

RELIGION WATCH

A Newsletter Monitoring Trends In Contemporary Religion

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FUTURE CHURCH TRENDS VIEWED THROUGH AN EPISCOPALIAN LENS

While the Episcopal Church has never been the most typical of American denominations, the church body is facing a future that may be shared by other mainline groups as they enter the 21st century. That is one of the conclusions a reader might come away with after reading the new book New Millennium, New Church: Trends Shaping the Episcopal Church (Cowley Publications, 28 Temple Place, Boston, MA 02111. \$12.95), by Richard Kew and Roger White. The book explores issues ranging from the small group movement to women priests, and forecasts that a different kind of Episcopal Church is emerging. While Kew and White report on a wide range of Episcopal trends, this issue of RELIGION WATCH will focus on those developments that may carry a trans-denominational impact.

* The ranks of those influenced by renewal groups are swelling and they are likely to move to the forefront of the Episcopal Church during the next century, according to Kew and White. The strength of these renewal movements, which can range from charismatic "small groups" to Anglo-Catholic communities and retreats, have not been acknowledged by many in the church leadership, but they are increasingly supplying the denomination with prospective clergy and financial support.

* The dominance of the liberal agenda in the church is coming to an end. Kew and White see a gradual erosion of support for such causes as the liberalization on sexual issues, especially as more conservative candidates are elected as deputies during the church's General Convention. While the battle over such an issue as homosexual lifestyles will continue in the next decade, the authors see the united effort of conservative groups as being more successful in shaping the church's agenda.

* As with moral and social issues, there is also a "groundswell toward creedal [or theological] orthodoxy" taking place in the denomination. Kew and White find a growing number of groups founded to fortify orthodox theology, such as the Scholarly Engagement with Anglican Doctrine (SEAD). The same emphasis on classical Anglican theology is now finding a place in Episcopal seminaries.

* "After years of liturgical upheaval, we are moving into a quieter period. It will not be free of controversy, but liturgy is unlikely to be the focus of dispute it has been in the past generation," write Kew and White. People in the pews want time to appreciate the liturgy introduced in the last decade or so before anymore is introduced. There will instead be more of an emphasis on improving preaching and teaching in the church.

* While the division over women's ordination is not likely to disappear, women will find greater acceptance as they move into

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leadership in both lay and ordained sectors of the church. During the 1980s, women priests often complained that they were marginalized in the church, but today "there seems to be a renewed openness to deploying female priests, perhaps because women in orders are no longer a threatening novelty." Kew and White add that female lay and ordained leaders are likely to put greater stress on "community, informality, and nurture in the life of the church." The greater role for women is also leading men to create a space for themselves in parishes through men's groups, the authors add.

* Like other mainline churches, the Episcopal Church has an overabundance of clergy; while the denomination has lost half of its membership since 1960, the number of clergy has doubled. Kew and White see some fear among the laity that the ordained hold too much power; the movement toward lay-based small groups is one sign of such dissatisfaction. Most of the new clergy are older, second-career people, but the authors write that the pendulum will soon swing in the other direction, with more young, life-long clergy coming through the ranks.

* Official ecumenism will be put on hold, as the various dialogues and talks of church union have not produced many results. Instead, evangelism will be emphasized more, although there will also be more instances of "grass roots ecumenism," where congregations of various denominations cooperate.

* Networks of small voluntary agencies will mushroom, just as church structures "fine-tuned to be in harmony with the 1950s and 1960s configurations of American business and industry" are declining. Kew and White write that baby boomers are becoming church leaders, and they favor networking over "top-down" leadership styles. Most of these voluntary agencies are more conservative than the central church bureaucracy, and their "offices are seldom found in the New York metropolitan area, but are often located near one of the various regional centers of influence in the Episcopal Church: Sewanee, Tennessee; Kanuga in North Carolina; Northern Virginia; and now in increasing numbers, Ambridge, Pennsylvania. This diaspora further illustrates the movement away from a centralized hierarchy to an interconnected series of networks with multiple foci."

