Orthodox faith supports military service.³⁸ On the other hand, clergy of "traditional" religions (Orthodoxy, Judaism, Buddhism, and Islam) are exempt from military service.³⁹

Slovak Republic

The 1992 Constitution grants the right of conscientious objection and the 1995 Civilian Service Act provides for CO status on religious and moral grounds. Substitute service, which at 24 months is double the length of military service, may be performed in civilian organizations or in the military, although the choice is not up to the individual CO.

Slovenia

The 1992 Constitution and the 1995 Military Service Law provide for conscientious objection in keeping with general European practice. CO status is granted on the basis of religious, philosophical, humanitarian, and ethical beliefs. Substitute service of seven months is the same as for military service.

Tajikistan

The government makes no provision for either conscientious objector status or substitute service. Following independence in 1991, civil war led to large-scale draft evasion and desertion. Many young men seek work abroad to avoid conscription, although it is unclear how many do so as conscientious objectors.⁴⁰

Turkmenistan

Despite its OSCE membership, Turkmenistan requires military service of all able-bodied men and refusal constitutes a criminal offense. No possibility of alternative civilian service exists.⁴¹ Two Jehovah's Witnesses currently are imprisoned for conscientious objection and refusal to swear oaths of allegiance to the president. Amnesty International reported in 2002 that an 18-year-old Baptist, Dmitry Melnichenko, had been tortured for his refusal to bear arms. After international pressure was brought to bear, he eventually was allowed to serve in a medical unit.⁴²

Ukraine

While the 1996 Constitution makes provision for non-military service for COs, the 1992 Alternative (Non-Military) Service Act recognizes only religious grounds for granting CO status. A further restriction permits the granting of CO status only to members of faiths that are officially registered with the government and whose creeds explicitly prohibit bearing arms.⁴³ Also, the Orthodox Church's support for military service in effect precludes CO status for most Orthodox. The length of substitute service, when permitted, is 36 months, twice the term of military service. Jehovah's Witnesses, who refuse unarmed service as well as military service, often receive convictions for their refusal to bear arms, for example, 41 between 1992 and 1994.⁴⁴ The government

has expressed a commitment to achieving European and international standards on protection of the rights of conscientious objectors, but in practice still discriminates against non-religious objectors.⁴⁵

Uzbekistan

The 1994 Constitution makes a theoretical concession to conscientious objectors, but the 1992 Law on Alternative Services makes it very difficult to obtain CO status. Only "members of religious groups that forbid their members to bear arms" are permitted to perform substitute service. Alternative service, when permitted, runs for two years and, oddly enough, requires two months of basic military training, including instruction in the use of weapons.⁴⁶ The payment of bribes is widespread to avoid military service, and for larger sums, alternative service as well.⁴⁷

Yugoslavia

The 1992 Constitution provides for CO status and substitute service, but in practice the only CO option has been non-combat service within the military. The 1994 Army Law specifies religion and "other reasons for conscience" as the grounds for permitting non-combat service, which lasts for 24 months, twice the length of regular military duty. Women in Black, a Belgrade peace group, supports conscientious objectors and publishes the magazine *Objection*. In 2001 Amnesty International reported that a law had passed providing immunity to conscientious objectors who had fled the wars of 1992-2000. In June 2001 a petition with 30,000 names advocated an option of civilian alternative service. Compulsory service has been reduced to nine months and alternative service in non-combatant sections of the military has been reduced to 13 months, but these changes still do not meet OSCE Helsinki standards.⁴⁸ War Resisters' International has criticized the Yugoslav government for refusing to provide a genuine alternative service option. It is unclear how many objectors who fled to Hungary will return to Serbia under the amnesty provision since they will likely face hostility from individuals who remained during the war.⁴⁹ ♦

**[In Ukraine]
the Orthodox
Church's
support for
military service
in effect
precludes CO
status for most
Orthodox.**

Katy Morrow Stigers, who earned a B.A. in political science at King College, Bristol, TN, served as an intern in fall 2002 in the Global Center, Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, Birmingham, AL.

Mark R. Elliott is director of the Global Center, Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, and editor of the East-West Church and Ministry Report.

Source Abbreviations and Web Sites

AI	Amnesty International 2002 Annual Report, http://web.amnesty.org/web/ar2002.nsf/eur
ARIRF	Annual Report on International Religious Freedom, http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2001/index.htm
FR	For the Record 2001: The United Nations Human Rights System, Vol. 5, http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2001/index.htm
KNS	Keston News Service
The Right	<i>The Right to Refuse to Kill</i> , 2 January 2001, http://teleline.terra.es/personal/beoc.ebco
WRI, Refusing	War Resisters' International, <i>Refusing to Bear Arms: A Worldwide Survey of Conscription and Conscientious Objection to Military Service</i> , Conscription and Conscientious Objection Documentation Project, 1998-2001, http://wri-irg.org/en/index/html (Access to the full English edition is restricted to readers who apply for a password.)

