



SOVIET ACTIVE MEASURES: THE CHRISTIAN PEACE CONFERENCE

May 1985

The Prague-based Christian Peace Conference (CPC) is a Soviet-backed international front organization. Since its founding in 1958, it has sought to influence opinion within church-related groups on a host of controversial international foreign and defense issues. From the start the CPC has been headed by a prominent Soviet or East European theologian or religious leader, and its major gatherings always have been staged in a communist country. Following the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the CPC was purged of dissidents to ensure Soviet control.

Perhaps with the lessons of the World Peace Council's obvious Soviet ties in mind, the CPC has sought to maintain a low profile (unlike the WPC, for example, it did not publicly endorse the September 1983 Soviet shutdown of a Korean airliner), although its consistent pro-Soviet bias is evident from the resolutions passed at its meetings and assemblies and from its other published documents and communiques. The CPC shares the U.S.S.R.'s approach to human rights and national liberation movements-, since at least 1978 it has worked to justify Christian support for violent struggle against what it deems unjust social orders. Like the U.S.S.R., the CPC rejects pacifism (on the grounds that pacifists do not distinguish between "just" and "unjust" wars), but it does not rule out cooperation with pacifists for tactical reasons.

During the 1970s, the CPC focused on promoting Soviet interests in the Third World. With the 1980s' debate over NATO's deployment in Europe of intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF), it has turned its attention to disarmament and security issues, invariably supporting Soviet initiatives in this sphere and, most recently, echoing Soviet criticism of the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). It has never publicly criticized Soviet or East European foreign or domestic policies, including suppression of religion. (For more information on the U.S.S.R.'s attitude toward religion, see "Religion in the U.S.S.R.: Laws, Policy and Propaganda," May 1982, published in the *Foreign Affairs Note* series.)

The Sixth All-Christian Peace Assembly

The Czechoslovak communist party daily *Rude Pravo* (January 26, 1985) reported that 600 representatives of "churches, Christian peace and ecumenical organizations" from more than 80 countries are expected at this gathering to convene in Prague, July 2-9, 1985. These assemblies have taken place in Prague every 4-7 years (1961, 1964, 1968,

1971, and 1978). *Rude Pravo* noted that the conclave will provide an opportunity for "frank discourse on all burning issues of the current international situation and for determining practical ways and means by which Christians and the churches can help avert a nuclear catastrophe."

The use of the term "frank discourse" 6 months before the July assembly indicates that its communist organizers expect significant disagreement over the theoretical and tactical issues that continue to frustrate Moscow's hopes for cooperation with noncommunist—including church-related—elements of the peace movement. The most notable of these is the extent to which the U.S.S.R.—and its Warsaw Pact allies—should cooperate with those noncommunist activists in the movement that criticize Soviet foreign and defense policies. Authoritative Soviet writings invariably attribute the activists' evenhanded approach to the influence of Western "special services" and have advocated "political re-education" to correct their views. For example, the August 1984 edition of *Kommunist* (the theoretical journal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) presented the following instructions on how to disabuse noncommunist

The Christian Peace Conference is no mere pacifist organization; it is contributing by its specific activity toward maintaining peace and toward efforts for disarmament. That is why it fully supports L. Brezhnev's latest proposals, which are a significant step toward halting feverish armament and preventing the emergence of a world nuclear conflict.

CPG President Karoly Toth
Rude Pravo, March 26, 1982

activists of the notion that the U.S.S.R. shared any blame for international tensions: "dialogue, persuasion and patient explanation . . . as well as a considerate attitude toward the position of others even when . . . these positions are inconsistent or wrong."

What Will Happen at the Assembly? The Kremlin sees the sixth CPC assembly as an important element in its overall campaign to influence international religious opinion against

Western foreign and defense policies. Indeed, Soviet and CPC activity and commentary since the last assembly in 1978—and particularly during 1984 and the first months of 1985—suggest that the July gathering's primary purpose is to orient religious and church-related sectors of the antinuclear movement in an anti-U.S. direction while avoiding any criticism of Soviet foreign and defense policies.

If past assemblies are any indication, the upcoming conclave will “elect” and “re-elect” CPC leading officers and governing bodies and issue several resolutions and appeals addressed to the world's churches. These documents—intended to shape CPC activity in the coming years—will again conform in every respect to stated Soviet foreign policy positions.

Furthermore, the meetings' communist organizers will attempt to confine discussion at the gathering to the inequities of Western society and attacks on the United States and the NATO alliance. Dissenting opinion will be actively discouraged, where possible, and will not appear in conference documents or communiques, the texts of which most delegates normally do not see until they are published in communist media. (See page 6 for reaction to this tactic by delegates to the 1981 CPC peace conference in Grenada.) For example, according to *Le Monde* (October 7, 1970), in early 1970 the CPC leadership under Soviet Metropolitan Nikodim discharged two Western CPC vice presidents—George Casalis of France and Heinz Kloppenburg of West Germany—who refused to endorse numerous pro-Soviet resolutions issued at a previous CPC gathering. Nikodim subsequently purged the CPC International Secretariat, Working Committee, and vice presidency of all dissent—the result was the dissolution of numerous Western CPC affiliates.