MAINLINE CHURCHES DRAWING BABY BOOMERS WITH SATURDAY SERVICES

Mainline churches are increasingly offering services on Saturday as an alternative to traditional Sunday services for the baby boom generation, according to the Hartford Courant (October 3). Roman Catholic parishes have offered Saturday Masses for over 22 years, but only recently have Protestant churches adopted the same practice. Writer Gerald Renner reports that the Saturday services are being seen as more "user-friendly" for baby boomers. "Boomers seem to want their Sundays free and some churches have found Saturday services effective" in drawing them into church life, says the Rev. James Kidd of Asylum Hill Congregational Church in Hartford, one of the fastest growing urban congregations in the United Church of Christ. Like other ministers, Kidd was inspired to adopt Saturday services from the example of Willow Creek Community Church, one of the nation's most famous mega-churches, drawing about 16,000 worshippers. Renner adds that "Smaller churches also have found that Saturday services fill a need, just as the traditional 11 a.m. Sunday services did." Another United Church of Christ pastor says that many single people, including older divorced and widowed people, are among the Saturday worshippers.

AMERICAN JEWS MOVING IN 'TRIBAL' DIRECTIONS?

American Jews will be more "tribal" in the near future, emphasizing uniquely Jewish values that clash with American culture, writes Jonathan Sarna in Moment magazine (October). Sarna, a Brandeis University Jewish scholar, writes that many American Jews are "beginning to question" the long-held assumption that Judaism is compatible with modernity. "These Jews smile at the naive optimism of an earlier generation that considered itself wholly at home in America; Jews in our day are more likely to consider themselves strangers at home-- at once part of America and apart from it. Where the watchword a generation ago was synthesis, we prefer to speak of 'tensions' between assimilation and identity and the tension between being an American and being a Jew." Sarna sees this shift among Jews as being similar to the way churches and seminaries are questioning liberalism and moving toward what it perceives to be "traditional values." There are two issues that will increasingly put Jewish people into sharper conflict with American culture: intermarriage and support of Israel.

While most surveys show Protestant and Catholics increasingly supporting interfaith marriages, "Jews are practically alone in being troubled by this development: We are now the only major religious group that actively fights to prevent interfaith marriages. In so doing we necessarily set ourselves apart from the mainstream of American culture," Sarna writes. In a similar way, the support for the Jewish state of Israel and its Law of Return--guaranteeing Israeli citizenship to all Jews-- is also making Jews "dissent from the pluralistic and universalistic values of contemporary culture." He adds that most Jews have "not yet come to terms with the implications of this dissent with respect to our relationship to modernity as a whole." Sarna concludes that "If Judaism as we know it is to continue, we must be tribal [which he defines as "the special ties that relate Jews to one another and separate Jews from everybody else."], and we must be willing to transvalue tribalism into a positive direction..." (Moment, 3000 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20008-2509)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT THE SMART INVESTMENT FOR MAINLINE CHURCHES?

"A small but growing number of congregations and church bodies are helping to finance community development projects, often through low-interest investments which provide capital for small businesses and affordable housing," writes Robert S. Bachelder in the Christian Century magazine (October 21). With the decline of the U.S. economy and a lack of money for social programs, Bachelder writes that "much of the economic justice ministry of the churches is an anachronism. Through their national and state bodies and ecumenical organizations, the churches seek to intervene directly in the public policy process, pursuing the Democratic strategy of social program politics more than the Democrats themselves. Such an approach is a dead end. The churches should close down their public policy offices." Instead, Bachelder advises mainline Protestant churches to join the congregations that are forming community- and neighborhood-based development institutions that "have some control of capital and resources." These organizations seek to "build bridges to the mainstream economy by enhancing the ownership, investment and

employment capacity of local residents and fledgling firms," he adds.

Bachelder cites the example of the Brockton Interfaith Community, a coalition of 14 congregations in Brockton, Mass., that successfully pressured two banks to reinvest in the city's neighborhood through a first-time homeowners program. "In cities such as Brockton, congregations are the only remaining organizations with the commitment and clout to influence political and financial leaders to discharge their public responsibilities. Denominational judicatories have already begun to initiate and support such work." He adds that this kind of work fits in well with the distinctive vocation of mainline Protestant churches: "to be 'bridging institutions' between the public and private spheres and to cultivate a 'socially responsible individualism.'" Shifting the church's ministry of economic justice from advocacy for social programs to community responsibility "entails an even more fundamental change in theology. Those who have focused on government-sponsored programs are often inclined to think God is working in history through the church's struggle to redeem the human community. The community-investment paradigm does not necessarily share this congenial conviction. [It] maintains merely that community investment is the most serviceable strategy for churches today. It acknowledges that progress will be slow at best." (Christian Century, 207 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60605)

CATHOLIC TRADITIONALISTS DIVIDED AND MOVING TO ANTI-SEMITIC RIGHT?

