


A Conference on Tolerance for Diversity of Religion or Belief

October 19-22, 1986

*Spring Hill Conference Center
725 County Road 6
Orono, Minnesota*

Sponsored by:

United Nations Association Minnesota

*Department of Professional Development and Conference Services
Continuing Education and Extension
University of Minnesota* 



SPONSORSHIP

The conference is sponsored by the University of Minnesota, the United Nations Association of Minnesota, the United Nations Association of the United States of America in cooperation with the World Federation of United Nations Associations in Geneva, Switzerland, and Project Tandem, Inc. of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Major funding has been provided by the U. S. Agency for International Development.

PURPOSE

The conference focuses on the formation of a response to the United Nations (U.N.) call for assistance in implementing the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. The two main objectives are to stimulate dialogue from diverse intellectual and cultural perspectives on the root causes and contemporary manifestations of intolerance based on religion or belief; and to recommend concrete action strategies to implement the 1981 U.N. Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.

OUTCOMES

A major contribution of the conference is that it will help develop core groups of individuals and organizations willing to contribute time, thought, and resources to implementing the spirit of the Declaration. The conference will recognize a variety of functional skills and interests for developing action recommendations. The four functional areas from which recommendations are expected to come are:

1. Analysis--ways in which special studies, research, and curricula can be developed in theological seminaries, universities, and colleges to combat and to eliminate intolerance based on religion or belief.
2. Law--ways in which efforts can be supported to examine international legal structures, national constitutions, national and local legislation, to make sure there is a legal framework for the Declaration in each nation-state of the U.N.
3. Education--ways in which broadly-based programs of education can be developed at all levels in schools, government, universities, voluntary organizations, and the media.
4. Development--ways in which organizations of diverse ideologies may be able to work together on humanitarian service projects in the "name and spirit" of tolerance, with mutual understanding and respect for each other.

AGENDA

Sunday, October 19, 1986

1:00 Registration
PM

6:00 Reception and Dinner

7:30 **OPENING PRESENTATIONS**

The evening session allows people to get to know one another. All delegates will be assigned to a small discussion group of 10 persons each, with even representation of international and USA participants. Each person will be asked to make a presentation in their group of up to five minutes on why they are at the conference and what they expect from it.

Discussion Group Leaders:

Peggy Carlin
Senior Vice President
United Nations Association of USA
New York, New York

The Reverend Donald Meisel
Senior Pastor
Westminister Presbyterian Church
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dan Owusu-Afari
President, United Nations
Association of Ghana
Accra, Ghana

Leroy Little Bear
Professor of Native American
Studies
University of Lethbridge
Alberta, Canada

Juliet Sheen
Research and Policy Division
New Wales Anti-Discrimination Board
Sydney, Australia

Kevin Boyle
Director, Article 19
Professor of Law
University College
Galway, Ireland

Erica-Irene Daes
Lawyer, Member U.N. Sub-
Commission on Prevention
of Discrimination and
Protection of Minorities
Athens, Greece

Einar Vetvik
Associate Professor of Political Science
Director of Social Research,
Diakonhjemmet
Sosialhøgskole
Oslo, Norway

Monday, October 20, 1986

9:00 AM Welcome

Don Fraser
Mayor
Minneapolis, Minnesota

9:15 A HISTORY OF THE 1981 U.N. DECLARATION

Freedom of belief is one of the rights proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly in 1948, and in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted in 1966. On November 25, 1981, the U.N. General Assembly proclaimed the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. The conference will open with a presentation on the history leading up to the adoption of this Declaration, and a review of the debates involved and the progress made toward its implementation.

Introduction of Topic:

David Weissbrodt
Professor of Law
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

History:

James Finn
U.S. Representative to the 1984
Geneva Seminar on the Declaration
New York, New York

Update:

Elizabeth Odio-Benito
U.N. Special Rapporteur
1981 Declaration
San Jose, Costa Rica

10:45 RELIGION AND THE 1981 U.N. DECLARATION

Recent proclamations such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1981 U.N. Declaration have ancient roots in world religions. Freedom of religion is a centuries old struggle. Increasingly, in recent times, human rights instruments have emphasized not only the right to profess any religion, but also the right to profess no religion, to change religious belief, or to adopt beliefs other than religious beliefs according to the individual's conscience. Given this universal approach to the elimination of intolerance and discrimination on the grounds of belief, whether theistic, agnostic, or atheistic, how best might the religions of the world approach the implementation of the 1981 U.N. Declaration?

