

THE CHRISTIAN LAWYER®

Vol 4, No 2
Fall 2008

REDEEMING LAW TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

IN THIS ISSUE

The Advocates International Vision

Reaching the World God's Way

Global Reports from the Christian
Lawyer Movement: Africa, Asia,
Australia, Europe, Latin America,
North America, Oceania

Coffee and Contemplation

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 1:8 NIV

DO NOT LAY UP FOR YOURSELVES
TREASURES ON EARTH... BUT LAY
UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES IN
HEAVEN... FOR WHERE YOUR
TREASURE IS, THERE YOUR HEART
WILL BE ALSO. — MATTHEW 6:19-21 (ESV)

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IN THIS ISSUE

REDEEMING LAW TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

3

Redeeming Law: The Advocates International Vision

by Professor Michael Schutt

4

Go Back the Way You Came: Reaching the World God's Way

by Samuel E. Ericsson

7

Global Reports from the Christian Lawyer Movement

8

EUROPE

14

AFRICA

18

ASIA

22

LATIN AMERICA

26

NORTH AMERICA

30

OCEANIC

DEPARTMENTS

32

**Attorney Ministries
Coffee and Contemplation**

34

**Law Student Ministries
Law as a Calling**

36

**Christian Legal Aid
Legal Aid in Mombasa**

38

CLS Attorney Chapters

39

Sam Casey Tribute

40

Editor's Note

Samuel B. Casey
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AND CEO



REDEEMING LAW WITH LOVE AND GOOD WORKS

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering...and let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...

HEBREWS 10:23-24

According to Christian tradition, it all began when that first “Christian lawyer,” the Apostle Paul, wrote his “word of exhortation” (Hebrews 13:22) to the Hebrew Christians living outside of Jerusalem urging them to persevere in their faith in Jesus Christ, despite the persecution and many obstacles they were facing. Since that first century when, in obedience to Jesus’ prophetic command in Acts 1:8 to bear “witness of Jesus” from the “Jerusalem” where they worked and lived to the “ends of the earth,” Christians have been “assembling together” for love and good works.

So it should come as no surprise that the three English-speaking North American Christian law fellowships, the Canadian Christian Legal Fellowship (CLF, founded 1978), the Christian Legal Society (CLS, founded in 1962) in the United States, and Advocates Caribbean (AC, founded in 2007), at the invitation of Advocates International (AI, founded in 1992), have announced that commencing this Fall they will be working together in a regional association called Advocates North America (ANA), in strategic partnership with AI, to promote justice, sanctity of life, rule of law, religious freedom, peace and reconciliation and family life.

Advocates North America began taking shape last summer when Ruth Ross (representing CLF), Sam Ericsson (representing AI) and I (representing CLS) were all invited to speak to the first annual conference of Advocates Caribbean in Trinidad & Tobago (T&T) by AC’s President, T&T Judge Alice Soo Hon. As the result of the conference, it was decided that CLF, CLS and AC would explore the formation of Advocates North America in order to best address many of the common challenges our fellowships face and to represent North America on the global council being formed by Advocates International to guide its global vision and mission commencing with the GLOBAL CONVOCATION OF CHRISTIAN LAWYERS (the “CONVOCATION”) in Washington DC, October 6-12, 2008.

In preparation for this historic Convocation, this issue of the CHRISTIAN LAWYER has been prepared not only to encourage every CLS member to consider attending the Convocation, but also better see your legal practice not just from a global “end of the earth perspective” perspective, but also from an eternal one.

C.S. Lewis said his trust in and love for Jesus Christ was not simply because one thing or another seemed to prove his faith to be credible. Rather, after examining all he knew about life, reason, imagination, experience and practice (personal and social), Lewis concluded “*I believe in Christianity as I believe the sun has risen, not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else.*”

Likewise, as you read this CHRISTIAN LAWYER, we trust that you will be impressed with the many “justice reports,” showing the ways and means Jesus is truly the unifying and motivating factor in the Christian law movement worldwide. We also hope you will be equally impressed that no matter where the Christian lawyer is practicing on God’s green earth and what challenges are being presented, we are all seeking to be concerned with the “weightier matters of the law” that so concerned Jesus: doing justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with God.