Since the excommunication of its leader Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre (now deceased), Catholic traditionalists have increasingly splintered into factions that espouse far-right and anti-Semitic teachings, according to Fidelity (October), a conservative Catholic magazine. Lefebvre and his Society of St. Pius X were excommunicated from the Catholic Church in 1988 after he appointed bishops to the organization, and also because he held that the Second Vatican Council introduced modernistic and heretical teachings. One recent "mini-schism" occurred when a St. Pius priest was expelled after he criticized head Bishop Richard Williamson, and took most of his parish with him. Other Pius X parishes around the country also "have recently been squeezed out or isolated," reports Thomas Case. Most of the controversies and division surround Williamson and his teachings. Case writes that the bishop teaches that there is no legitimate pope (although in public he denies that he holds this view), and that only those in the St. Pius Society are in the true church. Williamson aims much of his condemnation toward the Jewish people, calling them "enemies of Jesus Christ" that conspire to control the world; he also denies the Holocaust ever took place.

Equally divisive to the society is Williamson's repeated attacks on the U.S. Constitution and the American Revolution, claiming that they encourage abortion and are the products of a Masonic-Jewish conspiracy, according to Case. Such views are bringing most of the patriotic St. Pius members "to the point of rebellion," especially as Williamson even attacks the rightist John Birch Society for its liberalism. Far right views, including an admiration of Adolph Hitler, are said to be present throughout the society, mirroring the French Catholic traditionalist movement which seeks to restore a Catholic monarchy. In St. Mary's, Kansas, where the Pius X Academy and college are located, the residents are protesting the traditionalists authoritarian tactics, such as allegedly shunning and even physically threatening anyone who defies St.

Pius priests. Many parents have withdrawn their children from the schools and have armed themselves for protection, while society members are also reportedly stocking automatic rifles. Case adds, "It is no wonder that one priest formerly associated with the Society describes St. Mary's as a 'Jonestown waiting to happen.'" (*Fidelity*, 206 Marquette Ave., South Bend, IN 46617)

CURRENT RESEARCH: RECENT FINDINGS ON RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDES

* While the baby boom generation is the focus of attention for most church leaders and researchers, the next generation, known as the baby bust, is likely to pose an even greater challenge to organized religion. A recent study by the Barna Research Group finds there are wide differences between the boomers and the busters, which is made up of those born between 1965 and 1983. Twin Cities Christian newspaper (October 1) cites the study as showing: "busters" are found to be more skeptical about institutions and traditions, as they have seen too many scandals in government, business and religion; busters are less loyal to their church, denomination, and particular religious beliefs than other generations tend to be; they are 30 percent less likely to attend church in a given week than are other generations, and 50 percent less likely to attend any religious instruction activities such as Sunday school. George Barna says his study shows that the Busters "often resent what the Boomer generation has left them with, but they're unsure how to express this, and they're even unsure as to what they want out of life as an alternative." (*Twin Cities Christian*, 1619 Portland Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55404)

* Most new converts to Christianity make a profession of faith after a gradual conversion process through personal encounters with other Christians rather than through a sudden experience or by attending an evangelistic event, according to a recent British study. The survey, conducted by the ecumenical organization, Researchers for Churches Together in England, finds that only 4 percent of those surveyed said they found their faith in Christ through an evangelistic rally or similar event. The National & International Religion Report (October 19) cites the study's researcher Pam Hanley as saying she was surprised by the influence women have over men in the conversion process. Male converts especially are subject to influences from wives or girlfriends. "Perhaps it's only with their wives or girlfriends that the barriers are down far enough for men to discuss these very personal matters," Hanley says. The study also finds that it was not uncommon for a conversion to take place after an important milestone in life, such as the birth of a child or the death of a loved one. (*National & International Religion Report*, P.O. Box 21433, Roanoke, VA 24018)

* Context newsletter (September 15) reports that religious giving totaled \$67.59 billion, up 2 percent from 1990 (adjusted for inflation); giving for education \$13.28 billion, up 2.2 percent; arts, culture, and the humanities drew \$8.81 billion, up 6.6 percent. Giving to human services was down 14.3 percent, and giving to health down 6.7 percent, according to the figures from the American Association of Fundraising Counsel's Trust for Philanthropy. The nine categories in the report, including "undesignated," received a total of \$124 billion. This means that religion, pulling in \$67 billion-plus, received more than half the total given. (*Context*, 205 W. Monroe St., Chicago, IL 60606)

* The same issue of the National & International Religion Report cited above carries a recent study showing that the ratio of non-Christians to Christians globally is 6.8 to 1, the lowest ever. The evangelical movement is also found to be growing three times faster than the world's population. These figures are from Lausanne Statistics Task Force led by world missions researcher David Barrett. It should be noted that he defines "Christian" broadly in this study, encompassing many people who have only a nominal Christian heritage.