Introduction of Topic:

William Thompson
Secretary-General
World Conference on Religion
and Peace
New York, New York

Address:

Jose Miquez Bonino
Former World Council of Churches
President and Theologian
Buenos Aires, Argentina

12:30 PM Lunch

2:00 "DOUBLING" IN NAZI DOCTORS--PATTERNS OF TOTALISM AND GENOCIDE

"Doubling" is a term used by a distinguished behavioral scientist to describe a confusing duality of affection and violence he found in his studies of Nazi doctors. It is a theory that evil, generally speaking, is neither inherent in any self nor foreign to it. Under certain kinds of psychological and moral conditions it can emerge. Crucial to that emergence is an ideology or world-view, a theory or vision that justifies or demands evil actions. What can this study tell us about the root causes of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief?

Introduction of Speaker:

Fred Lukermann
Dean, College of Liberal Arts
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Address:

Robert Jay Lifton
Distinguished Professor of Psychiatry
and Psychology
John Jay College of Criminal Law
New York, New York

3:15 IN WHAT TERMS CAN CLAIMS TO TRUTH BE UNITED TO POWER WITHOUT PRODUCING INTOLERANCE?

A distinguished panel will be asked to present their views on this question. All major belief systems involve creeds that lay claim to understanding the truth about human nature and how people should behave. Can this lead to a potential for abuse of others who do not believe in the same way? If so, how can religious and secular beliefs counteract this tendency to abuse based on claims to truth? Is there a female point of view on this question that differs from a male perspective? In addition to giving their own views, the panelists will be asked to respond to the address from the behavioral scientist which precedes the panel discussion, in reference to how they would incorporate his thoughts on the question of power and intolerance based on claims to truth.

Introduction of Speakers:

Max Shapiro
Rabbi
Saint Thomas College Center for
Jewish-Christian Dialogue
Saint Paul, Minnesota

Presentations:

Mohammed Talbi
Professor of the Arts and
Sciences
University of Tunis
Tunis, Tunisia

Devaki Jain
Economist
Institute of Social Studies Trust
New Dehli, India

Iwao Munakata
Dean, Graduate School of
Humanities and Social Science
Sophia University
Tokyo, Japan

6:00 Reception and Dinner

7:30 **ATHEISM AND THE 1981 U.N. DECLARATION**

Several socialist states have officially adopted atheistic constitutions. What does this mean for those institutions of religious faith going back centuries beyond this recent political change? What forms do intolerance and discrimination take toward theistic believers in states with atheistic constitutions? On the other side of the issue, what forms may intolerance and discrimination take toward atheistic thinkers in states with theistic state policies? Is there an opportunity to expand atheistic-theistic dialogue through the 1981 U.N. Declaration? What is being done now and what can be done in the future to implement provisions of the 1981 U.N. Declaration in socialist states?

Introduction of Speaker and Moderator:**Address:**

David Preus
Presiding Bishop
American Lutheran Church
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Adam Lopatka
Professor at Polish Academy of
Sciences and Minister of Church Affairs
Peoples Republic of Poland
Warsaw, Poland

Tuesday, October 21, 1986

9:00 **THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1981 U.N. DECLARATION**

AM

Non-governmental organizations have an important role to play in the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief. Major religious, human rights, educational, and academic institutions and organizations have material and human resources that can be used to implement the 1981 U.N. Declaration. This morning session is designed to educate non-governmental representatives on the relationship between their organizations and the United Nations. How do non-governmental organizations considering programs to implement the Declaration relate it to the work of the U.N.? Given the budget constraints of the U.N., how best might these groups be of assistance?

Introduction of Topic:**Address:**

Peggy Carlin
Senior Vice President
United Nations Association of the USA
New York, New York

Marek Hagmajer
Secretary-General
World Federation of United Nations Associations
Geneva, Switzerland

10:00 **ACTION MODELS TO PROMOTE RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY OF RELIGION OR BELIEF**

In preparation for small group discussions on strategies to implement the Declaration, a distinguished panel will present three models of action to reduce or eliminate intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief. The presentations will include an academic model reflecting on the role scholars have to play in interreligious-interideological dialogue, a report on the activities of a small organization engaged in cross-communal cooperation of opposing beliefs in a contemporary conflict, and a discussion of the principles of a large charitable organization applied across ideologies and based on the advantages of a non-religious approach to humanitarian service.

Introduction of Topic:

Barbara Knudson
Professor of Sociology
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Presentations:

*The Reverend John Morrow
Leader
The Corrymeela Community
Belfast, Northern Ireland*

*Leonard Swidler
Professor of Religion
Temple University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

*Kristian Sorensen
Secretary-General
Danish Red Cross
Copenhagen, Denmark*

12:30
PM Lunch

ENCOURAGING ACTION PROJECTS

From descriptions of action models that work, the participants will be encouraged to look to the future--to what they can do to implement the Declaration. Two presentations at lunch will provide inspiration to carry into the small group discussions in the afternoon. The first address will be by the president of the Unitarian-Universalists, a major religious association in North America with a reputation for tolerance of diversity and pluralism of belief. The second address will be by a member of the Nobel Peace Prize Committee, who will reflect on the meaning of the Nobel award for peace, criteria the awards are based on, and recent examples of persons and organizations who have won because they have brought opposing beliefs together.