(continued on page 10)

Sources:

1. Karen S. Lord, "What, Exactly, IS Religious Freedom," *East-West Church and Ministry Report* 6 (Summer 1998), 15-16.
2. "Jehovah's Witnesses Beliefs—Role in Society: Neutrality," <http://www.jw-media.org/beliefs/society.htm>.
3. Bojan Aleksov, "Serbian Deserters in Hungary Face a New Dilemma," *The Right*.
4. WRI, *Refusing*.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Silke Makowski, "An Unrecognized Human Right: Conscientious Objection in the Caucasus and Central Asia," *The Broken Rifle* No. 56 (November 2002), 6; WRI, "Armenia: Conscientious Objector Artur Grigoryan Sentenced to 2-1/2 Years in Prison," ARM 12801-051202, 05/12/02; "Armenia," 2001 ARIRF; Felix Corley, "Armenia: Prime Minister Widens Council of Europe Defiance," KNS, 25 September 2002.
7. WRI, *Refusing*.
8. Makowski, 6.
9. *Ibid.*
10. "Belarus," 2002 ARIRF; "Belarus," FR.
11. WRI, *Refusing*.
12. Paul Marshall, *Religious Freedom in the World* (Nashville, TN: Freedom House, 2000), 89.
13. *Ibid.*, 90; "Bulgaria," 2002 ARIRF.
14. WRI, *Refusing*.
15. Drazen Glavas to author, 19 December 2002.
16. EBCO Seminar in Belgrade, 14-16 September 2001.
17. WRI, *Refusing*.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. George Geguchadze, "What is Going On? Georgia," *The Right*.
21. Makowski, 6.
22. "Hungary," 2002 ARIRF; Marshall, *Religious Freedom*, 154; Bojan Alexsov, "Serbian Deserters in Hungary Face New Dilemma," *The Right*.
23. WRI, *Refusing*.
24. Makowski, 7.
25. *Ibid.*; WRI, *Refusing*.
26. "Latvia," AI; WRI, *Refusing*.
27. "Macedonia," FR.
28. WRI, *Refusing*.
29. *Ibid.*
30. Marshall, *Religious Freedom*, 254.
31. WRI, *Refusing*.
32. "Romania," 2002 ARIRF.
33. WRI, *Refusing*.
34. "Romania," AI.
35. WRI, *Refusing*.
36. Makowski, 6.
37. Simon Saradzhyan, "Alternative Service Wish List Drawn Up," *Moscow Times*, 2 December 2002.
38. Maria Kulagina, "Nearly Ten Percent of Youth Conscientious Objectors," *Moskovskaia pravda*, 31 October 2002, Russia Religion News, <http://www.stetson.edu/~psteeves/relnews/0210d.html>.
39. Nadezhda Kevorkova, "Military Deferment for Russian Clergy," *Gazeta*, 29 January 2003, *Ibid.*
40. Makowski, 7.
41. "Turkmenistan," 2002 ARIRF.
42. "Turkmenistan," AI; Felix Corley, "Turkmenistan: New Deadline for Conscripted Baptist," KNS, 7 June 2001.
43. "CO Case in Ukraine," *The Right*.
44. WRI, *Refusing*.
45. Marshall, *Religious Freedom*, 308. The Amnesty International article which Marshall cites, "Out of the Margins: the Right to Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Europe" ([http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/EUR010021997?OpenDocument&of=COUNTRIES\(UKRAINE\)](http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/EUR010021997?OpenDocument&of=COUNTRIES(UKRAINE))), is a comprehensive overview through 1997 of European government policies on CO.
46. WRI, *Refusing*.
47. Makowski, 7.
48. "Federal Republic of Yugoslavia," AI.
49. Igor Seke, "Yugoslavia: New Law, But Nothing's New," *The Broken Rifle* No. 55 (May 2002), 3-4.

Organizations Supporting Conscientious Objectors

European Bureau for Conscientious Objection (EBCO)

Calàbria 120, Pl. Baixa, E-08015 Barcelona, Spain
Tel: 34-93-425-40-64; fax: 34-93-423-44-98
E-mail: beoc.ebco@suport.org; ebcobrussels@ifias.net
Web site: <http://www.terra.es/personal/beoc.ebco>

Amnesty International

Aldijana Sisic, Campaign Coordinator
Europe Regional Programme, Amnesty International
International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London
WC1X8DJ, United Kingdom
Tel: 44-207-413-5970; fax: 44-207-956-1157
E-mail: asisic@amnesty.org
Web site: <http://www.amnesty.org>

War Resisters' International (WRI)

Bart Horeman, Concodoc Project Coordinator
5 Caledonian Rd., London N19DX, United Kingdom
Tel: 31-30-2714376; fax: 31-30-2714759
E-mail: barthor@antenna.nl
Web site: <http://www.wri-irg.org>

Protestant Association for the Care of Conscientious Objectors (EAK)

Guenter Knebel, Secretary of the National Board
Carl-Schurz-Str. 17, D-28209 Bremen, Germany
Tel: 49-421-34-40-37; fax: 49-421-349-19-61
E-mail: eak-brd@t-online.de
Web site: <http://www.ekd.de/eak>

The Polish Light-Life Movement: Another Perspective

Zygmunt P. Karel

Editor's note: Following the publication of "The Polish Light-Life Movement and the Roman Catholic Church" by Pawel Zalecki, East-West Church & Ministry Report 11 (Winter 2003), 9-10, the Report received a response and critique of the movement by a leading Polish Protestant educator, which is published below.

