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Advisory Editorial Board and OPREE Editorial Policy

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ADVISORY EDITORIAL BOARD AND OPREE EDITORIAL POLICY

The introduction of the Advisory Editorial Board is a sign of growth of OPREE.

Among the unwritten editorial guidelines which I have followed from the inception of the publication of OPREE were:

- keep it simple and unpretentious,
- create only as many editorial steps as necessary for efficacy,
- "don't fix it if it ain't broke," and
- be a wise steward of financial resources.

We have now grown to a stage where the creation of an Advisory Editorial Board to assist the editor and associate editor will enhance the quality of this publication. The letter to the individuals who were approached to become members of this board informed them that the main purpose of the board is to be an instrument for the improvement of OPREE. From time to time some of them would be asked to help in evaluating a manuscript submitted for publication. They themselves would hopefully contribute some material for publication and would help in the search for new contributors or point to existing or potential sources of relevant material. Their suggestions and criticism regarding OPREE would be useful in making OPREE a more excellent source of reliable information on religious life in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Fifteen prominent scholars have already accepted the invitation to serve on this board. Their names are printed on the inside front cover. Others will, undoubtedly, be added to the board. Attention was given to diversity of the Board. What unites them is their commitment to the careful study of the developments to which this publication is dedicated. They have been readers of this journal and know its editorial policy. This policy has been communicated previously in various editorials and was approved by the Executive Committee of CAREE. It is reproduced here in full for the benefit of our readers.

Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe (OPREE) is a publication of Christians Associated for Relationships with Eastern Europe (CAREE), an ecumenical association related to the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. The views of individual authors do not necessarily reflect the views of CAREE, though they are selected with the intention of providing reliable insight into the religious situation in Eastern Europe.

OPREE arose out of the acute need for reliable interpretation of current religious developments in Eastern Europe. It was mandated by CAREE as a vehicle for the diffusion of information, analysis, and evaluation aimed at promotion of understanding among the leadership of

the churches in the USA and Canada. After the appearance of the first issue it became evident that such information is also sought in academic circles, as was evident from the responses of scholars and later by the number of library subscriptions.

OPREE seeks to publish analytical and informative articles of various lengths on the religious situation in the USSR and Eastern Europe. It seeks primarily scholarly approaches, though it will also publish impressions of observers, participants, and officials which may not follow a scholarly method. There will be no discrimination in regard to the ideological, political, or religious bias or affiliation of the author, though purposive misinformation has no place in OPREE. Truth can be served only if it is approached from many perspectives.

OPREE endeavors to present both issues of religious liberty and of peace with justice as they relate to Eastern Europe. One cannot promise any artificial balance because papers are published as various authors write them. However, OPREE shall not consciously narrow the focus only to the violations of religious liberty and on dissenters or only on ecumenical relations with official churches, or only to the peacemaking activities of such organizations as the Prague Christian Peace Conference. OPREE will be a vehicle of expression for a diversity of views and concerns. It is the editorial conviction that religious people need not be a single-concern people, but can concurrently promote a number of crucial values.

So far, the response of the scholarly community in terms of writing OPREE articles has been nothing short of astonishing. It is impossible to provide systematic coverage of all countries and all churches in Eastern Europe, although it is our aim not to leave any out. Often it is very hard to find people able or willing to write about certain countries or churches, while it is easier to provide quite a few articles on other countries (e.g., on East Germany and Hungary, mostly written by Protestants). It is the editor's intention to provide as wide a coverage as possible and--while such coverage may not be evident immediately--in due time such a variety will manifest itself on the pages of OPREE. Suggestions with regard to potential authors and ways of reporting are always welcome. From time to time, we may be able to present--in addition to writings of Western observers--both personal and "official" essays by Eastern Europeans. It is hoped that these will all shed light on a topic which is both important and difficult.

Paul Mojzes, editor