Finally, any attempts to discuss controversial Soviet actions—such as U.S.S.R. domestic repression of religion, suppression of human rights activists, or the harassment and incarceration of “unofficial” Soviet peace activists—will be suppressed by the meetings' organizers. Moscow customarily dismisses such criticism as “anti-Soviet propaganda.”

Preparation for the Assembly

Over the past 18 months, Moscow and the CPC have intensified efforts to court the peace movement, enhance the influence of the U.S.S.R. within international religious and church circles, and align a significant segment of religious opinion with Soviet foreign policy interests.

The importance the CPC attaches to this activity—and particularly to “unifying” the movement on an anti-Western platform—was spelled out by CPC President Toth in the December 1981 edition of the Prague-based *World Marxist Review*:

For 23 years our Christian Peace Conference has been active in opposing the nuclear war threat and the arms race. . . . Acting on our religious convictions and in the name of Christian humanism we have joined the antiwar movement. Christianity teaches that life is a gift to the human being from above. To defend it, to uphold the right of people to life we are prepared to cooperate with all forces, regardless of their ideology and world view. I should like to accentuate the fact that the standpoints of Christians and Communists coincide on this question.

Commentary From Moscow. Authoritative Soviet journals also have promoted the role of religious elements in the antiwar movement. The September 1984 edition of *Kommunist*

Profile: The Christian Peace Conference

Name: Christian Peace Conference.

Headquarters/Formation: Prague/1958

Claimed Strength: Affiliates in at least 80 countries; membership not given.

Publications: *CPC* (quarterly), *CPC Information* (semimonthly).

UN Status: UNESCO (C), ECOSOC (III).

Presidential Board: *President:* Bishop/Dr. Karoly Toth (Hungary). *Nine vice presidents:* Rev. Dr. Richard Andriamanjato (Madagascar, WPC vice president), Prof./Dr. Sergio Arce-Martinez (Cuba); Prof. Gerhard Bassaralk (German Democratic Republic); Dr. Nicolae Corneanu (Romania); Metropolitan/Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios (India, a WPC member, WCC copresident) Dr. Jan Michalko (Czechoslovakia); Bishop Pham Quang Phuoc (Vietnam); Mrs. Bernadeen Silva (Sri Lanka). *Chairman of the CPC Working Committee:* Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev (U.S.S.R.), (Toth, Mirejovsky, and Filaret all are World Peace Council members, Toth is on the WPC's Presidential Committee and the World Council of Churches' Executive Committee. Richard Andriamanjato also represents Madagascar as a WPC vice president.)

Secretariat: *Secretary general:* Lubomir Mirejovsky (Czechoslovakia), *Two deputy secretaries general:* Rev. Alfred Christian Rosa (Sri Lanka); Bishop Sergey Fomin (U.S.S.R.). *Director of CPC's Prague Headquarters:* Rev. Tibor Gorog (Hungary).

Policymaking Bodies: CPC Presidium (composed of CPC president, secretary general, vice presidents, and honorary members); CPC International Secretariat (composed of some 20 nonworking committee members and presumably headed by secretary general; it meets three times a year, appointed by the CPC Working Committee), CPC Working Committee (composed of the Presidium and some other officials meets twice a year: elected by the All-Christian Peace Assembly, Working Committee in turn appoints the International Secretariat); CPC Continuation Committee (composed of 100 officials, meets approximately every 18 months, elected by the All-Christian Peace Assembly; carries on CPC work between assemblies), All-Christian Peace Assembly (composed of several hundred CPC officials; meets every 5-7 years—1961, 1964, 1968, 1971, 1978, and 1985).

CPC Policy Support Bodies: Study commissions on theology, economy and politics, antiracism, youth, women's problems, and international questions, Subcommissions on Indochina, Middle East, European security, disarmament, and the United Nations.

Related Organizations: Official regional subsidiaries: African Christian Peace Conference, Asian Christian Peace Conference, Regional Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean; complementary organizations: Berlin Conference of European Catholics (also represented on the World Peace Council); Asian Buddhists' Conference for Peace (also represented on the World Peace Council),

*Derived from various issues of *CPC Information*.

appealed to “all peace-loving forces, including Christians and people professing other beliefs . . . to establish broad contacts and engage in a dialogue in the interests of peace and prevention of war.” According to *Kommunist*, such cooperation helps to surmount manifestations of “inconsistency and hesitation which develop in religious circles” and to “counter the pressure exerted by imperialist forces on believers and their organizations.”

As examples of “cooperation” the journal cited meetings between “Marxists and Christians” under the auspices of the

International Institute for Peace, the World Peace Council, and the International Committee for European Security and Cooperation, without mentioning that all three organizations are supported and funded by the Soviet Union.

Kommunist did, however, acknowledge friction in communist relations with religious forces and, in so doing, set an uncompromising tone that may surface at the July CPC assembly:

Naturally, the claim cannot be made that cooperation between communists, on the one hand, and believers and leading representatives of religious circles, on the other, is smooth and unobstructed and difficulties are not encountered along the way. The Marxists-Leninists realize that political compromises between communists and religious forces are necessary because they help to achieve unity of action and cooperation among toiling masses. At the same time, however, they reject compromises of the conceptual nature. In Lenin's words, one must keep one's own head on one's shoulders and be able to find one's own way in each individual case.

