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is in the human that God does so. There is a clue in prophethood itself to the meaning of 'God incarnate'. What has to be said lives a human life. 'That which we have seen' is 'the Word of life'.

Nor need we think of the Christevent (as Muslims do) as somehow derogatory to God. It is only by his own will that it brings him into limitation and humility, just as it is the very authority of the shepherd that takes him to the wilderness. He is not disqualified by being there; he would be disqualified if he were not—the sheep being out there. And self-expenditure is always the prerogative as well as the nature of love.

Our Christian 'commendation' of Christ crucified is the same. The Muslim mind is urgent about 'vindication' of messengers. They should be seen to succeed in what the Qur'an often calls 'manifest victory'. But what is really 'victorious'—the love that suffers or the power that intervenes to frustrate the evildoers? In the latter case their enmity is never 'borne' never taken away, never 'forgiven'. It is merely deceived into frustration; it remains embedded in the wilful heart. The only power that overcomes evil without a residue is not retaliation, not Stoic unforgiving sullenness, not a false indifference—only love that suffers. This alone is 'the name given under heaven whereby we must be saved'. Where at the cross we see qualitatively, what evil does to love, we also see what love does with evil. Not being overcome it overcomes. This is the faith which we commend in the confidence that its capacity to be received for what it is belongs in part with what is already present in the faiths of men. Ours is the task of eliciting the ability to receive—always in entire dependence on the Holy Spirit. [p. 140](#)

Some may enquire why it all matters. Are there not far more urgent tasks to be tackled in the world—ministry to human need, peace-making in the political order and all the duties of an acknowledged pluralism of human cultures and societies. Indeed, all such tasks are urgent but they do not exclude the ultimate witness to the being and nature of God. It is there that Christian witness takes us. For God is always the question of questions.

So 'commendation': it must be reverent for all we meet, honest about all we explore, hopeful about all we identify and wisely entrusted with the Lord's own commendation of himself.

Bishop Kenneth Cragg was Bishop of Jerusalem and the Middle East. [p. 141](#)

The Church in the Sudan

The International Institute for the Study of Islam and Christianity, London, England

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'The Church in the Sudan' is extracted from The Status of the Church in the Muslim World (Monograph No. 1 of IISIC), a survey of difficulties faced by Christians in Muslim majority situations (Egypt, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Turkey) published in

1992. The compilers of the report also recognize that where Muslims are a minority, particularly in the west, they too undergo various forms of discrimination and for these they deserve redress.

The Editor

The Democratic Republic of Sudan, the largest country of Africa, is an ethnically complex nation dominated by the contrast between the twelve provinces of northern (i.e. northern and central) Sudan and the three provinces that constitute southern Sudan. Nearly 50% of the population are Arab or of Arab origin, a further 20% are Nubian—both groups are almost entirely Muslim and live in the north and centre of the country. The remaining 30% of the population live in the south and are mostly African by race. The majority of these follow tribal religions but a large minority are Christian, constituting about 9% of the total population of the country. Christians dominate the educated elite in the south, which hence has a western value system, as distinct from the Islamic and Arabic values of the north. Southerners come from about 130 different tribes, speaking 47 main languages, and have ethnic links across the borders with Kenya, Ethiopia, Central African Republic, Zaire and Uganda. The poor infrastructure makes travel around the country very difficult, so northerners and southerners know very little about each other. The general attitude of the more-or-less Arab Muslim majority in the north towards the black Christian minority in the south is relatively tolerant; Muslims realize that they benefit from Christians in various ways, for example in education which is available to both Christians and Muslims.

HISTORICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH

How did such a difference between north and south come to exist in this **P. 142** country? The area which is now modern Sudan previously existed as a collection of small independent states. The northern two-thirds was Christian until the advent of Islam when gradually, by invasion and by treaty, Islam became established in its place. The south, which retained its original tribal religions, was frequently a source of slaves for Arab slave traders in the north. In 1820–21 Sudan was conquered and unified by Turkey and Egypt. During the period 1899–1954 Sudan was administered jointly by Britain and Egypt (in practice mainly Britain) and north and south were kept virtually separate. European Christian missionaries were active in the south but not allowed to work in the north. Indeed, a passport was needed by anyone who wished to go from south to north. The south was left undeveloped economically whereas the north was far more developed.