In the last two decades of the twentieth century the Roman Catholic Church made a vital contribution to the national history of Poland. Within the Catholic Church one of the most striking phenomena of the 1980s and 90s was the Light-Life Movement. Also called the Oasis Movement, as early as 1973 it set as goals for its followers "to participate in individual evangelism or evangelistic services concluding with a decision to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and to follow the path of Christ's disciples."

Its discipleship program has as its chief objective an encounter with the Christ present in the Scriptures (Level I), followed by a liturgical and sacramental initiation leading a person to an internal liberation from the old nature (Level II). A significant characteristic of the Movement is its focus on the Virgin Mary. "Had it not been for the Movement, I would now be a lost man, like many of my peers," says Dr. Jacek Zielinski, a professor of philosophy at the University of Wroclaw and the Biblical Theological Seminary, Wroclaw. Dr. Zielinski is an example of the Movement's positive influence, including its fight against addictions which devastate human dignity.

From the perspective of the Catholic Church, numerous groups within the Movement "got out of control." Personally, I witnessed two such instances: in the 1980s, when church hierarchs forced the dissolution of a dynamic group of several thousand students meeting at the Dominican Church in Cracow, and in the 1990s, when a group of several

hundred Oasis Movement young people in Wroclaw met the same fate. These were just two of many instances of Light-Life fellowships suppressed by the Polish Catholic Church in the 1980s and 90s.

The turning point in the development of the Oasis Movement occurred in 1979 with the ascendancy of Pope John Paul II (Cardinal Karol Wojtyla) to the papacy and with the departure from Poland of Father Franciszek Blachnicki. Both men had been protectors and promoters of the Movement. The departure of these two leading proponents of Oasis spelled trouble as Oasis no longer could resist the strong pressure of conservative factions within the Polish Church. Many of its leaders, accused of Protestant sympathies, were faced with the demand of "recatholicization." This resulted in the exodus of numerous influential persons from the Movement and the hierarchy's assertion of strict control over Oasis fellowships. Presently, Light-Life young people who object to "recatholicization" are forming independent charismatic communities or are joining established charismatic or, to a lesser extent, non-charismatic evangelical churches.

Toward the end of the twentieth century the dynamism of the Light-Life Movement began to fade. It seems that this Movement, historically so beneficial to Polish youth, is now past its prime. ♦

Oasis leaders, accused of Protestant sympathies, were faced with the demand of "recatholicization."

Zygmunt P. Karel is president of Biblical Theological Seminary, Wroclaw, Poland.

The Light-Life/Oasis Movement, 1993-2002

Year	Total Number of Participants	Number of groups	Number of priests	Percentage of Male Participants
1993	1,936	25	22	25.4
1994	1,799	24	22	31
1995	2,035	23	21	21
1996	2,202	32	27	27
1997	2,065	32	31	27
1998	1,999	28	25	25.3
1999	2,146	24	24	31
2000	2,074	33	30	41
2001	2,005	29	19	31
2002	2,191	30	28	34

Source: Light-Life Movement Web site: <http://www.oaza.org.pl/polski/>.

Made in America: Or the Self-Evident Truth That Russians Aren't Savages

Vladimir Solodovnikov

Editor's Note: The East-West Church and Ministry Report does not endorse certain opinions expressed in Dr. Solodovnikov's article and sadly regrets the anger the author appears to harbor toward missionaries in particular. Nevertheless, since his sentiments are far from unique, it behooves those from the West involved in ministry in former Soviet-Bloc states to, at the very least, be aware of such attitudes and to prayerfully consider what portion of such a critique merits a change in Western attitudes and actions. In the accompanying article, attorney Katya Smyslova provides a helpful corrective to some of the charges leveled by Professor Solodovnikov. The editor welcomes additional reader responses for future publication.

More than one laudatory article about the positive service of Americans has appeared in our Christian publications. But enthusiastic praise is not able to overshadow some negative sides of their presence in Russia. Transoceanic friends—with the very rare exception!—willingly or unwillingly, but in both cases methodically, use precisely the American model of Christian spiritual work, American thinking, and the American way of life.

It is unbelievable, but a fact, that the overwhelming majority of American workers in Russia clearly have not troubled themselves with prior deep study of the history, culture, and traditions of our country. They desperately like to use stereotypes developed in the United States regarding Russia: Stereotype 1: "Russia is a godless country"; Stereotype 2: "Russia is an Orthodox country"; and Stereotype 3: "Russia is a savage country and Russians are some kind of savages, having devoured Captain Cook."