Further insight into the U.S.S.R.'s position on communist cooperation with religious forces—and desire that the latter refrain from criticism of Soviet foreign and defense policies—was provided in the November 1984 edition of *Voprosy Filosofii* (published by the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences' Institute of Philosophy). It declared that while there

We have always advocated and continue to advocate close cooperation with all peace-loving forces in the world, including religious circles who, in our opinion, can play a considerable role in delivering mankind from the nuclear threat.

CPSU General Secretary Konstantin Chernenko
Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya, January 6, 1985

were "quite a few Christian churches and groups which, citing the will of God, directly or indirectly support aggressive militarist programs," their "positive ideals and values" could be realized "only as a result of an active socio-political struggle and the consistent exposure of the imperialist messengers of nuclear war."

Events Sponsored by the U.S.S.R. and CPC. Meanwhile, Moscow and the CPC have tried to cultivate elements of the European antinuclear movement and to persuade them to focus their efforts away from criticism of communist suppression of religious activists and against INF deployment and other Western policies.

- Following a 4-day CPC International Secretariat meeting in Prague, *Rude Pravo* (January 20, 1984) underscored the "need to develop the activity of the peace movement" in CPC-associated churches and "support efforts aimed at coordinating" their participation in the "global struggle of progressive forces for security, disarmament and maintaining peace."

- A 3-day Moscow "roundtable conference"—at which Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, and Muslim representatives joined in discussions with a "group of experts involved with space studies"—was held in April, according to *Izvestiya* (April 6, 1984). The participants made an "in-depth analysis of the disastrous consequences that the use of space for military purposes could entail" speeches delivered to the conference were, according to *Izvestiya*, "full of alarm and indignation at the dangerous plans of the U.S. Administration, which has set its sights on militarizing space."

- During an April 8-13 CPC working committee session in Dresden, CPC President Karoly Toth told the East German *ADN* news service (April 10) that the deployment of U.S. missiles in Europe had created a situation that made cooperation among people of "different philosophical outlooks" imperative. Toth hinted that this issue is expected to be contentious at the CPC assembly when he praised the German Democratic Republic for pursuing a "flexible peace policy" and "not shrinking from an exchange of ideas and views . . . even with those who are deliberately hostile to socialism." Final documents from the working committee meeting urged all states to adopt a no-first-use of nuclear weapons pledge; advocated a peace treaty between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, an end to the arms race, the creation of nuclear-free zones, and "all-around and complete disarmament"; and called on all Christians and churches to "act against the militarization of space by the United States." Finally, the working committee pledged that it would do "all it could" to prevent the further deployment of U.S. intermediate-range missiles in Europe.

- An international religious "seminar" devoted to "peace and human rights" and attended by representatives of European and North American churches was staged June 25-29, 1984, in Moscow by the CPC's Commission on International Questions. (The commission is responsible for the preparation of position papers for the CPC.) Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Belorussia (chairman of the Soviet Peace Committee's recently formed Public Commission for Relations with Religious Peace Circles) told the gathering that only "common efforts" would avert "nuclear catastrophe" (TASS, June 25). But a subsequent TASS report (June 28) reported a "frank exchange of opinions . . . at the seminar," an indication of considerable disagreement at the session over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the meeting's anti-American rhetoric, and Moscow's attempts to blame only the West for the nuclear arms buildup.

- A CPC International Secretariat meeting in Sofia (September 3-7) established the July assembly's agenda, CPC Secretary General Lubomir Mirejovsky stressed the "necessity of giving full support to propositions leading to a nuclear freeze," negotiations on disarmament, prohibitions on chemical weapons, and preventing the "militarization of outer space"; he also cautioned that "concepts like freedom, liberty, democracy, human rights and religion can be utterly misused to justify deterrence ideologies." The International Secretariat called for the creation of nuclear-free zones in the Balkans and Scandinavia and an "immediate stop" to the deployment of NATO medium-range missiles in Europe.

- A subsequent CPC Presidential Board meeting (November 12-17) in Italy prepared final documents for the assembly, among them an appeal for disarmament and a resolution on Nicaragua. (It is common practice among Soviet-backed fronts to draft such "final documents" long before the event which is to originate them takes place.)

Moscow Creates New Fronts. To better execute their influence activities, the Soviets recently created two new front organizations, each ostensibly independent of the CPC, whose purpose is to manipulate church opinion in the West. The "Working Presidium of the World Conference of Religious Workers for Saving the Sacred Gift of Life From Nuclear Catastrophe" was set up in Moscow in November 1982 to continue the work of the May 1982 Moscow religious con-

ference. The "Public Commission for Relations With Religious Peace Circles" was established in Moscow by the WPC-affiliated Soviet Peace Committee in late 1983, according to *Kommunist* (September 1984). Both groups are headed by Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Belorussia (not to be confused with the CPC leader Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev), who also is the chairman of the Department of External Church Relations of the Russian Orthodox Church's Moscow Patriarchate.