NORTH-SOUTH CIVIL WAR

The first independent Sudanese Parliament was inaugurated in 1954, and complete independence achieved in 1956. The new government was composed mainly of northerners, i.e. Muslim Arabs, and it attempted to integrate the south into the rest of the country by discouraging Christianity and insisting on the use of Arabic as the official language. Southerners, fearing that this was going to happen, began to react against it with violence from 1955. In 1958 an earlier agreement concerning a federal arrangement between north and south (i.e. that they should be governed separately) was abrogated. Triggered by this, the unrest amongst Southerners developed into a full-scale civil war which lasted until 1972.

The peace treaty of 1972 granted autonomy to the south to be a single self-governing region. However, in the late 1970s, oil was discovered in the south. This prompted the central government to re-classify the oil-bearing regions as part of the north. In 1983 the

south was re-divided into three parts to be ruled directly from Khartoum, and in September President Nimeiry imposed Shari'ah law over the whole country. These innovations were, of course, far from welcome in the south. Southerners were also dissatisfied because development programmes announced for the south had not been implemented. (In a secret policy statement, Nimeiry's State Security described the south as a 'vacuum of uncivilization' which they intended to keep undeveloped until it could be Islamicized.) These factors prompted southerners to rebel again, and war has continued ever since.

THE SITUATION OF CHRISTIANS

Sudanese Christians have suffered with the rest of the south in the prolonged civil war. Many thousands (some estimates say hundreds of thousands) have been killed or have died of disease or starved to death. Thousands more have fled from rural areas to the towns or to neighbouring nations such as Kenya, Uganda, Zaire and the Central African Republic. Some 12 per cent of Sudan's population are now displaced people. The Government continuously relocates **P. 143** the internally displaced victims of the civil war thereby ensuring its control over them. Frequently, Christians are harassed by the regime, notably by having their dwelling demolished, and there are reports of Christians being crucified in the camps. The Khartoum area is populated by nearly two million displaced southerners, who are either Christians or practice traditional African religions.

It should be noted that the various Southern guerilla movements, which are splinter groups of the secessionist Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), have themselves committed atrocities such as massacres and mass rapes and been involved in corruption, such as diverting aid. The U.S. Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1994* state that the SPLA also engaged in torture, arbitrary execution, and the killing of villagers in the Nuba mountains who refused to co-operate with them. Both their war against the Government and their conflicts with each other ironically assist the depopulation of the south and consequently, the oppression of Christians.

Some Christians believe there is a deliberate government policy to starve Christians to death. For example, between November 1991 and March 1992, 400,000 southern and western southern Sudanese, who had fled to Khartoum for safety, were evicted from the shanty towns and rubbish tips where they were living and taken to desert areas. No preparations had been made for their arrival—there was no food and no water. Relief aid is the only means of sustenance for very many in the south, especially in the town of Juba, but in some areas this is provided only to those who will recite the Muslim creed. The starving people of Chot Bara, a remote village in South Sudan, walked up to Khartoum in February 1994 in response to a Government offer of clean clothes and a supply of food to all who would present themselves in the North and sign a paper saying they were willing to convert to Islam and pray in Arabic five times a day. Two months later they walked home. (During the journey they were infected with *kala-azar* [*leishmaniasis*], which is usually fatal if untreated.) It should be noted that whilst Muslim charities operate freely, some areas are altogether closed to Christian institutions—even indigenous ones.