* Citizens of European countries with a Catholic orientation are more likely to object to neighbors with AIDS and those who are immigrants and Muslims, according to a recent study. The European Value Systems Study Group, a network of academics who research the values and beliefs of different nationalities, polled nearly 20,000 people in 14 European countries on the question of whether they would want to live next to members of unpopular or minority groups. According to a summary of the study in the World Press Review (October), most Europeans object more to neighbors who they are afraid may cause trouble, such as drug addicts or heavy drinkers, than to those who are simply different in some way, as, for instance, being of another race. The greatest hostility to people with AIDS comes from the traditional Catholic countries of Italy, Spain, Ireland and Portugal. But in other respects, Spain and Ireland are "quite relaxed"-- for instance, toward heavy drinkers and people with large families. Concerning racial and religious minorities, the Belgians rated particularly intolerant, with the highest ratings opposed to immigrants (21 percent) and Muslims (26 percent).

* There is now a 57 percent approval rating for the Catholic Church in Poland-- a significant drop from the period of the revolution that overturned communism, according to a recent Polish opinion poll cited in the National Catholic Reporter (October 2). The poll showed that the approval rating for the church dropped 30 percent since the demise of communist rule in 1989. The church got lower public approval than the army, police, and state television. (National Catholic Reporter, P.O. Box 419281, Kansas City, MO 64141)

RUSSIAN CHRISTIANITY MAKES CHANGES FROM THE MARGINS AND THE BOTTOM

James Billington, Librarian of Congress and Russian historian, discusses the current state of Christianity in Russia and finds some trends that have largely been unreported in the media, probably because they are coming from unexpected quarters. In the Woodstock Report (October), the newsletter of the Woodstock Theological Center at Georgetown University, Billington says that in recent years there has "been a movement in from the periphery" in the Russian Orthodox Church as "a large number of Ukrainians entered the seminary. There were a significant number of Jewish converts and a large number of people in the seminaries who did not come from traditional Orthodox backgrounds at all. The Siberians have basically taken over the country...They bring with them a totally different orientation towards both democracy and religion, particularly towards ownership of and responsibility for property." Billington sees three different attitudes in the Russian church: "The first is apocalypticism...There has never been such a sustained apocalyptic mood in Moscow...[leading] to all kinds of occult and unbelievable calculations, conspiracy theories, the sense of the impending end of the

world, the third millenium." Secondly, the movement of nationalist "neoauthoritarianism" is growing and has the support of some of the church hierarchy and older members of the clergy.

Billington continues that the "third trend is the recovery of piety and the rediscovery of Christian community, particularly in the provinces." He adds that "there is an enormous interest at a journalistic level and at a personal level in parish development and in other Christian groups. There is a substantial sub-current of conversion to Catholicism and a considerable interest in fundamental Protestantism, both of which deeply worry the Orthodox hierarchy." There are the beginnings of new Christian communities, "such as the new hospital in the monastery at Petersburg. There is the Christian revival union which is setting up a voluntary association working for the reconstitution of agrarian life on a village level...The leaders of these activities are under 35. These are the people who were on the barricades. They are building new communities from the bottom up, renouncing the entire high political arena."