Recent Efforts. Since January 1985, Moscow and the CPC have continued their pre-assembly efforts to influence Western religious and church-related groups. On January 30, Metropolitan Antony of the Russian Orthodox Church attacked U.S. "imperialist circles" and urged "people in all countries to unite" in the struggle against nuclear war. A Moscow round-table conference in early February convened scientists and religious representatives from 27 countries in discussions of Western foreign and defense policies and means of stimulating "ever more intensive participation" of religious forces in the antiwar movement. And a March 9 CPC message, issued prior to the opening of the U.S.-Soviet disarmament talks in Geneva, called on all "peace-loving people throughout the world, regardless of their political or religious convictions," to intensify activity in the peace movement.

Soviet Lines of Control

Twenty-seven years of support for controversial Soviet policies reflect the well-established financial and organizational ties between Moscow and the CPC.

Financially, the CPC's most generous component is the Russian Orthodox Church, which customarily provides funds to Moscow-backed international fronts. For example, the Moscow Patriarchate "donated" 3 million rubles (currently more than U.S. \$2 million) to the World Peace Council's 1973 world peace congress in Moscow (an event comparable in importance to the July CPC assembly), according to *Peace Courier* (November 1973).

The Soviet Peace Fund—a so-called public organization founded in 1961 which finances a wide range of international fronts—also finances part of the CPC's operations. Former

It is very difficult, if not simply impossible for man to live without ideals and without faith in their triumph. If we are not quick enough in convincing him of the rightness of our ideas and do not cultivate a Marxist-Leninist world outlook in him, then he can easily find himself in the power of a value orientation alien to us and fall, for example, under the influence of religion and unhealthy world outlook trends.

CPSU Politburo member Eduard Shevardnadze
Kommunist, December 1984

Soviet Peace Fund chairman Boris Polevoi acknowledged in *20th Century and Peace* (April 1980) that his clients include "the leaders of the international democratic organizations working for peace" and that the fund renders "financial aid to organizations, movements and personalities fighting for stronger peace, national independence and freedom." Current fund chairman Anatoly Karpov told the *Festival Herald* (No. 1, 1984, devoted to Soviet coverage of this summer's World Youth Festival in Moscow) that a "considerable part" of the fund's finances go to the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace and helped pay for the WPC's World Assembly for

Extracts From the Statute of the CPC*

Article I

The Christian Peace Conference is an international movement of Christians, Theologians, Clergymen and Laymen, which . . . was founded:

- to awaken Christendom and make it recognize its own complicity in the two World Wars and the necessity to work for peace, reconciliation, and peaceful cooperation among nations;
- to concentrate on joint peace actions the forces of those who, all over the world, embrace Christianity;
- and finally, to coordinate the peace groups in individual churches and their joint efforts towards a peaceful reconstruction of present society.

Article III

1. Some churches, groups and individuals as agree to the principles, the import and the mission of the movement, expressed in Article I, may participate in the work of this movement.

2. Participants have the right to take part fully in the work of the movement, to elect the organs of the CPC and to be elected to them.

3. Participants have the duty to spread the ideas and objectives of the CPC and as far as possible, to support the movement financially.

4. Participants are entitled to form regional work units.

Article VIII

The expenditures of the CPC amount to:

- (a) Cost of interdenominational Christian peace meetings.
- (b) Costs of the review and other information material.
- (c) Salaries for the staff of the secretariat of the CPC.
- (d) Office material and similar expenses.
- (e) Travel expenses for the members of committees, commissions and the secretariat of the CPC.

*From Laszlo Revesz, "The Christian Peace Conference." *Conflict Studies*; No. 91: Jan. 1978; pp.10-11.

Peace and Life, June 1983, in Prague. According to Karpov, the fund will "do everything to see" that the Moscow youth festival "will be a success."

The current CPC leadership—President Karoly Toth (Hungary), Secretary General Lubomir Mirejovsky (Czechoslovakia), and Continuation Committee Chairman (Metropolitan) Filaret of Kiev (U.S.S.R.)—keeps the organization steered in a pro-Soviet direction. In addition, two well-placed Soviet officials—Bishop Sergey Fomin and Dr. Aleksey Buyevskiy—also have responsibility for insuring that the CPC conforms to Soviet initiatives. Fomin, a CPC deputy secretary general, is vice chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's External Church Relations Department, the "foreign ministry" of the Russian Orthodox Church. The department's responsibilities include direction of all church participation in international bodies including the CPC and the World Council of Churches (WCC). Fomin is considered the decisive CPC voice on policy and administrative matters; he attends all meetings of CPC organs and maintains direct ties to Prague headquarters via Archpriest Georgiy Goncharov, the Russian Orthodox Church representative there (*CPC Information*, June 11, 1984). Buyevskiy, a layman, is secretary of the Patriarchate's External Church Relations Department and a CPC Working Committee member.