According to a 1994 report by the U.S. State Department, in certain parts of Sudan there are credible reports of massacres, kidnapping, forced labour, conscription of children, and displacement. Whilst in some cases these human rights abuses are the responsibility of local militias of the Popular Defence Forces (PDF), exceeding their orders, in other cases the degree and scale of abuse point to Government instigation. In March 1993 troops massacred almost a thousand people between Manwal station and Aweil, and captured 300 women and children. They also burnt granaries and fields, and

stole cattle, resulting in the starvation of many who had eluded the soldiers. When troops in the south lose vehicles to mines of the secessionist SPLA, they engage in collective punishment, by burning the first village they encounter and massacring its inhabitants. The PDF [p. 144](#) often plunder aid intended for southern refugees.

Sudan has a policy known as ‘the marriage of the fifty’, in which Arab Muslim soldiers are encouraged to wed southern (i.e. Christian or animist) women they capture. Soldiers who father children from these marriages get special premiums. The children are, of course, raised as Muslims. Effectively, this practice encourages the enslavement and rape of Christian or animist women. This procedure seems to be part of an overall plan to Islamize the country through converting the children, as is evidenced by the practice in displacement camps whereby some Islamic charities offer to feed, clothe and educate destitute southern children—but on condition that their parents have no contact with their offspring. Where education exists in the camps, all children must study the *Qur’an*. It should be noted that whilst non-Muslims can join the PDF, all recruits must submit to Islamic indoctrination (this is true of the armed forces in general).

In addition to this, Christians suffer many forms of discrimination. It is difficult for anyone with a Christian name to get a job. Indeed many destitute Christians without food or shelter change their names in order to increase their chances of getting employment. When severe flooding destroyed many homes four years ago, food was offered only to those who replied ‘Yes’ when asked ‘Are you a Muslim?’. Many young people are forced to agree to fight in the armed forces (i.e. against their own people) or to join the police in order to get food and clothing. It is harder for Christians than for Muslims to attend any educational institution for which they are qualified, and church-run schools among some refugee communities have been forcibly closed down. Non-Muslims are generally kept out of positions of authority in the army and civil service. They are also barred from any ‘ministry of sovereignty’ in the government, for example, Prime Minister, Attorney-General, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Education, President or Speaker of the Assembly. Non-Muslims are required to pay a special tax for their protection, as specified by Shari’ah law.

It is difficult to get permission to build a church or other Christian institution. An atmosphere of suspicion against Christians, in particular Christian leaders, has been created by accusations in the media. All Christian exhibitions were removed from the National Museum on the grounds that they were ‘relics of the colonial past’. The traditional Christmas procession through Khartoum has been banned.

Since independence in 1956 various measures designed to restrict the spread of Christianity have been imposed. Both the quota of missionaries and the Christian school system have been frozen at their positions in 1956. When missionaries leave permanently, their replacement is hampered by many bureaucratic obstructions. In 1957, all 295 mission schools in the south were nationalized. In 1962 a Missionary Societies Act was passed resulting in strict government control of all public Christian religious activity. By this Act, it became illegal for any church or mission society to perform ‘any missionary act except in accordance [p. 145](#) with the terms of the licence granted by the Council of Ministers’ and in practice such licences were not issued. The Act also forbade the construction of church buildings without government permits. According to the US Department of State’s *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1990*, none of these permits has been issued for more than ten years. The Act is couched in broad terms and, to quote the US Department of State, it is ‘often capriciously interpreted by local officials’. In 1963–4 all foreign missionaries were expelled from the south. Since then the situation for foreign missionaries has varied according to the war situation and the need for food and foreign aid. For example, after the peace agreement of 1972 was signed, missionaries

were again allowed to enter Sudan but only if they were primarily involved in development rather than evangelism. Since 1967 there have been restrictions on foreigners travelling in the country. The press was nationalized in 1970, and since then church-owned publications have been suspended.