Billington sees in much of this the "beginning of a profound stage in the history of the Christian church. If one of the great poverties of Christianity in the modern world is the absence of authentic prophets, saints, and martyrs, in Russia you are dealing with a Christian community which has all three." The so-called "new martyrs" (those Christians persecuted under communism) have long been recognized by the Orthodox in exile, but only recently has the official Russian church had a ceremony recognizing several of them (although critics claim that the church still refuses to recognize the majority of the new martyrs). In another article, Thomas Bird adds that the above mentioned Catholic revival in the republics "is very much a 1990s Roman Catholic restoration [or conservative] church. It is being brought in under a hierarchy that is Polish and the tilt, the flavor, the mood...of the Catholicism that is being brought into those Republics now comes under the auspices of Opus Dei, Comunione e Liberazione and the neo-catechumenate." (Woodstock Report, Georgetown University, Washington, DC 20057-1097)

BRAZILIAN EVANGELICALS GAINING POLITICAL MATURITY, INDEPENDENCE

As the evangelical presence increasingly makes itself known in Latin America, it appears that these Protestants are gaining experience and expertise in politics-- at least in the case of Brazil. There has been some criticism within Latin American evangelical ranks that evangelical politicians have been too inexperienced and have discredited the churches [see December 91 RW]. But the evangelical magazine World (October 17) reports that during the recent impeachment proceedings against Brazil's President Fernando Collor, 25 out of the 26 evangelical deputies (or mayors) voted to oust the leader. Brazilian evangelical Caio Fabio says this is one sign of an emerging political maturity among Brazilian believers. Until about a year ago, most evangelicals would not have taken a position "against the government" on grounds that the Bible enjoins them to "submit to the authorities." He adds that there has been a recent attempt by evangelicals to teach Christians that each individual is accountable for his political stewardship and that he should avoid being manipulated at election time.

Such teaching has "not been popular with pastors of some of the larger charismatic churches, the evangelical leader indicated, since they have

tended to manipulate their people in order to deliver bloc voting," reports the magazine. A profile of Benedita da Silva, a popular evangelical candidate running for mayor of Rio De Janeiro, also shows how evangelicals are becoming an influential force in Brazilian politics. When Rio's religious leaders recently gathered to meet da Silva and discuss mobilization of the evangelical vote for her, it was the Pentecostal women who led in the initial balloting over the objections of the city's "Pentecostal chiefs." They campaigned against her because she was the candidate of the "PT," the workers' party that the church leaders fear is subject to Marxist influence. Fabio discounts such suspicions, since "People here vote for the candidate, not the party." He believes that da Silva got virtually all of the evangelical vote, despite the warnings of the Pentecostal chiefs. "In addition, she galvanized most of the people of color and the poor, who see her as their champion," the magazine adds. (World, Box 2330, Asheville, NC 28802)

SOUTH AFRICAN CHARISMATICS, EVANGELICALS SEEK MORE OUTSPOKEN ROLE

The appearance of a "Christian Manifesto" among South African charismatics and evangelicals may signal that they are moving away from their apolitical past into a more activist phase. The evangelical and charismatic churches are among the fastest growing segment of Christianity in South Africa, both among whites and blacks. The Twin Cities Christian newspaper (October 15) reports that the manifesto, released after the annual convention of the International Fellowship of Christian Churches (IFCC), says the churches sinned in not fulfilling the prophetic role to speak out against the many wrongs that were perpetrated, often in the name of God. The IFCC is made up of about 600 churches, including such large and influential evangelical congregations as the Hatfield Christian Church in Pretoria and Johannesburg's Rhema Church. The manifesto not only admits the wrongdoing of the evangelical churches, but also praises the efforts of President F.W. DeKlerk to correct past ills. The IFCC also pledges to assist in building a "peace-loving society based on justice and equality," and calls on government leaders to publicly seek forgiveness from the people.

Religion Watch

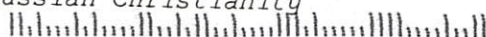
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— A Bi-Monthly Supplement of Religion Watch —

PRESS NOTES

November/December 1992

* Pro Ecclesia is a new theological journal that also shows the dimensions of a fairly new movement in American theology. Within mainline Protestant denominations there appears to be a growing movement of "evangelical catholics," who call for a return to historic Christianity, often shun Protestant individualism, and seek a rapprochement with Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy and Anglicanism. While often a minority in their own denominations, the founding of Pro Ecclesia and its sponsoring Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology suggests that these evangelical catholics are banding together to better promote their ideas. The quarterly's editors and advisors include a wide spectrum of theologians from Lutheran, evangelical, United Church of Christ, Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Methodist traditions. The first issue (Fall) suggests the journal will feature academic theology and church history, as well as more general articles for the lay reader. A subscription costs \$25 per year and is available from: The Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology, 5642 Endwood Trail, Northfield, MN 55057.