CPC Relations With Other International Organizations

The CPC promotes the Soviet line in UN deliberations whenever possible and fully uses its consultative status to address numerous General Assembly special committees. The CPC also cooperates with the World Council of Churches. According to Hungary's *Nepszabadsag* (August 13, 1983), Toth is a member of the WCC's Executive Committee. Moreover, the top CPC leadership simultaneously hold positions in the World Peace Council-, their dual membership ensures close WPC-CPC cooperation on issues deemed important by Moscow. The CPC customarily issues declarations of support for the anti-Western campaigns undertaken by other Moscow-backed fronts, and frequently coordinates agitation/propaganda activities with them. For example, the CPC will take part in this summer's World Youth Festival in Moscow, sponsored by the communist-backed World Federation of Democratic Youth. Archbishop Goncharov represented the CPC at the November 2-4, 1984 meeting of the festival's international preparatory committee in Moscow (Moscow Patriarchate *Information Bulletin*, November 29, 1984).

CPC Origins

At its founding congress (June 1-3, 1958, Prague), the CPC defined its objective as a "peace fight." As the organization's first secretary general, Czechoslovak theologian Bohuslav Pospisil, described it:

At a time when public opinion everywhere is alarmed by the growth of nuclear arms we are beginning to realize that at this critical moment . . . the churches must not stand aside.

The first clear-cut indication that the CPC defined "peace" in Soviet terms was the congress' failure to criticize the Soviet invasion of Hungary 2 years earlier. Instead, the 1956 Hungarian popular "counterrevolution" was attacked and reproached for its "encumbrance of Christian activities."¹

The CPC at its second meeting (April 16-19, 1959, Prague) attributed the concept of cold war exclusively to the noncommunist West. Secretary General Pospisil carefully pointed out that the "peace fight" had political ramifications: "It is not irony, but the logic of history that in the peace movement Christians openly and sincerely march side by side with the progressive elements of society, the Communists."²

The CPC's third meeting (September 6-11, 1960, Prague) condemned anticommunism as the ideology of a crusade incompatible with the cross.³ By this time, participation in the organization had grown: the 1958 conference hosted 40 representatives; in 1959 there were 96 delegates in attendance; and in 1960 198 delegates participated. Also in 1960, for the first time, Eastern-bloc representatives were a minority (96 of the 198 delegates).

A More Defined Course

The CPC held its first All-Christian Peace Assembly in Prague, April 13-16, 1961. In the opening address to the 700 participants, CPC President Joseph Hromadka noted:

We have to recognize that the old international order, which up to the Second World War supported the so-called Christian peoples of the West, has fallen apart. We are at the beginning of a new order, the construction of which may well take up to several decades more.

One of the main CPC concerns at the 1961 conference was to organize the "peace fight" along more coordinated lines. A Continuation Committee of 110 members and a Working Committee of 16 were formed to conduct the work of the CPC between gatherings.

The second All-Christian Peace Assembly (June 28-July 3, 1964, Prague) drew 1,200 delegates from 50 countries. On this occasion the representative of the Russian Orthodox Church, Leningrad professor of theology Vitichy Borowoj, proposed that the CPC adopt an ostensibly neutral political outlook: "Our movement is essentially and potentially neither Eastern nor Socialist, but generally Christian."⁴

What Borowoj meant by a politically neutral Christian commitment was spelled out in the course of the third All-Christian Peace Assembly (March 31-April 3, 1968, Prague), where more than 1,000 people participated. Resolutions issued in the name of the assembly called on the world's churches to: put an end to "anticommunist hysteria," which was the cause of the global arms race; take part in the "construction

Why do we not declare in our program that we are atheists? Why do we not refuse Christians and those who believe in God admission to our party? . . . [Because] unity in this truly revolutionary struggle of the oppressed class for the creation of a paradise on earth is more important to us than unity of opinion among the proletarians about a paradise in heaven. That is why we do not and must not proclaim our atheism in our program; that is why we do not and must not forbid proletarians who still cherish certain relics of the old superstitions to approach our party.

V.I. Lenin, "Socialism and Religion." 1905, in *Selected Works*, Vol. 11, pp. 660-661

Every religious idea, every idea of a god, even every flirtation with the idea of god is unutterable villainess . . . of the most dangerous kind, "contagion" of the most abominable kind. Millions of sins, filthy deeds, acts of violence, and physical contagions . . . are far less dangerous than the subtle, spiritual ideas of a god decked out in the smartest "ideological" costumes.

V.I. Lenin, "Socialism and Religion." 1905, in *Selected Works*, Vol. 11, pp. 675-676

of that new society in which social justice, peace, and the possibility of a complete evolution of the personality are guaranteed"; and demand that the West European nations and the United States "pay for the stimulation of the economy and the industrialization of the Third World, without any strings being attached to this aid."⁵ This last message heralded greater CPC attention to the Third World in the 1970s.

The Invasion of Czechoslovakia

The CPC had difficulty retaining its following after the August 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Several CPC officials, along with officials in a number of other Soviet-backed front organizations, had to be replaced by Moscow in order to restore discipline. CPC President Hromadka and Secretary General Jaroslav Ondra (Pospisil's successor), both Czechoslovaks, were forced out of office after Hromadka protested the invasion in an open letter to the Soviet Ambassador in Prague. Under pressure from Moscow, Czechoslovak authorities mounted an attack on Ondra-1 Hromadka was considered less vulnerable to pressure because his position within the CPC was too secure. Ondra was informed that if he failed

to resign, he would be denied visas for international CPC travel. Ondra's resignation was followed by that of Hromadka, who asserted:

I realize very clearly that the background of the drive against Dr. Ondra was purely political, that it had nothing to do with the real activity of the general secretary. If any political criticism should be heaped upon him, its real target was my pronouncements published during the tragic days of the summer of 1968. (From a letter to the *Church Times*, November 28, 1969)

The "resignations" of Ondra and Hromadka increased dissension within the CPC; and brought written protests from some Western CPC regional committees as well as numerous resignations from West European CPC officials. The November 15, 1969 issue of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* noted that the CPC was "breaking up" and that, until the Soviet-led invasion, many in the organization had taken Soviet speeches about peace as the "genuine article" and had placed themselves at the Soviets' disposal as a church platform for such propaganda. By February 1970, Soviet control had been restored, albeit at the expense of once-heavy European participation.