Finally, as I write my last column and conclude my service at CLS as your “executive servant,” I pray that every CLS member will be inspired to see how, with God’s grace, we may never cease gathering together to use our gifts, legal training, experience and resources for the love and good works Jesus seeks to accomplish through the legal profession, not just down the street, but around the world.

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Fall 2008, Volume 4, No. 2

Editor-in-Chief & Publisher
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Design & Production:
Custom Designers, Inc.

Editorial Office
The Christian Lawyer
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3001 Braddock Rd, Suite 300
Springfield, VA 22151

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Advertising Office:
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285 Whittlewood Lane
Winchester, VA 22602
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Advertising E-mail:
info@adguidance.com

Advertising in *The Christian Lawyer* does not imply editorial endorsement. The *Christian Lawyer* does not offer subscriptions.

Opinions expressed in *The Christian Lawyer* are solely the responsibility of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors or members of the Christian Legal Society.

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 **CHRISTIAN
LEGAL SOCIETY**

The Christian Lawyer is a publication of the Christian Legal Society, 3001 Braddock Road, Suite 300, Springfield, VA 22151. Tel: (703) 642-8070; Fax: (703) 642-8075.

The Christian Legal Society is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization, gifts to which are deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

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REDEEMING LAW:

The Advocates International Vision

By Professor Michael Schutt

Redeeming law. Really? Redeeming? Law?

Yes, really: God is indeed in the business of redeeming all of his creation, including the law and legal institutions twisted by human sin. And there's more: Law—even ordinary human law—can have redeeming value in this world as God uses it to reconcile, vindicate, punish, restore, and reveal. So our theme this year is not only about God redeeming the law, but also about God redeeming through law. And while the theme is new this year, the conviction that God ministers through lawyers and that he ministers to lawyers has been at the heart of the Advocates International vision since its founding in 1991.

As Advocates founder Sam Ericsson explains, God carries out his ministry in law through lawyers who gather locally, organize nationally, network regionally, and disciple globally. This is the vision of redeeming law.



What does this look like for lawyers around the world?

John closes his second epistle by telling his readers that he has more to say, but rather than write, he hopes to come to them and talk face to face, so that their "joy may be complete" (2 Jn. 12). When lawyers gather face to face, sharing their professional struggles, their vision, their stories, joyful empowerment for redemptive ministry follows. Even lawyers are created for community.

Of course, living in local community is not enough. God empowers us to engage the world, to use our legal training and talents to minister wherever he places us. God will use us to accomplish his work in redeeming law and institutions. It requires humble submission to him over political agendas and personal ambition, and it demands faithful, biblical thinking regarding legal solutions to struggles we face in the regime in which he has placed us. God equips us in a variety of ways—whether it be to come alongside the righteous, to vindicate the rights of the oppressed, to speak truth to tyrants, or to govern wisely.

This is redeeming law. May the Lord continue to guide Advocates International as it carries out this global vision to gather and to engage.



Michael P. Schutt is the author of Redeeming Law: Christian Calling and the Legal Profession. He is the Director of the Christian Legal Society's Institute for Christian Legal Studies and also is an associate professor at Regent University, where he has taught since 1993. His subjects include Tort, Legal Ethics, and Business Associations, among others, and he has written and taught on the relationship of lawyers, faith, and culture.

GO BACK THE WAY YOU CAME: REACHING THE WORLD God's Way

by Samuel E. Ericsson • Advocates International

The providence of Christ (His-Story) in all of our lives includes adventure, drama, mystery and suspense as we seek "Thy will be done." Jesus is the Author of life (Acts 3:15), of our salvation (Heb. 2:10) and of our faith (Heb. 12:2). "He is before all things and in Him all things hold together" (Col. 1:17). An author precedes his story and holds the story together by words, sentences, paragraphs and chapters. Psalm 139:16 declares, "All the days ordained for me were *written* in your book *before* one of them came to be."