Introduction of Speakers:

*Thomas Atchison
President, United Nations
Association of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota*

Presentations:

*The Reverend William Schulz
President
Unitarian-Universalist Association
Boston, Massachusetts*

*Francis Sejersted
Member
Nobel Peace Prize Committee
Norwegian Nobel Institute
Oslo, Norway*

2:30 **SMALL DISCUSSION GROUPS**

Participants will meet for the rest of the afternoon in small discussion groups of 10 members each. Each group will be asked to begin to formulate concrete action strategies for recommendation to the conference as a whole the following day. These can be in the form of papers already written, strategies such as those prepared ahead of time in Minnesota, or new ideas which come out of the group.

5:30 Dinner

7:00 **TOUR OF INTER-FAITH EXHIBIT: TENT OF MEETING**

In the evening all conference participants will be bussed to downtown Saint Paul to view a unique work of art on tour in the United States. The "Tent of Meeting" is a 40' x 25' tent in bedouin style. On its inner walls and ceiling are the symbols and stories of the three Abrahamic rooted Western religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The tour in Saint Paul is sponsored by the United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities as a way to foster dialogue, understanding, and cooperation between religions. It will be an opportunity for international participants to see the City of Saint Paul and to view a work of art of interest to the purpose of the conference.

Introduction to Exhibit:

*Howard Mills
President, United Theological
Seminary of the Twin Cities
New Brighton, Minnesota*

Address:

*Stephen Lewis
U. N. Ambassador
Canada*

9:00 Public Reception for Conference Participants

Wednesday, October 22, 1986

9:00 **SMALL DISCUSSION GROUPS**

AM
12:00 Lunch

1:00 **FUTURE STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE THE 1981 DECLARATION**

PM

Moderator:

*Robert Anderson
Bishop
Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota*

Presentations:

*Small Discussion Group
Special Rapporteurs*

Summation:

*Bertie Ramcharan
Special Assistant to the Director,
United Nations Centre for
Human Rights
Geneva, Switzerland*

4:00 Adjournment

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The fee for the entire conference is \$290, which includes attendance at all sessions; handout materials; refreshment breaks; and meals including dinner on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday and lunch on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

The one-day fee is \$100 and includes lunch and dinner, refreshment breaks, and handout materials. Please indicate on the registration form the day(s) which you will be attending.

Applications for registration accompanied by a remittance of the full fee should be received one week prior to the conference. After this day, call (612) 625-9023 to confirm your registration. Refund of fees may be made if cancellation is received in writing prior to the conference. A \$25 processing fee will be withheld from all refunds.

LOCATION AND ACCOMMODATIONS

The Spring Hill Conference Center, 725 County Road 6, Orono, Minnesota, will be the site of all sessions except the Tuesday evening tour of the inter-faith exhibit. A map indicating these locations will be sent with confirmation of your registration.

A limited number of sleeping rooms are available at the Spring Hill Conference Center. The fee is \$40 per night which includes single accommodations and breakfast. Please indicate on the attached form the nights for which you require reservations.

Nearby hotels include the Radisson Plymouth Hotel, 612-553-1600, 2705 N. Annapolis Lane, Days Inn Motel, 612-559-2400 2955 Empire Lane, and the Holiday Inn, 612-559-1222, 3000 Harbor Lane. Please contact these facilities directly for reservations. They are all located at highways 494 and 55 in Plymouth, Minnesota.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Lori Graven, Program Director
Professional Development and Conference Services
217 Nolte Center
315 Pillsbury Drive S.E.
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 625-9023

Michael Roan
Program Manager
Project Tandem, Inc.
11 Dell Place
Minneapolis, MN 55403
(612) 871-7676

The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, religion, color, sex, national origin, handicap, age, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

Registration Form

A Conference on Tolerance for Diversity
of Religion or Belief
October 19-22, 1986

63-13LG
Spring Hill Center
Orono, Minnesota

Name _____
Last First MI

Organization _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Position Title _____

_____ I enclose \$290 for the registration fee
_____ I enclose _____ at \$100 per day for the following day(s) _____ October 20 _____ October 21 _____ October 22
_____ I enclose _____ at \$40 per night for sleeping room accommodations at the Spring Hill Conference Center for the following
nights _____ October 19 _____ October 20 _____ October 21

Checks should be made payable to the **University of Minnesota** and sent to: Registrar, Department of Professional Development and Conference Services, University of Minnesota, 315 Pillsbury Dr. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455

Department of Professional Development and
Conference Services
University of Minnesota
Nolte Center for Continuing Education
315 Pillsbury Drive S.E.
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