The 1970s: Focus on the Third World

Attendance at the fourth All-Christian Peace Assembly (September 30-October 3, 1971, Prague) dropped to a relative low of 240 delegates and 100 observers from 49 countries. But it included representatives and observers of the World Peace Council, World Council of Churches, World Lutheran Federation, All-African Conference of Churches, and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. WPC Presidential Committee member Richard Andriamanjato (Madagascar) was elected to the CPC Working Group. (Presently he is a vice president of both the WPC and CPC and, as such, is the ranking CPC member in the WPC complex.)

The assembly organizers made special efforts to associate the fight for peace more strongly with the "fight for social progress." The new focus on the Third World and national liberation was underscored when newly elected Secretary General Janusz Makowski (Poland) asserted:

More militants from [the developing world] should be recruited for the CPC. . . . [Our militants went to Africa, America, Latin America and India in 1971. . . . Representatives of the Third World have never been so numerous as today, when they constitute nearly forty percent of this Assembly.]

The assembly passed resolutions on Vietnam, the Middle East, East Pakistan, and South Africa, all supportive of Soviet foreign policy positions. Statements and resolutions defined the struggle against anticommunism as a task to be undertaken by Christianity and the churches in the interests of peace. The blatant pro-Soviet direction of the gathering prompted the Paris daily *Le Figaro* to comment on October 1: "Following the 1968 events in Czechoslovakia deep repercussions have occurred within the CPC so it has become an instrument of Soviet policy."

Other CPC gatherings during the 1970s underscored the organization's close alignment with Soviet foreign policy interests, particularly with respect to the advancement of what it called "social progress" in the developing world.

1974. The CPC Study Commission for Economy and Politics, meeting in Prague in early March, discussed "threats to world peace" and agreed in the course of its deliberations that an essential part of Christian activity consisted of "exposing the warlike political-economic mechanism of imperialism."

A CPC Peace Conference in Grenada, May 1981

Attempts to legitimize the contents of two documents apparently drafted prior to a CPC gathering in St. Georges—but purported to have been drafted during the course of the meeting—illustrate the orchestrated nature of such CPC-sponsored and -supported events.

Religious representatives from Mexico, Cuba, Ecuador, Panama, F.R.G., Colombia, Nicaragua, and other countries attended the conclave, which was staged to condemn the "military and economic aggressions of United States imperialism and its allies in the region against free Grenada and its revolution." * The senior ecclesiastic at the conclave was Archbishop Nikodim Rusnok of the Russian Orthodox Church.

One document was a "Declaration of Grenada" that expressed "solidarity with free Grenada and the hopes that its government and people attain the highest achievements in the development and consolidation of the people's revolution."

Another was a "letter" from the conference to the Christians and churches in Latin America and the Caribbean, expressing concern over the "antipeople and militaristic attitude of the Reagan administration" and condemning "U.S. imperialism."

The Roman Catholic Bishop of St. Georges, Sydney Charles, and Anglican Archdeacon of Grenada, Hoskins Huggins, told reporters after the gathering that they were not in a position to either endorse or disassociate themselves from either the "Declaration of Grenada" or the "letter" from the conference "We had no part in drafting these documents, we have had no opportunity to study them," Charles said, "and we did not know they were going to be read here tonight." (Bridgetown *CANA*, May 16, 1981)

*Note: By May 1982, a continental CPC in Latin America and the Caribbean had been formed as a third regional branch.

On March 12-15, a working commission comprising 50 representatives of churches and other Christian organizations gathered in Prague to review cooperation of all peace forces. The CPC subcommission on the Middle East met in Cairo on April 23-27; participants' resolutions endorsed the Arab "struggle against Zionism" and the liberation struggle of the Palestinians; the session adopted a statement of principles placing the CPC firmly behind the anti-Zionist struggle.

1975. The founding meeting of the CPC's Asian subdivision—the Asian Christian Peace Conference—in January adopted resolutions demanding the "full reunification of Korea in accordance with the principles of the five-point proposals of the North Korean Government." It also established a commission to investigate the question of political prisoners in Asian countries. Later that month, 80 church representatives from Europe, North America, Africa, and Asia attended a CPC seminar in West Berlin on the "Meaning of the World Christian in the Work for Peace."