Stereotype 1: Russia is Godless

It is absolutely clear that these stereotypes are lies. Russia is not at all "godless," but rather, a spiritually problematic country. (Try to name a country where there are no spiritual problems!) One thousand years have passed since Rus' was baptized. The Russian land gave the world millions of heroes and martyrs of the Christian faith and she bore talented theologians and Christian philosophers. Russian Christianity didn't die in the gears of the millstones of Stalin's repressions, didn't turn into dust in the labor camps, but was strengthened by the blood of the confessors and witnesses of Christ.

Stereotype 2: Russia is Orthodox

Russia is not "Orthodox," but a multiconfessional country. The Russian Middle Ages were represented by pre-Reformation Christian movements of "Strigolniks" and Immaterialists. In a certain sense, the genesis of Russian Protestantism came both from within so-called spiritual Christianity and even from Old Believers. Three powerful streams—the

"Stundists" of New Russia and South Ukraine, Baptists of the Caucasus, and "Pashkovites" of St. Petersburg—began the Evangelical Christian-Baptist brotherhood, which extends back already more than 130 years.

Stereotype 3: Russia is Savage

Many Americans develop a stereotype about Russian savagery and supposedly undeveloped intellect on the basis that the majority of us have material problems. When someone bravely tries to disagree with overseas coworkers they smugly throw out, "If you are so smart, then why are you so poor?" Among American Christians the opinion is widespread that material problems are a sign that God has turned away from man.

The real misfortune of our brothers from America is their illusion of the superiority of everything American. Being deceived, they try to instill in us this same illusion, provoking—especially in weak souls—an inferiority complex. They impose upon Russian believers the notion that American Christianity is better, American evangelism is better, American theology is better, American religious services are better, and American Christian education is better. From this "logically" follows the "necessity" of bowing to America, which some unstable brothers and sisters are already practicing in Russia.

It is possible to doubt that American evangelism in particular is best. I have seen bewildered passersby on Moscow streets avoid American missionaries who were obtrusively offering to explain to them the "Four Spiritual Laws" on the run and at the same time. . . [inviting them] to try on sunglasses. But we in Russia don't speak about God hastily in passing "in a couple of words." Our interest in what is holy is not aroused by the distribution of sunglasses or chewing gum.

I categorically disagree that American theology is better, if only because its introduction into Russian Baptist churches brought some problems. I am talking about the American version of Calvinism and its doctrine of "eternal security" or, more exactly, eternal

(continued on page 14)

The desire of American brothers to reduce all the fullness of Christian spiritual work to a set of diagrams and a collection of little toy drawings puts any God-fearing and thoughtful Christian in Russia on guard. Their persistent urge is to topically organize the Bible.

Welcome to Russia: In Response to Vladimir Solodovnikov

Ekaterina Smyslova

Russians and Americans are very different, but this is good. Differences attract each other. This is why, for example, Russians read articles and watch television programs about Americans with great interest. Unfortunately, the media often give a distorted and biased impression of foreign countries. It would be naive to believe that we can understand each other's culture and traditions only from observation from afar. Because of our different environments we need to be immersed into the society of the other if we are to gain real understanding.

I remember when Gorbachev opened Russia's doors to foreign Christians in 1989-1992, for many Westerners it was their first introduction to Russian culture, history, and traditions. At that point Christians were coming together to celebrate our unity in Jesus, regardless of our differences. Many from the West were surprised when Russian brothers and sisters in Christ embraced them with genuine love and opened their hearts to them in unconditional acceptance. Russian people frequently worked hard—and still work hard—to ensure the comfort and safety of Americans in the uncertain environment of a transitional society.

East-West Cultural Distinctives

So why do we now face a certain coolness between many Russian and American Christians? Where does the disappointment come from? Why, since we tried to offer each other our best, do we now sometimes face mutual misunderstandings? The problem may stem from the very different bases for our civilizations: Western and Eastern Christianity. American society defends the rights and freedoms of every individual as a sacred responsibility. Americans consider the words private and privacy to be very important. They greatly value their privacy and often seem reluctant to share serious problems for fear of being perceived as unsuccessful or not in control. For Americans, material welfare appears to be the measure of value.

In contrast, Russians for centuries have had the greatest respect for those willing to suffer humiliation and face sacrifice for the benefit of the community. Profit seeking has been considered one of the most abominable human qualities. Russians believe the person intent on material gain is capable of any crime. This is why common Russians treat wealthy people with great suspicion and disrespect. In addition, Russians see the wealthy as unrestrained by any moral or legal limitations.

To be respected in Russia one should live in an average apartment, be satisfied with a modest income, dispense with ambitious plans for material accumulation, work honestly, never cheat, and be hospitable and friendly. Russians typically are not driven to seek success in the Western, economic sense of the word. Whereas most Americans are pragmatic and reserved, Russians follow their heart and their mood. Relationships are more important for them than results. Russians never plan life far ahead because of the instability of the social, political, and legal environment and the absence of any realistic means of protecting oneself from harm's way. An old Russian proverb that people still affirm says, "Do not swear off begging and imprisonment."