* The recession is forcing American congregations and religious organizations to pay attention to physical as well as spiritual needs. The summer issue of the newsletter Initiatives provides some examples of how congregations are dealing with unemployment among their members. The newsletter and its sponsor, the Catholic-based National Center for the Laity, is different from many religious social activist groups in that it focuses on the efforts of ordinary church members in their various professions rather than on the actions and statements coming from high levels of religious leadership in meeting such needs. This issue of Initiatives reports on the growth of congregation-based support groups around the country for the unemployed, which conducts such activities as job re-training and career counseling. The ecumenical newsletter also reports on how Christians make the connections between their faith and the workplace. A donation of \$15 is asked for a subscription, which is available from: National Center for the Laity, 1 E. Superior St., #311, Chicago, IL 60611

* The liberal National Catholic Reporter recently published two supplementary sections that may be of interest to readers. The September 11th issue has a nine-page section on the changing face of Hispanic theology in the U.S. While influenced by Latin American liberation theology (such as on the importance of "base communities"), the several Hispanic theologians and church leaders profiled have been forging their own identity based on the concept of "mestizaje," or the mixing of Latin and American cultures. The section also suggests that the various Hispanic national groups, such as Cubans, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and Colombians, are now working together on church and theological issues. There are also articles on Hispanic Protestants (noting that some Hispanic Protestant evangelicals are now cooperating with Hispanic Catholics), and a review of recent books on the subject.

The October 23rd issue features a 10-page supplement on interfaith relations, with an accent on the Catholic role in such activities. There

are articles on small groups of laity promoting ecumenism, Christian dialogues with non-Christian groups, the thawing of Southern Baptist-Catholic relations, and a profile of the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research, a key ecumenical center in the U.S. For more information on these two issues, write: National Catholic Reporter, P.O. Box 419281, Kansas City, MO 64141.

ON/FILE: A Survey of Groups, Movements and People Impacting Religion

1) REACH, Inc. is an organization that blends conservative black religion, self-help philosophy and communitarianism-- and serves it up with some controversy. REACH, which stands for Research, Education and Community Help, is the brainchild of Bishop Luke Edwards and his Greater Christ Temple Church in Meridian, Mississippi. Edwards started the organization to help his 200 church members become self-supporting in 1977. Today REACH is the vehicle through which its members buy and develop the many farmlands and businesses they now own, which includes supermarkets, restaurants, a meat processing plant, and about 2,000 acres of land in Mississippi and Alabama. The community, which is called "Holyland," also operates an elementary and high school in Emelle, Alabama (where most members live). Edwards says he started his community on the model of the Israeli kibbutz, and like the early pioneers of that movement, REACH preaches the redeeming value of work, along with conservative Christianity. Black leaders from the NAACP have charged that REACH is a "cult" and a "commune of Moonies," but there have been favorable reports on the organization from Alabama Public Television and CNN. Edwards says that he has drawn criticism because he preaches self-reliance, and he calls on churches to also start black-owned businesses instead of preaching "pie in the sky." REACH's address is: P.O. Box 5401, Meridian, MS 39301. (Source: Summer issue of the newsletter Issues & Views, P.O. Box 467, New York, NY 10025)

2) Frederick Lenz, known as the yuppie guru, is gaining a nationwide reputation for his combination of "a heavy dose of occultism, a dash of Buddhism, and constant pressure on his followers to make more money as free-lance computer programmers and consultants." Lenz, once a follower of Indian guru Sri Chinmoy, and known as Zen Master Rama, has "regained momentum after a 1987 interruption when a group of former students went public with stories of his seducing female devotees and 'brainwashing' his followers into believing only he could save them from 'psychic attacks' by demons and other lower spiritual entities." The Long Island-based Lenz has resurfaced on the West Coast with a series of lectures called "Empower Your Life"-- a "meditation and psychic development program" for affluent people in their twenties. In his new incarnation, Lenz has again been accused of making sexual advances toward young women. (Source: San Francisco Chronicle, July 30, and the Cult Observer, Vol. 9, No. 8)

Note to Readers: With the January, 1992 issue of Religion Watch, the subscription rate will be increased to \$19.95 per year for individuals and \$25 for libraries (write for foreign rates). The high costs of preparing and producing the newsletter necessitates this increased rate. This increase will also help defray the costs of publishing an annual RW subject index (which will appear in the December issue); readers have commented on how helpful a yearly index is for keeping track of the trends covered in RW. Up until January 1st, we will welcome renewals from subscribers at the current rate of \$17.50.