

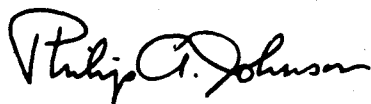
WORLDVIEW's First Twenty Years: A Word From the Publisher

In 1914 Andrew Carnegie inspired twenty-nine of the most prominent Christians and Jews of the day to establish The Church Peace Union. His objective and theirs was to enlist the resources of religion in the struggle for world peace.

That objective still guides the successors of that original group, since 1961 known as the Council on Religion and International Affairs (CRIA). Through studies, discussions, seminars, and publications we try to ask and answer the tough questions of war and peace, justice and reconciliation on the basis of values rooted in religious tradition and nourished in a continuous critical interaction between realistic analysis and the insights of faith.

Since its first appearance in 1958 *Worldview* has been central in CRIA's work, the most public and visible way in which we present international issues in the context of ethical concern. Today our rapidly expanding readership—from government, business, religion, media, and the academic community—is finding a breadth of vision and depth of analysis that is all too rare in the publishing world.

In this Twentieth Anniversary year I am pleased to salute the editors and authors who bring you this lively forum, but most of all you, the thoughtful readers (and letter-writers) who make possible *Worldview's* distinctive contribution. As we continue to think and work together over the next twenty years perhaps the elusive world of peace, justice, and human freedom we envision will be a bit closer than it was in 1914 or is today.



Philip A. Johnson

Publisher
President, CRIA

Correspondence

A "Durable Solution" to Fascism?

To the Editors: In "A Fascism in Our Future?" (*Worldview*, November, 1977) Dale Vree writes persuasively and pointedly about certain political and moral dangers now threatening the "democratic" nations. As he says, fascism may indeed come to us in the guise of something else and "triumph under another name."

However, the overall worth of what Mr. Vree says is somewhat lessened by his two closing paragraphs. It is extremely unsettling to have him say that the "only manageable and durable solution" to fascism is "religious faith." He appears to offer an overly simple answer to a very complex moral and political difficulty. While one easily sympathizes with his sentiments about faith—he is generally on the mark in what he offers as some of its defining characteristics—it does not seem that fascism or even the threat of it can be so easily forestalled by religious faith, even by that variant of it known as Christianity. One need only look at the main facts of recent European history to have legitimate doubts as to the strength of religious faith as a counterforce to fascism. And even the quickest perusal of such facts ought to occasion anything but optimism concerning the ability of religious faith to work against the Fascist outlook and its obvious attractiveness to a great many people, including those who should know better. One might wonder what religious faith did to prevent the blossoming of the Fascist movement and its subsequent popular acceptance in Italy and Germany. In particular one could wonder as to the whereabouts of the "soldier of Christ" in those countries and against whom (or what) he employed his combat skills in "daily battle."

It may be that "traditional religion" does call for self-discipline and sacrifice and that it does in truth protect us from "decadence and cultural polarization." At least one would hope

so. Still, even if it can be so efficacious, its accomplishments clearly have not been sufficient to prevent a Hitler and an Auschwitz, a Mussolini and a March on Rome. Perhaps then it is quite understandable why religious faith is "supposedly discredited" as a solution to and prophylaxis against fascism.

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Dale Vree Responds:

Actually, I was not greatly concerned with defending democratic nations against fascism. Indeed, in my last paragraph I spoke of the "danger of politics—any kind of politics..." and went on to speak of the paganism of liberals and conservatives as well as of Fascists and Marxists. I ended on an eschatological note, hoping for the Day when all false gods are desecrated.

The context of the remark that religious faith is the "only manageable and durable solution" was this: There are three fundamental alternatives to the jaded life: Marxism, fascism, and religious faith. I indicated a preference for religious faith for the reasons stated in the article—but *not* because it *has in fact been* an antidote to Marxism and fascism. (I could argue that the success of fascism—especially Nazism—presupposed the substantial secularization of European society, but I would rather pursue a different point.) Al-

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