The brief of the Minister of Religious Affairs is confined to Islamic affairs. Government funding is given to mosques but not to churches. There is no government budget for the teaching of Christianity in schools: Christian teachers must be financed by the churches. The government gives radio and television time for Muslim religious programmes, but severely restricts Christian use of these media. Evangelistic radio programmes are legal but cannot in practice be broadcast because Muslim fundamentalists would attack the radio stations. Christian proselytism of non-Muslims is permitted but proselytism of Muslims is discouraged. (Proselytizing by Muslims is allowed.) Priests in northern Sudan are harassed, beaten and evicted from their churches. In April 1990, land in the Khartoum area belonging to the Catholic Church was arbitrarily expropriated by government authorities, apparently to prevent the construction of a school on the site. Christian preaching in the north is permitted only within church buildings. Special permission—‘sanctioned freedoms’—must be obtained for other events, such as a large Christian rally, and this permission may then be withdrawn again before the event occurs. There is greater freedom to preach in the south i.e. amongst non-Muslims. In the Southern town of Damazin, the town commissioner tried to close the church, but protests from both Christians and Muslims forced him to give way.

Reports last year described how Christians are followed even when going from one house to another for a Bible study. If a group of Christians want to meet together in someone’s home to study the Bible, they have to take care to arrive separately, in case the house is being watched. In 1994 the Sudanese authorities killed seventeen Christian women in Khartoum because of a women’s protest over the killing of a woman and her children.

The same year a Sudanese Christian woman, Roda Kuku, found guilty of adultery, was sentenced to death by stoning. Her Muslim lover was also found guilty by the court, was sentenced to stoning with 100 pieces [p. 146](#) of rock (unlikely to be fatal), 100 lashes and a one year prison term. After a campaign led by Roda’s father, an Anglican clergyman, her sentence was commuted to 100 lashes. Roda would have been the first woman to be put to death by stoning since Sudan imposed *Shari’ah* (Islamic law) in September 1983. It is reported that in Sudan the most brutal *Shari’ah* punishments (such as amputations) are rarely carried out against Muslims, only against Christians.

Nuba Mountains

The Nuba mountains are a non-Arab enclave inhabited by Christians and Muslims in the Muslim part of Sudan. The Government has destroyed at least 140 villages in the region, destroying churches but leaving the mosques intact. There have been a number of massacres, and over a hundred Christian men have been crucified. Survivors of the campaign are herded into desert ‘resettlement camps’ where men are separated from women. The Government has encouraged local Arab tribes to assist the campaign, with the incentive of gaining Nuba lands as incentive.

Apostasy

The law on apostasy ante-dates the current National Islamic Front regime, being introduced by President Nimeiry in 1983. A Muslim political dissident, Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, was executed under its provisions in 1985. Section 126 of the 1991 Penal Code expressly mandates the death penalty for apostasy that ‘is committed by any Muslim

who advocates apostasy from Islam or openly declares his [her] own apostasy expressly or by categorical action.' Unless an apostate recants within a time specified by the court he will be executed except when he is a recent convert, in which case the sentence is at the discretion of the court. It should be stated that the law seems to be directed against not only Christian converts, but also Muslim political dissidents who object to the policies of 'the Islamic State', and thus the 'laws of God'. The provisions of the law with respect to execution were first put into practice in 1994.

Christians who have converted from Islam are particularly persecuted. They may be taken to court and imprisoned. Not only the police but often their own relatives too will be trying to track down the convert to arrest him. Bribery or other pressures may be applied to try to make the convert return to Islam. Many live in fear of being murdered by their own families. Converts are often reluctant to be baptized, in case there is a spy in the congregation who will take note of those who have converted. It even happened at Easter 1991 that when an Arab Christian Sudanese from a Christian background gave his testimony publicly he was taken away by the police for questioning because they suspected he might be a convert from Islam. Other Christians are afraid to visit new converts or help them when in trouble, and so the converts lack fellowship and support.