Those who live in a country that values the rule of the law or in a traditional, tribal society can set a strategy and a daily schedule for their lives. But Russians must trust God for every minute of life because nothing is certain. Russians must know their reason for living and must adapt their behavior, strategy, and methods to the reality of each new day. Russian believers in particular must be able to face disparagement, losses, and unjust accusations with deep trust in God, seeking ways to turn everything to His glory. This is the only way to be successful in the missionary field in Russia and the only way to enjoy life in Russia.

The Soviet Assault on Faith

It was sad for me to read the article, "Made in America," written by Dr. Vladimir Solodovnikov. Being an intellectual and acting as a voice for the historic Russian Protestant community, he shares his pain with his readers. The lack of cultural sensitivity of foreign missionaries, sad to say, has damaged the reputation of the Protestant church in Russia in general and that is a pity. But I cannot agree with Dr. Solodovnikov's statement that Russia is a Christian country. Russia is not godless, but Soviet Russia was. Ninety-nine percent of current adults did not hear about Jesus Christ in their childhood. For years and years the Communist Party worked to destroy any hint of Christianity in people's traditions, culture, and literature, replacing it with a so-called Proletarian culture. Three generations of Russians were raised in a godless society. Comparing Russian immigrants in the U.S. who arrived there in the first part of the twentieth century with those who arrived in the 1990s, one discovers they are people from two

(continued on page 15)

Whereas most Americans are pragmatic and reserved, Russians follow their heart and their mood. Relationships are more important for them than results. Russians never plan life far ahead because of the instability of the social, political, and legal environment.

Ekaterina Smyslova is president of Esther Legal Center, Moscow, and teaches at the Russian-American Christian University, Moscow.

(Solodovnikov, continued from page 12)

Before coming to Russia, seriously study her past and present and the mentality and distinctive cultural features of the population. It is important to get acquainted more deeply, and not superficially, with the history of Russian Christianity.

impunity. Such preaching occurs with the simultaneous conviction that we Russian Baptists, they say, do not have our own theology. Regretfully, some students of Russian Evangelical Christian-Baptist educational institutions believe this. But in reality we have the brilliant theology of Ivan Veniaminovich Kargel and the theological works of Vasily Gurevich Pavlov, Ivan Stepanovich Prokhanov, and others. Russian Evangelical-Baptist theology may need future development, but this in no way signifies there is none at all. Nevertheless, the shelves of our Christian stores are filled with a mass of translated American books, the theology of which, in principle, is doubtful, or even openly harmful.

Russian Critique of American Faith: Overly Simplistic and Overly Familiar

The desire of American brothers to reduce all the fullness of Christian spiritual work to a set of diagrams and a collection of little toy drawings puts any God-fearing and thoughtful Christian in Russia on guard. Their persistent urge is to topically organize the Bible. And spreading the Good News about Christ in a pair of phrases with the help of "Four Spiritual Laws" is announced as "the great discovery of the 20th century." Long before, our fellow countrymen had been studying the problem of turning souls to Christ clearly, deeply, and seriously. And the so-called "Four Spiritual Laws" look pale against the works of N.O. Lossky or N.A. Berdyaev.

The overly familiar attitude of some Americans toward God, particularly noticeable in their evangelistic literature, also saddens. And missionary "standards" of prayer, in which reverence is completely absent, seem utterly simplistic. For some Americans, "prayer is a conversation with God" approximately of this type: "Hello, God! It's me—Bill. Thank you for all Your good deeds. You see, I again have such-and-such problems. You know them. If it will be according to Your will, solve them, but I don't have time. By the way, You are mine. Amen." Of course this is hyperbole. But such are examples of prayers printed in evangelistic tracts.

The process of praying with reflection typically has been a Russian spiritual practice; for centuries our prayer has been called *intellectual activity*. There never was even a hint of undue familiarity toward God in it. There was and is only true love and an attitude of respectful trepidation toward Christ the Savior.

American Evangelical and Russian Communist Campaigns

I have been astounded by the unbelievable similarity of the service of Americans in Russia with the functioning of the All-Union Leninist League of Young Communists (Komsomol). Do you want examples? There are plenty! First, there is a mania for planning, working out all kinds of "strategies" and "vision," and also cheerful reports. The office of any American mission, at least in Moscow, is absolutely

an exact tracing from the Komsomol of Brezhnev times.

Second, there is a rampant campaign mindset or maniacal passion toward the organization of so-called "mass activities": evangelization campaigns, conferences, rallies, and so forth. If at such activities you close your eyes and dismiss the Christian lexicon of the speaker, you will have the complete impression that you have found yourself in a Komsomol meeting or even at a party management meeting somewhere in the 1970s.

Third, consider the names of various American missionary projects. Just look, for example, at the name of the project, "By the Year 2000—2000 New Churches!" In 1976-77 the Central Committee of the Komsomol offered Soviet youth a socialistic competition under the motto, "By the 60th Year of the Great October [Revolution]—60 Over-Achieving Shifts!"