Jesus is the ultimate Author in all believers' lives and in particular the story of Advocates International (AI). Jesus told the disciples that "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth." AI's mission is Acts 1:8 in action: *Bearing witness of Jesus Christ through the legal profession by encouraging and enabling advocates to meet locally, organize nationally, cooperate regionally and link globally.* AI's network informally links 30,000 lawyers and judges in over 120 nations, and the L - O - R - D provides an outline for AI's mission.

L = Local Fellowships.

"... you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem."

Jesus' strategy begins in the city where we live and work. After leaving CLS in 1991, I received two independent phone calls just two weeks later. They were both invitations for me to visit Sofia, Bulgaria, a city that had never crossed my mind in any significant way. The first call was from CLS member Roger Sherrard and the second was from Paul Popov, a stranger from Pasadena, California. During our conversation, Paul and I discovered that 40 years earlier, his mother and my father had worked in the same offices in Stockholm, Sweden. The Author was at work!

Roger and I flew to Sofia the next month and we have returned to the Balkans 30 times since then. During my 5th visit, I met a young Christian judge who, along with three others, joined me in a café inside the former Communist Party headquarters building to declare, "Karl Marx, you lose. Jesus Christ, you win."

A few visits later, I met Latcho Popov, who began mentoring lawyers in Bulgaria. Together, we organized the Rule of Law Institute (RLI) in 1995, and by 2000, the institute had 80 lawyer members engaged in advancing human rights, religious freedom, conflict resolution and ethics. The RLI today has over 200 active members meeting in local fellowships in 10 cities around Bulgaria. The former US Ambassador to Bulgaria told me RLI was the most effective non-governmental organization in the Balkans. Latcho also serves as the president of the 35-nation regional group, Advocates Europe.

continued on page 6

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AI'S NETWORK INFORMALLY LINKS 30,000 LAWYERS AND JUDGES IN OVER 120 NATIONS, AND THE L-O-R-D PROVIDES AN OUTLINE FOR AI'S MISSION.

O = Organize nationally.

“... you will be my witnesses...in all Judea.”

Jesus' strategy moves from the city to the countryside. I have learned this lesson through my visits to South Korea. I have been there ten times and each time encouraged the Koreans to meet locally and organize nationally. Several small Christian lawyer groups have been meeting there for fellowship, prayer and evangelism, but the groups were only concentrating on the “local” fellowship. They were not focused on the great legal issues facing the Church throughout Asia.

In 2001, I attended a prayer breakfast with 70 Korean judges and lawyers at the Supreme Court in Seoul. I did not understand the Korean speaker at the time, so I sat and read Ephesians 5 and watched the verses leap off the page, “*Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.*” Afterward, I shared that the issues facing Asia were not the responsibility of a Swedish immigrant living in Virginia. I challenged the Koreans to *make the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.* I encouraged them to organize Advocates Korea and asked them to consider hosting Advocates Asia for the first Asian conference of Christian lawyers in Seoul later that year. The Koreans accepted the challenge.

After the prayer breakfast, a former chief prosecutor provided his car and driver so I could visit an 81-year-old lawyer dying of Parkinson's in a Seoul hospital. I sat down in the backseat of the luxury car and the driver asked permission to listen to the English Bible on CD. He pushed the play button and the reader began, “*Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.*” The probability that the reader would start with the same verse I had quoted 30 minutes earlier is astounding! There are 31,173 verses in the Bible. It once again proved that the Author of His-Story was at work, again!!

Advocates Korea became a reality and hosted the first Asia conference that year. Advocates Asia now links 30 nations, including lawyers from Malaysia, Singapore, and other Asian nations, encouraging lawyers throughout Asia “for such a time as this!” No national group has had a greater impact on a region than Advocates Korea in Asia.

R = Regional networks.

“... you will be my witnesses ... in all ... Samaria.”

Jesus' strategy challenges us to focus on cross-cultural matters. Peruvian Law Professor Nina Balmaceda returned to Lima after the AI Global Convocation in 2000 and organized CLS of Peru. She also helped Advocates Latin America hold its first regional conference in 2001. One year later, two Uruguayan lawyers returned home from the Costa Rica regional conference and organized the Christian Legal Institute of Uruguay (CLIU). In 2004, CLIU, Nina and groups in 15 Latin nations worked to derail efforts by international abortion groups to make Uruguay the first Latin American nation to adopt an abortion on demand law.