ISLAMIZATION AND ARABIZATION

The process of Islamization and Arabization, begun after independence, **P.147** reinforced the already existing north-south differences and has continued until now. All three of the main political parties, the Umma, the National Islamic Front (NIF) and the Democratic Union Party, are dominated by the Arab Muslim elite and share a desire to see the Islamization and Arabization of the whole country. Ibn Rahma quotes from a recent party document of the Democratic Unionist Party which begins by referring to the deliberate division of the south into three administrative units:

The continuation of the South divided as three regions and without economic power will keep them dependent on the Central Government (*sic*) and on the two Islamic Organizations—The 'Daawa' and Islamic Relief ... the party's executive committee blessed the move which Nimeiri did in redividing the South as a service to Islam through his policy of divide and rule and it is a policy that could be applied at this moment as a vital service for the establishment of an Arab Islamic State ...

It is of vital importance that Arabic language should be spread in all parts of the South and the Nuba mountains. Hence, Arabic language is the most important element in the modern society and for a strong administration needed for the spread of Arabic and Islamic cultures especially now that the audio-visual apparatus has been established in the pagan lands of the South and the Nuba mountains.

These are difficult times when things connected with Religions are not easily accepted so the only easier avenue to achieve this is through the spread of the Arabic language and which is one of the fields of 'jihad' in the name of God and Arabism.

The current president, Omar el Bashir, has extended the process of Islamization and Arabization of Sudan. Women wear the black chador, not coloured clothes, and must be veiled. An unveiled woman will be turned away from her workplace. School girls and women university students must all obey these dress rules too. These rules apply to non-Muslim women as well as to Muslims; the daughter of a Christian minister was flogged for wearing African dress which reached only to knee-level. All schools and universities must teach in Arabic language instead of in English as at present. This covers both public and private schools, including church schools. An Islamic banking system is being implemented, which will be applied to all banks. Christians are not allowed to work in

Islamic institutions. Students who do not take classes in Islam will be automatically failed. The government has renamed the army 'Jundi Allah' (the army of God), and it is said to be fighting a jihad against the Southerners. Indeed, while northern Sudan is categorized under Islamic thinking as Dar-al-Islam (the abode of Islam), the south is classified as Dar-al Harb (the abode of war—a term which covers every part of the world where Islam does not hold sway, because of the Islamic obligation to conquer and subdue it).

At the time of the re-introduction of Shari'ah in 1991, 'Popular Committees' were set up in every residential area to watch the conduct of everyone and inform on any violation or suspected violation of the Shari'ah. So people are encouraged to report each other to the police, who may then come and search the house for incriminating evidence etc. p. 148

THE CONSTITUTION

The Sudan Transitional Constitution of 1956 quoted verbatim from the Self Government Statute of 1953 in which religious freedom was guaranteed: 'All persons shall enjoy freedom of conscience, and the right freely to profess their religion, subject only to such conditions relating to morality, public order or health as may be imposed by law.' The amended Transitional Constitution of 1964 also used the same wording. However, a new constitution dated 12 April 1973 began its preamble with the words 'In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful, the creator of peoples and granter of freedoms'. Part I Article 9 states that 'The Islamic Law and custom shall be the main sources of legislation. Personal matters of non-Muslims shall be governed by their personal laws.' Article 16 runs as follows: '(a) In the Democratic Republic of the Sudan Islam is the religion and the society shall be guided by Islam being the religion of the majority of its people and the State shall endeavour to express its values (b) Christianity is the religion in the Democratic Republic of the Sudan, being professed by a large number of its citizens who are guided by Christianity and the State shall endeavour to express its value. (c) Heavenly religions and the noble aspects of spiritual beliefs shall not be insulted or held in contempt. (d) The State shall treat followers of religions and noble spiritual beliefs without discrimination as to the rights and freedoms guaranteed to them as citizens by this Constitution. The State shall not impose any restrictions on citizens of communities on the grounds of religious faith. (e) The abuse of religious and noble spiritual beliefs for political exploitation is forbidden. Any act which is intended or is likely to promote feelings of hatred, enmity or discord among religious communities shall be contrary to this Constitution and punishable by law.' Article 38 states that all Sudanese are 'equal before the courts' with 'equal rights and duties, irrespective of origin, race, locality, sex, language or religion'. Article 47 states, 'Freedom of belief, prayer and performance of religious practices, without infringement of public order or morals, is guaranteed.' When Omar el Bashir came to power in a military coup in 1989, the Transitional Constitution was suspended.

