In the Previous and This Issue

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IN THE PREVIOUS AND THIS ISSUE

Due to an error the table of contents and the "In This Issue" introduction was left out from the past issue of OPREE (Vol. XI, No. 6, December 1991). We apologize for the inconvenience. Since the introduction shed some light on the process that resulted in the major articles we decided to provide it in this issue, to be followed by very brief comments about the present issue.

The Europe/USSR Committee of the Division of Overseas Ministries of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. requested Alan Geyer, Paul Mojzes, and Charles West to prepare papers for its bi-annual meeting, September 12-13, 1991. The papers were intended to guide the Committee in its thinking on issues affecting Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The Committee members urged that these papers be made available to a wider readership by publishing them in OPREE. All three authors attempted to come to grips with some burning issues.

Alan Geyer was to present an analysis of the situation in the Soviet Union. Since the attempted coup d'etat in August took place after he agreed to accept the assignment he focused his reflections on the impact of the coup.

Paul Mojzes was given the task to examine the issue of the danger of nationalism to peace in Eastern Europe with a special reference to Yugoslavia. Pointing out the linkage between nationalism and religion, he explored the issue both from an historical and more contemporary perspective.

Charles West was given the assignment to reflect upon the changes in Eastern Europe from the perspective of social ethics, the field of his expertise. He is the author of Communism and the Theologians. This piece in a sense is a brief venture into "Post-Communism and the theologians"; though he does not examine here the work of any specific theologian, he raises a number of important questions which any serious theologian both East and West will need to confront.

The fourth article is by Patricia Lefevere, who attended the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia, February 1991 and explored issues of Orthodox-Catholic Relations in the Soviet Union with a prominent Orthodox and Catholic leader.
A book review by Paul Mojzes on a recent study of syllabi on Christian-Marxist relations at United States universities follows the main articles.

The issue concludes with a statement signed by a number of scholars, "Toward a 'Universal Declaration of Global Ethos'" by Hans Küng of Tübingen University, Germany, and Leonard Swidler of Temple University, Philadelphia, PA, U.S.A. Though the religious and ideological conflicts are not mentioned the statement is pertinent to the current situation in this area. Readers who sympathize with the statement are urged to add their signatures by communicating to Dr. Swidler.

In this issue we are covering a wide variety of countries. Dr. Burgess wrote an analysis of the processes of democratization and the role of the churches in it in the former G.D.R. Prof. Spas Raikin, a Bulgarian Orthodox specialist who lives in the USA had a chance to visit his native country after many years and noted his impressions of the predicaments in which the Bulgarian Orthodox Church finds itself. Dean Jakub Trojan of Prague, Czechoslovakia, addresses issues related to the change in the post-socialist economic system. Professor Boris Gubman of Tver University in Russia dealt with post-totalitarian search for universal values. Professor Waldemar Chrostowski of Warsaw reports on the Jewish-Catholic Conference held at the Academy for Catholic Theology. And finally our frequent contributor Bill Yoder of Chicago provides a report about some Polish Lutheran responses to recent events.

Paul Mojzes