D = Disciple globally.

“... you will be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth.”

How do one-lawyer and three secretaries in Virginia impact the globe for Christ? It is impossible from a human standpoint. Thankfully, Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would empower us to be his witnesses *to the ends of the earth.*



AI's mission took a significant turn in August 1999 when I discovered I had massive bladder cancer. The cancer triggered waves of prayer support. Lawyers are not a high priority on anybody's prayer list, but friends of AI around the globe realized the need for prayer. Likewise, as I was dealing with cancer, AI lawyers around the world took the initiative to meet locally, organize nationally, cooperate regionally and link globally. It was no longer up to me!

AI took another turn in a few years later. In July 2003, while walking down some steps at home, I fell and broke seven ribs and punctured my right lung. The x-rays also showed that the bladder cancer had spread to my right lung. Amazingly, we would have never discovered the lung cancer if I had not fallen. The fall also inspired AI to produce the *When Things Go Wrong* card with the five Bible verses that I often use in counseling. There are now over 600,000 cards in 24 languages, including Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew, Hindi, Mongolian, and Russian. Lawyers around the globe distribute these cards to other lawyers, clients, pastors and prisoners. The Kenyan Christian Lawyer Fellowship distributes hundreds of cards within the prisons where KCLF members provide legal aid.

Cancer was not part of my plans in 1999, and the fall was not in our program for 2003. However, they were part of God's plan to help a small staff disciple “to the ends of the earth.” *I can do everything through him who gives me strength.* (Phil 4:13)



Sam Ericsson is the president of Advocates International, which he launched in the early 1990s to create a global network of lawyers committed to religious liberty, human rights, conflict resolution and ethics.

Africa



North America



Asia



Global Reports from the Christian Lawyer Movement

Latin America



Oceania



Europe





Eastern Europe, Religious Liberty and the Role of Christian Lawyers since the Fall of the Wall

by Roger D. Sherrard

BULGARIA

In 1991, when Sam Ericsson and I were at the airport in Sophia, Bulgaria, waiting for our return flights to the United States, we were elated. We had seen seeds which God had planted.

Sam remarked, in pure Ericssonian fashion, "Not since St. Paul have lawyers been able to be missionaries to other countries." We knew we were on the cutting edge of an Ephesians 4:14 experience, "...for such a time as this." Before that initial trip to Bulgaria and before Advocates even existed, we had only imagined the experiences we would see serving other countries.

To our amazement, the chorus of the most popular song in Bulgaria in the summer of 1991 contained the words "pray for Bulgaria; God grant my Bulgaria a way, light and liberty." While discussing the principles of liberty with law students and lawyers in Bulgaria, we commented that we are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights and that no person can grant or take away those rights. A Bulgarian law student said he knew where that concept came from: the U.S. Declaration of Independence, which he had studied as a revolutionary document. Another student said that they always knew who the Creator was; they just couldn't say it in Communist classes. Later, during that visit, these sentiments were confirmed by the words of a leading lawyer in the country who said, "We now battle, not with guns and swords, but with words and ideas, a battle of the spirit." God had been planting seeds for many years in Bulgaria for freedom and religious liberty.

ALBANIA

The next year, Sam and I ventured to Albania, where we discovered more seeds had been planted and more doors were opened. Although the Albanian people had experienced one of the most repressive governments in the world, we found a similar openness. The leaders of Albania were ready to fill the void left by the collapse of an official atheistic state. When Albanian Vice President Peter Arbori asked us to suggest a rule to govern parliamentary activities, I answered, "The Golden Rule: Treat others the way you want to be treated." The vice president, a dissident who had spent many years in prison, scribbled diagrams on a piece of paper and then concluded, "This, my friends, is a universal rule. It applies person to person, government to government and between government and persons." Five years later, after we had had the opportunity to be advisors to the drafting committee concerning religious liberty provisions of their constitution, we saw the fruit of those seeds in the first words of the preamble to the Albanian Constitution, which begins, "We, the people of Albania, proud and aware of our history, with responsibility for the future and with faith in God ..." (emphasis added). Reading further in the body of the Constitution, we were encouraged to find our suggestions implemented with the effective and comprehensive provisions for individual freedoms and religious liberty.