SHARI'AH LAW

Since independence there have been calls by Muslim traditionalists for the law to be based on the Shari'ah. As mentioned above, it was the imposition of Shari'ah which triggered the second outbreak of civil war in 1983. In 1985 the implementation of its more severe punishments was suspended. In their Sudan Charter, issued in 1987, the NIF proposed a federal system in which Shari'ah law was applied only in Muslim-majority regions. In 1989 a review of the Shari'ah law was begun, and this ended in January 1991 with the re-implementation of Shari'ah once more. This has begun with the amputation of the hands

of two men convicted of stealing food. If the same pattern is followed as when Shari'ah law was implemented **P. 149** between 1983 and 1985 (during which time about 200 people were punished by amputation) then most of the amputees will be Christians. This is partly because it is mainly Christians who are so poor that they need to steal and partly because Muslims usually have influential relatives who can exert pressure to prevent amputation occurring. It would be legal to execute anyone who converted from Islam to Christianity. (Probably the person who did the converting of the other would also be killed—not officially, but by incensed Muslims.)

ISLAMIC MILITANCY

Islamic fundamentalists are gaining increasing 'behind the scenes' political power in Sudan. A 40-man committee from the NIF effectively runs the government. Almost all government undersecretaries are NIF members. Although the ministers may be from the south, they are only figureheads. The leader of the NIF, Hassan Turabi, has 'enormous and growing influence' over President el Bashir and his government. Turabi's vision is to transform Sudan into the new centre of Islam worldwide. He feels that Saudi Arabia is compromised because of its links with the West in the Gulf War of early 1991. In April 1991 Turabi called a conference in Sudan, with representatives from 55 nations, which resulted in the creation of a new international Muslim organization, the Popular International Organization, intended to rival the Riyadh-based Organization of the Islamic Conference.

RESPONSE BY THE CHURCHES CATHOLIC BISHOPS

The situation of Christians in Sudan is succinctly summed up in a pastoral letter dated November 16, 1991 from the Catholic Archbishop of Khartoum and three other Sudanese Catholic Bishops. It is entitled 'The truth shall set you free' and quoted almost entire (in English translation) below:

THE PRESENT SITUATION

Although the government professes and advertises that all Sudanese are equal on human rights ... we see the real situation differently. The government policies are intended to create one nation under Islamic-Arab culture, regardless of other religious, ethnic and cultural considerations. These policies are manifest in the below mentioned areas:

Education

The government discriminates between Muslim and non-Muslim citizens as proved by the introduction of Arabic language as the only medium of instruction even in private schools which conducted instruction in English; the intended objective is to facilitate the process of Islamization. Christian students are forced to attend Islamic lessons and Sundays are officially working days during which Christians are forced to work. Passing the subject of Islamic Religion has now become a precondition for admission to higher studies.

There is a re-writing of the history of the Sudan in which the entry of Islam to Sudan is considered the starting point of Sudanese culture, **p. 150** ignoring the Sudanese Christian heritage, and other ethnic cultures of tribes such as the Nubas, Hadandawa, Zande, Dinka, Nuer, Fur and the Bari.

Church-based or Christian schools are being continuously attacked in the media, thus belittling their role in education in the Sudan.

Freedom of Religion, Worship and Conscience

The Sudanese who is not a Muslim is now viewed as a stranger, putting the rights of a non-Muslim and a non-Arab Sudanese in jeopardy.

In view of the above practices, we refuse the imposition on non-Muslims of the Islamic Shari'ah laws, as we did in 1984 when President Jaafer Nimeiry first imposed the Islamic Shari'ah law.