So, what can our American friends who wish to accomplish spiritual work in modern Russia do? First, make sure that good intentions are a call from God. Second, before coming to Russia, develop an authentic and not a manufactured love for the Russian people. It also wouldn't be bad to love the other numerous peoples of our country whom Americans, not troubling themselves with excessive thinking, group together as "Russians."

To Reach Russia, Study Russia

Third, before coming to Russia, seriously study her past and present and the mentality and distinctive cultural features of the population. It is important to get acquainted more deeply, and not superficially, with the history of Russian Christianity, and in particular, with Evangelical Christians-Baptists. For this, special missionary courses for Americans should be held in the United States or in Russia. In my view, offering such courses could be a new and highly effective cooperative project for believers of the two countries. Of course, this is if Russian teachers are allowed to participate. Who else should teach the fundamentals of Russian culture, traditions, and mentality? It would also be in no small measure strange if all the teachers were Americans themselves, albeit even the most famous Russian "specialists."

And still more, for truly blessed service in Russia, an American should become one of us. Is it really possible for a foreigner? Yes. And concerning this, there is a marvelous historical example: the Empress Catherine II. Being a pure-blooded German, she so immersed herself in her adopted culture that people considered her Russian.

I think this article is still mostly intended for our American friends. However, it is unlikely that they will read it through to the end. Most likely, they will limit themselves to a brief translation and, like always, in search of the "basic ideas," will dismiss the central idea, considering it "inconsequential."◆

Vladimir Solodovnikov holds a doctorate (candidate) degree in history and teaches at the Russian-American Christian University, Moscow.

Edited excerpt reprinted with permission from Slovo very [Word of Faith], Omsk, Siberia, no. 1 (2002): 25-30. Translated by Susan Clark.

(Smyslova, continued from page 13)

different civilizations: Christian and godless.

Russian Christians remember that martyrs died for Jesus in Soviet times and that others quietly cherished seeds of faith, unknown to the public. All sources of information on Christianity, such as Russian religious philosophy, were hidden from the public in Soviet times. The authorities suppressed the spiritual content of articles, poems, and novels by famous Russian writers such as Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Nikolai Gogol, Apollon Maikov, and others. Only after 1989 did Russian people gain access to the sources of native Christian spirituality. Only in the 1990s was the Evangelical community free to bring the news about Jesus to the wider public.

Positive East-West Collaboration

The Russian Evangelical community is the product of historic Russian Christian culture. Evangelicals use music, poems, and art produced by Russian Orthodox Christians and folk songs in their outreach to other Russians. Evangelicals are the bridge between the simplest and the highest levels of Russian Christian spirituality. Working in partnership with American brothers and sisters, Russian Evangelicals can be extremely productive. My Baptist church has been visited by many groups of American Christians who came to teach us and to take part in our projects. Each time was heart-warming and heart melting for our guests. They returned home spiritually renewed because they discovered a very new level of relationship with God. I saw many tears in their eyes as they shared that their life would never be the same after their time in

Russia. They brought us methods, but we taught them the art of enjoying God's love. Yes, we are different, but we can serve each other.

Working as a lawyer for many American missions and churches, I have been fortunate to see many positive examples of the highly productive work of foreign Christian organizations in Russia. In 1999 I was invited to speak at a conference in Texas at Abeline Christian University for Church of Christ missionaries in Russia. I was greatly amazed by the Abilene professors' depth of comprehension of the roots of Russian culture and traditions. They were able to encourage missionaries "to plant healthy pines in Siberia instead of banana trees." Even banana trees can bear fruit in Siberia if they are kept in expensive hothouses, but they will perish without intensive care and large investments. I am not sure about other universities, but I can recommend to any mission planning to work in Russia to go to ACU to discover the secrets of the Russian soul. With such an appreciation for the Russian soul, one will then understand why such a pamphlet as the "Four Spiritual Laws" is so offensive.

I believe we can and will serve each other. And we should and can learn from each other. I know how difficult it is for East and West to be mutually sensitive, but we should try for Jesus' sake, who can be greatly glorified through our lives. My favorite Christian saying is: "God never calls the equipped, but He always equips the Called." If one has been called by the Lord to the mission field, ample sources of information are available that will equip one for a fruitful ministry. But one has to search for them. An amazing blessing awaits missionaries to Russia who not only teach, but learn from, those to whom they minister. Enjoying one's life with Jesus in any environment will be a rich reward. ♦

Russia's Demographic Decline

(continued from page 16)

Thus, while the ethnic situation in Russia as a whole creates grounds for concern, that in the Far East suggests the potential for conflict that could involve another nuclear-armed state—perhaps if harassment or ill-treatment of Chinese immigrants or migrants spurs Beijing to take action. That said, the professed desire of Russian

officials to build a civic society based on nationalism, not ethnicity, provides grounds for some optimism. ♦

Edited excerpt reprinted with author's permission from Assessing Russia's Decline: Trends and Implications for the United States and the U.S. Air Force, ed. by Olga Oliker and Tanya Charlick-Paley. Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2002. Available on the Internet at www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR122.