In February, the CPC's International Secretariat met in Moscow, and on April 10 its Working Committee convened in Sofia with 50 leading church representatives attending. The theme of the April session was: "The Co-Existence of Christians, Jews, and Muslims and the Problems of Peace in the Middle East." Discussions touched on contributions Christians could make in resolving the Middle East conflict, general problems facing the international political system, and possibilities for further cooperation of anti-imperialist forces. CPC President Metropolitan Nikodim stressed during the deliberation's the necessity of putting an end to Zionism's "misuse" of religious ideas for justifying Israel's "aggressive" policies.

1976. The CPC in January issued a call for support of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola. The CPC's Anti-Racism Study Commission met in the Federal Republic of Germany in February to draft a statement on the situation in Namibia and a circular letter to churches on Angola. Seventy participants from 24 countries, including Secretary General Mirejovsky, attended a CPC seminar in Sofia in mid-June to discuss the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and its significance for the Third World. It issued a communique stressing the significance of the CSCE Final Act but warning that the Helsinki accords did not signify any diminution of the efforts of socialism to combat capitalism in order to secure a better future for mankind.

1977. Mirejovsky, three CPC vice presidents, and the international secretaries from 15 countries attended the CPC's International Secretariat meeting in Prague on January 11. The final communique expressed support for Warsaw Pact disarmament proposals and welcomed the convening of a special UN session on disarmament the following year. It also pledged support for UN proposals for an antiapartheid conference in Africa and for economic sanctions against Chile. According to local media reports, delegates expressed their determination to oppose attempts by reactionary forces to use the human rights issue as a "pretext for reviving the cold war spirit and impeding detente." In May the CPC joined the Berlin Conference of European Catholics (a complementary Soviet-line front, since the CPC does not include European Catholics) in Prague for a discussion on the need to counter attempts to revive the cold war. Other CPC gatherings throughout the spring focused on the Christian's contribution to peace, justice, and freedom in Africa and the "oppression of progressive forces" in Latin America. An African CPC branch was founded in December.

1978. The fifth All-Christian Peace Assembly (June 21-29, Prague) was attended by more than 680 delegates, guests, and observers from nearly 100 countries who participated in workshops on disarmament, racism, economic problems, theological questions, cooperation with the United Nations, and the contribution of Christians to "world peace." The participants approved an appeal to governments concerning "dangers to peace" in Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East and the proposed production of the neutron bomb; and resolutions on disarmament and detente, colonialism and neocolonialism, China's "militaristic moves," and the need to solve the Vietnam-Cambodia dispute peacefully. The assembly also endorsed the Soviet call for a world disarmament conference. The imprisonment of priests in Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, and the U.S.S.R. was not mentioned publicly in the course of the gathering, however, nor were the church protests then taking place in the G.D.R. against expansion of premilitary education in the schools.

1979. A 13-member CPC delegation attended a World Peace Council conference on Vietnam in Helsinki on March 16. A week later the CPC leadership conferred with WPC President Romesh Chandra in Budapest. In April the CPC Working Committee met in Helsinki and issued statements on detente, disarmament, southern Africa, Vietnam, and Palestine, which were all consistent with the Soviet line. In mid-May the CPC staged a disarmament conference at Selm in the Federal Republic of Germany.

The CPC and the National Liberation Movement

Parallelism with Moscow's line is especially obvious in the CPC's promotion of "social progress" and Third World interests, particularly in the context of the "national liberation struggle." According to official CPC documents, social injustice is to be remedied by armed struggle; such "war for a just cause" is, in turn, a prerequisite for a "just peace." Armed struggle also is legitimate against a "pacification" policy that prejudices socialism:

The striving for liberation without the search for a just peace can easily degenerate into aggression and expansionism. . . . For this reason the concept of the just peace is fundamental to all proceedings. . . . Confronted by injustice all over the world we cannot be neutral, and we cannot submit to the role of mere observer. By the message of the Bible we are bound to take concrete decisions and to participate actively in any fight against injustice. . . . That form of exploitation which characterizes the capitalist system was recognized by the ecumenical movement as one of the causes of social injustice in the modern world. . . .

Any consideration of the necessity to abolish unjust structures of power will necessarily lead to the question of how and when to apply power and violence. The CPC gave a lot of thought to this problem in connection with the question of revolution. We realized that there can be social situations in which only revolutionary change will be able to create a legitimate new society. In such a situation we Christians have no choice but to suggest this form of establishing people's rights.⁶

At the same time, opposition to revolution is unjustified:

There is another type of change which does not deserve the name of "revolution." That is the so-called counter-revolution. Whereas revolution wants to bring about the humanization of society, counter-revolution strives to restore the old, unjust order of society. . . .⁷

The justification of revolutionary violence had been formulated during the 1971 assembly:

In a situation in which institutionalized power excludes every other possibility violence is a justified means to reach this objective (namely, radical social change). . . . The fact that theologically war cannot be justified . . . can never mean that the possibility of a fight against unjust social structures and of revolution as *ultima ratio* is to be excluded.⁸

Liberation Theology and Human Rights

According to documents from the 1971 assembly, Christians should lend their support to peace forces that promote the armed national liberation movements of the Third World against imperialism. The same conference characterized Western imperialism as the "greatest threat to the peaceful existence of mankind." It rejected pacifism *per se* for not distinguishing between just and unjust peace but did not exclude cooperation with the pacifists.⁹

The CPC's own "theology of liberation" seeks to provide a philosophical underpinning for the "peace fight" and national liberation warfare.¹⁰ This "theology" recommends supporting national liberation movements and demands that Western churches rid themselves of the bourgeoisie: "The churches of these countries must free themselves of the bourgeoisie social ties. The churches existing in Western society need liberation at least as urgently as the proletarian masses."¹¹

The CPC, as a result, declares itself against the "individualistic concept" of human rights and demands that "distinctions be made according to the respective situation" (thereby apparently excluding from its purview human rights violations in the U.S.S.R. and other communist regimes). It

also maintains that Christians have the duty to concede that "any realization of human rights must lead towards socialism."