Evidence of the Containment and Restriction on Christians

1. In Damazin, capital of the South Blue Nile province, Christian evangelism has been forbidden; land and other property has been confiscated by the government.
2. The priests and catechists in Dongola, capital of the Northern region [state] have been arrested.
3. Closure and destruction of chapels and church buildings in displaced people's residential areas of the Greater Khartoum and El Obeid suburbs.
4. Repeated refusal, in all places, to allow new church buildings to be erected.
5. The attempt to equate the Christian churches in the Sudan with Western foreign forces!
6. The government makes accusations against the Church, through the media, that Christianity is against Islam.
7. There is continuous harassment of priests, sisters and other Christian leaders in the Sudan.
8. Non-Muslims and Christians in prison are being pressured to become Muslims as a condition for their release. [This applies to both political prisoners and ordinary criminals.]
9. Government Islamic institutions do not employ people who cannot prove that they are Muslims.
10. In certain areas relief is provided with conversion to Islam as a prerequisite. Christian-based relief agencies, including the Sudan Council of Churches, have been forbidden to distribute relief to the displaced, while the Islamic relief agencies have been encouraged to do so.

All the above practices, and many more, do not justify the 'creation of a new modern Sudan' for which the regime stands. Instead, they create fear, lack of confidence in the government and hatred among non-Muslim and non-Arab Sudanese.

The letter supported such actions as sit-ins. On January 13, 1992, the central security administration declared that the letter violated national security and provoked civil strife, and ordered the bishops to surrender all copies of the letter. The signatory bishops, including Archbishop Gabriel Wako of Khartoum, were called to a meeting in the capital with security officers on January 15.

ANGLICAN LAMBETH CONFERENCE

At the 1988 Lambeth Conference of the Anglican communion, resolutions included: **P. 151**

23. Freedom of Religious Activity

This Conference calls upon all governments to uphold religious freedom, including freedom of worship and freedom to teach and evangelise, as a fundamental human right, the denial of which threatens all other liberties.

Explanatory note: We are concerned here for minority religious groups, but have a special concern for those in Islamic states.

25. Iran

This Conference, recognising the positive development of recent events in Iran, and in the light of a declared policy of religious tolerance in that land, respectfully requests the Islamic Republic of Iran to facilitate a positive response to the many requests, sent on behalf of the Diocese of Iran, the Primates of the Anglican Communion, and the President Bishops of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, concerning all the claims of the Church in Iran.

61. Islamic fundamentalism

This Conference:

1. Expresses concern that the emergence of Islamic religious fundamentalism has resulted in serious violation of fundamental human rights, including the right of religious belief, practice and propagation, as well as destruction of property or Christian Churches in such places as Northern Nigeria and the Sudan.
2. Urges the Anglican Consultative Council to find ways and means of bringing these concerns to international Islamic organisations and the United Nations, and encourages dialogue with countries where pursuit of Islamic religious fundamentalism has led to such violations of human rights.

Explanatory note: This is a real issue in Sudan and Nigeria.

62. Peace in the Sudan

This Conference:

1. Commends the effort of the Christian Churches in the Sudan in seeking peace and reconciliation between southern and northern Sudan.
2. Urges the government of the Sudan to take the initiative in beginning negotiations with the Sudan People's Liberation Army as a first step towards peace in the Sudan, and further.
3. Urges the Sudanese Government to consider accepting a third party to initiate peace talks, e.g. World Council of Churches and the All Africa Conference of Churches.

63. Shari'a Law in the Sudan

This Conference:

1. Notes with great concern that the Government of the Sudan wishes to reintroduce Shari'a Law and impose it upon the people of the Sudan.
2. Respectfully requests the Government of the Sudan to reconsider its decision on this matter and replace *Shari'a* Law with some other more humane legislation for punishing offenders.

There is an urgent need for action on behalf of our brothers and sisters in the Muslim world. The call of the Russian Orthodox priests to the world church, as represented by the World Council of Churches, was heard and resulted in international Christian concern, prayer and action for the Marxist world. Christians in the Muslim context are now crying out to the rest of the church to stand by them in their suffering. They are appealing for action to be taken. [p. 152](#)

Costly Discipleship: Two Stories from Iran