Murray Feshbach, former branch chief of the U.S. Bureau of the Census and research professor at Georgetown University, is a senior scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars, Washington, DC. He is the author of *Ecological Disaster: Cleaning Up the Hidden Legacy of the Soviet Regime* (1995).

Sources:

1. This section draws heavily on the excellent report on Russian demographics by Julie DaVanzo and Clifford Grammich: *Dire Demographics: Population Trends in the Russian Federation* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2001). The authors provide a wealth of information and readers are advised to consult their report.
2. "Russian Population Continues to Decline," *RFE/RL Newslines*, 5 (No.158, Part I), 21 August 2001; Nail' Gaftulin, "Yet Another Crisis—a Demographic One" (in Russian), *Krasnaya zvezda*, 5 June 2000, Internet edition, www.redstar.ru; Alla Astakhova, "Scenarios of Extinction" (in Russian), *Segodnya*, 12 September 2000, Internet edition, www.segodnya.ru/w3s.nsf/Contents/2000_203_news_text_astabova1.html.
3. "Russia Publishes Population Figures," Astakhova, "Scenarios."
4. Theodore Gerber, "Russia's Population Crisis: The Migration Dimension," PONARS, 2000.
5. DaVanzo and Grammich, *Dire Demographics*; Paul Goble, "Russian Presence in Former Republics Declines," *RFE/RL Newslines Endnote* 5 (No.149, Part I), 8 August 2001; Mikhail Tul'skiy, "The True Face of the Demographic Catastrophe," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 19 July 2001.
6. DaVanzo and Grammich, *Dire Demographics*, 25.
7. *Ibid.*, 50-51.
8. *Ibid.*, 71-74.
9. "Russia's Dwindling Population Ensures Rigid Foreign Policy," 13 April 2000, Stratfor.com E-mail publication.
10. DaVanzo and Grammich, *Dire Demographics*, 71-74.
11. *Ibid.*, 62.
12. "Mortality Rates for Working-Age Males 'Weak Link' in Russia's Demographic Picture," *RFE/RL Newslines* 5 (No. 207, Part I), 31 October 2001.
13. DaVanzo and Grammich, *Dire Demographics*, pp. 51-55.
14. *Ibid.*, 55-56.
15. Paul Goble, "Three Million Young Russians Addicted to Drugs," *RFE/RL Newslines* 4 (No.146, Part I), 1 August 2000; "Putin Says Drug Problem Threatens Russian National Security," *RFE/RL Newslines* 5 (No.185, Part I), 1 October 2001.
16. Deputies to Russia's parliament, the Duma, have openly made antisemitic remarks, as did Krasnodar Province Governor Nikolai Kondratenko. Human Rights Watch has accused Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov of "silently endorsing" police violence against ethnic minorities. See Human Rights Watch, *World Report 1999 and World Report 2000*.
17. "Human Rights Activists Condemn 'Wave of Racism in Russia,'" *RFE/RL Newslines* 5 (No. 217, Part I), 15 November 2001.
18. "Council of Europe Says Racism Widespread in Russia," *RFE/RL Newslines* 5 (No. 216, Part I), 14 November 2001.
19. John Daniszewski, "Racism Rears Up in Russia," *Los Angeles Times*, 14 June 2001.
20. Sabrina Tavernise, "Bomb Attack Shows that Russia Hasn't Rooted Out Anti-Semitism," *New York Times*, 1 June 2002.
21. Mikhail Alexseev, "The Chinese Are Coming: Public Opinion and Threat Perception in the Russian Far East," PONARS, 2001.

Russia's Demographic Decline

Murray Feshbach

Demographics

Russia is facing a growing public health crisis and a series of critical demographic challenges.¹ Over the past nine years Russia's population has shrunk by over three million.² Population forecasts are even grimmer. Russia's population today can be estimated at about 144 million, while population projections for the Russian Federation in 2015 range from an optimistic assessment of 147.2 million to around 130 million.³ By 2050, the Russian Federation could have a population as low as 80 million.

In the early 1990s immigration from other post-Soviet states helped moderate the decline caused by dropping birth and increasing death rates. The rates of immigrants arriving from neighboring states rose steadily until 1994, and then remained at a lower but steady and positive rate until recently.⁴ In the last year or two, however, immigration into Russia has dropped off.⁵

The fact of population decline is not nearly as disturbing as its components. Russia's fertility rates (on average, 1.2 children per woman per lifetime), while among the lowest in the world, are not dissimilar from fertility rates in Spain or Italy. Moreover, Russia's staggering abortion rate—at 70 percent of pregnancies, one of the highest in the world—has been declining recently because of the greater availability of birth control.⁶

The declining birth rate must be considered in conjunction with an increasing death rate and the fact that the death rate has climbed disproportionately for working-age men. If in the 1960s Soviet medicine helped attain life expectancies comparable to Western levels, the situation today suggests a frightening reversal of progress. From a statistical perspective, Russian men born in 2000 can expect to live to be 58.9 years old. Women born that same year can expect to live to be 72.⁷