The CPC has stated specifically:

Human rights have to be seen not only as individual rights to liberty, but also and rather as the rights and duties of groups and communities. . . . The liberal interpretation of human rights is not in accordance with the message of the Bible. We regard an absolute concept of human rights, which does not take the historical development into account, as unacceptable.¹²

The 1980s: Peace and Disarmament

With NATO's December 1979 decision to deploy INF missiles in Western Europe, Soviet-backed fronts, including the CPC, mobilized as part of an overall Soviet diplomatic and propaganda campaign to overturn the decision. The CPC continues to promote Third World causes, but the focus of its activity since 1980 has been the anti-INF campaign.

1980-81. The CPC in mid-May 1980 sponsored an International Seminar on Detente; in October the CPC Continuation Committee met in the G.D.R. and called for a halt to the production and deployment of weapons of mass destruction. In November 1981, a CPC conference in East Berlin rejected the U.S. "zero option," endorsing instead the U.S.S.R.'s proposal for a moratorium on INF deployment in Europe.

1982-83. In March 1982 a CPC Working Committee session, attended by 60 church representatives from 26 countries, was held in Prague; a letter to Brezhnev stemming from the session endorsed his proposal for a moratorium on nuclear missile deployments, called for support of the Palestine Liberation Organization and an international conference on the Middle East, and attacked U.S. policy in Central America. In May 1982 a massive "World Conference of Religious Workers for Saving the Sacred Gift of Life From Nuclear Catastrophe" was held in Moscow, cosponsored by the CPC and attended by more than 2,000 delegates. Its final report criticized Western foreign and defense policies and endorsed a series of resolutions paralleling Soviet foreign policy positions.

In February 1983 a CPC International Secretariat meeting endorsed the results of a January 5 Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee session in Prague; delegates also commemorated the 35th anniversary of communist rule in Czechoslovakia. In May a CPC-sponsored gathering, "What Can the Churches Do in the Interests of Disarmament?," was

staged in Budapest- more than 150 Western Hemisphere, Asian, and African church representatives attended. On October 14, Czechoslovak leader Husak received Toth on the occasion of the 25th CPC anniversary. Meetings commemorating the anniversary, attended by CPC activists from all over the world, were staged in Moscow through late October. In an October 20 meeting with U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet officials, Toth applauded "peace initiatives" by then-Soviet leader Andropov.

1984. A 6-day CPC meeting in Odessa in January discussed U.S. "nuclear strategy" in the Pacific and its influence on Japan. A 4-day International Secretariat session, staged later that month in Prague, stressed the role of the churches in the anti-INF movement and the global struggle of "progressive forces" for security, peace, and disarmament. An April gathering of the Working Committee staged in Dresden examined the "exacerbated threat of war" in advance of the sixth All-Christian Peace Assembly in July 1985. At Dresden, Toth told participants from 27 countries that the peace movement's influence has grown as a result of INF deployment in Europe. The session's final document called on all nuclear powers to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons; urged the NATO and Warsaw Pact alliances to sign a non-use of force treaty, called on all Christians and churches to "act against the militarization of space" by the United States; and pledged the CPC to do "all it could" to prevent further INF deployments.

¹"The History of the Christian Peace Conference," Part 1, *Reformatusok Lapja*, February 14, 1971, Budapest, as quoted by Laszlo Revesz in "The Christian Peace Conference," *Conflict Studies*, No. 91, Jan. 1978.

²*Ibid.*, Part 111, February 28, 1971.

³*Ibid.*, Part IV, August 8, 1971.

⁴*Ibid.*, Part VI, August 29, 1971.

⁵*Ibid.*, Part VIII, October 8, 1971.

⁶Peace and Justice: The Ecumenical Duty of Christians and Churches. Contribution of the CPC to the Fifth World Congress of the World Council of Churches," *Theologiai Szerrile (TSz)*, No. 5-6, 1975, pp. 175-180, Budapest.

⁷Karoly Toth, "The Problems of the Third World in the CPC in Cuba and Madagascar," *TSz*, No. 11-12, 1974, pp. 342-346.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 343.

⁹Peace and Christian Responsibility: A New Impulse From Prague," *For the West of Europe*, Prague, December 1971.

¹⁰Karoly Toth, "on the Theology of Liberation and the Fight Against Racial Discrimination," *TSz*, No. 1-2, 1975, pp. 42-52.

¹¹*TSz*, No. 7-8, 1975, pp. 234-240.

¹²"The Attitude of the CPC to the Question of Human Rights," *TSz*, No. 11-12, 1974.

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