One aspect of these demographic trends is that Russia will see an increasing "graying" of its population in coming years, with steadily declining numbers of young people of working age generally and of men of military age in particular.⁸ The Russian Federation's Security Council projects that the number of people eligible for each year's military service call-up will drop nearly by half from 850,000 in 2000 to 450,000 in 2015.⁹ Rather, if trends continue, more and more of the population will be made up of female elderly.¹⁰

Disease and illness are two more key components of what has been referred to as Russia's demographic crisis. Increasing poverty is

also a contributing factor. Many people cannot afford medical care, which was available at little or no cost throughout Soviet times.¹¹ Russia's medical system is not capable of handling high rates of disease effectively, yet it is repeatedly faced with the threat of an epidemic. For instance, in October 2001, First Deputy Health Minister Genadii Onishchenko reported that Russia had serious outbreaks of viral hepatitis.¹² Rising rates of tuberculosis are another indicator of the decline of Russia's health-care capacity. Tuberculosis is of particular concern in Russia's prison system. One million of Russia's 145 million population is incarcerated. Nearly one in ten prisoners is infected with tuberculosis, 20 percent of them suffering from a multidrug-resistant strain.¹³

Also of concern is the rising rate of HIV infection, particularly because Russian hospitals tend to lack modern AIDS drugs and equipment for treating AIDS patients. Although Russia reported fewer than 1,000 AIDS deaths in 1999, a high underreporting rate can be assumed. Intravenous drug use is believed to be a decisive factor in the spread of HIV in Russia.¹⁴ Indeed, drug abuse and addiction are yet another growing health challenge for Russia. In September 2001, President Putin described Russia's drug problem as sufficiently serious to threaten the country's national security. Some 20 percent of Russian conscripts admit to having used drugs, while government estimates suggest that some 80 percent of teenagers have experimented with illegal substances.¹⁵

Ethnicity and Racism

The scapegoating of minority groups that often accompanies economic and political turmoil has been a consistent, if difficult to measure, aspect of life in Russia since independence. Ethnically biased statements by political and opinion leaders are common, and those who voice them are rarely taken to task.¹⁶ Human rights activists speak of a "wave of racism...gathering force" in Russia and cite beatings of Blacks, Hindus, and those from the Caucasus in Moscow.¹⁷ A study by the Council of Europe's Commission Against Racism and Intolerance reported official discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities in Russia at all levels. Antisemitic violence, the use of "extreme nationalist, racist, and xenophobic propaganda" by political parties and the media, and violence against minority people were discussed in this report.¹⁸

Certainly anecdotal reports abound of street violence targeted at Jews, Africans, those from the Caucasus, and other minorities, especially in large cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg, although many officials deny the problem is widespread.¹⁹ Antisemitic attacks have included a booby-trapped sign on the side of the road that injured a woman in June 2002 and a variety of regional attacks on individuals.²⁰

Research by Mikhail Alexseev suggests that fears of Chinese demographic encroachment in the Far East are far more a matter of perception than reality, although as perceptions go, this one has its potential dangers. His research in Primorsky Krai, where Chinese migrants are no more than 1.5 percent of the local population, suggests that local Russians tend to overestimate the Chinese proportion of the population by a very large factor, with 46 percent of survey respondents estimating it at 10-20 percent. They also expect this situation to get "worse" with rapid growth of the Chinese population relative to that of the Russian population. Moreover, most respondents described Chinese migrants as a threat to their region.²¹

EAST-WEST CHURCH & MINISTRY REPORT, published quarterly by the Global Center, seeks to encourage Western Christian ministry in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union that is effective, culturally relevant, and cooperative. It also serves as a forum for the exploration of a variety of issues relating to Christianity's presence in Europe's formerly Marxist states. Letters to the editor are welcomed. Subscription rates are \$44.95 per year (U.S. and Canada); \$54.95 (international); and \$19.95 (E-mail). Reprint and photocopy policy: 1) Quantity photocopies or reprints of up to three articles from a single issue may be distributed or reprinted with no royalty charge. 2) Written permission is to be secured for each distribution or reprinting. 3) The following statement is to be carried on each photocopied article reproduced and each article reprinted: **Reproduced (or Reprinted) with permission of EAST-WEST CHURCH & MINISTRY REPORT.** Currently indexed by OCLC Public Affairs Information Service (formerly PAIS), Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), and Zeller Dietrich (formerly Zeller Verlag).

Editor.....Mark Elliott
Assistant Editor.....Jena Abbott
Designer.....Jennifer Myers

EAST-WEST CHURCH & MINISTRY REPORT

The Global Center
Beeson Divinity School
Samford University
Box 292268
Birmingham, AL 35229
Tel.: 205-726-2170
Fax: 205-726-2271
E-mail: ewcmreport@samford.edu
Web site: <http://www.samford.edu/groups/global/ewcmreport>



Birmingham, AL 35229

©2003 The Global Center. Printed in Samford University Print Shop. ISSN 1069-5664

(continued on page 15)