In 1993, Advocates International was invited to sponsor the first annual Albanian judicial seminar on the subject of "Equal Justice under the Law." Advocates' lawyers and judges were able to convey an amazing sense of justice under the law based on the overriding principle of the Golden Rule.

Not only have we experienced these seeds, but we have heard amazing stories of others. The northern Albanian town of Shkodra exists as a seminal example of religious tolerance. After Communism fell, Catholic, Orthodox and Muslim believers helped one another rebuild their places of worship. Later, when the surrounding nation of Yugoslavia was literally in flames, provocateurs tried to incite the people of Shkodra by saying that the Catholics were going to burn down the mosque and the Muslims were going to burn down the Catholic cathedral. Leaders from each faith slept in one another's places of worship until the threat subsided. The example of religious liberty and tolerance is one for the world to see.

Cathedral in
Varna, Bulgaria



On a recent visit to Shkodra, I could not help but reflect Christ's words to St. Peter: "...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). The faith of the believers in Shkodra had withstood the scourges and persecution of Communism and had prevailed.

LAWYERS

After more than 17 years and more than 40 visits to emerging democracies, I cannot but help reflect that "God works through willing people." Lawyers have a unique opportunity to use their training and experience to advance justice, serve in other countries and advocate the God-given principles of liberty and freedom as advisors, counselors and brothers and sisters of believers in other countries. The seeds have been planted. Now it's time to multiply the harvest.



Roger D. Sheppard is a business and estate planning attorney in Poulsbo, Washington. A West Point graduate and decorated combat veteran, Mr. Sheppard is the founding Board Chair of Advocates International. Mr. Sheppard and his wife, Katie, have two sons.

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The L-O-R-D in Eastern Europe

Meeting Locally in Sofia and elsewhere, Organizing nationally in Bulgaria, cooperating Regionally in the Balkans & Europe and Disciplining globally

by Latchezar Popov

The Lord reached into my life in May 1994 to take it in a whole new direction personally and professionally. It has never been the same. I received a visit from Advocates International President Sam Ericsson after church one Sunday. We had a short, friendly chat, during which Sam asked if I would be willing to try gathering a group of Christian lawyers in Sofia, Bulgaria. I found the idea interesting, and a few months later, Sam invited me to a Christian Legal Society (CLS) National Conference in Snowbird, Utah.

A New Experience

Some time later, I traveled to Utah and saw something I had never before experienced – lawyers, judges and law students from across the United States praying, worshipping, lecturing and encouraging each other in their walks with Christ. On the last evening of testimonies, I shared my personal story and CLS CEO Sam Casey invited me to stand on the podium while more than 400 lawyers prayed for me and my ministry in Bulgaria. It was then that my life changed and my ministry took a new and more affirmative direction. I returned to Bulgaria with a list of a few young lawyers and arranged meetings with all four of them. Soon thereafter, the five of us began meeting every Tuesday evening in my office to pray and support each other. Those meetings have continued for 14 years, and they now include many more lawyers and followers of Christ.

In early 1995, the Central Student Administration, which owned the building where my office was located, terminated my rental contract under the pretext that we were, in their words, “using the premises for sectarian gatherings.” I was forced to quickly relocate my office and rent a tiny basement. Nevertheless, we continued our lawyers’ gatherings, although sometimes we found ourselves locked out of the basement or even meeting outside in public parks, my car, and even in the pouring rain. Yet, those times bring back some of the most thrilling memories of my walk with Christ and the birth of our organization in Bulgaria.

RLI

By the end of 1995, we had registered “Rule of Law Institute” Bulgaria (RLI) with the Bulgarian authorities, which later became the nation’s premier organization of Christian lawyers. Since that time, we have reached more than 200 Christian lawyers, judges, prosecutors, magistrates and law students spanning multiple denominations, including evangelicals, Protestants, Eastern Orthodox and Catholics. We now have groups of lawyers in twelve cities, and our network continues to grow. Additionally, our young lawyer exchange program has enabled us to send more than 100 lawyers to international events, and to welcome twelve interns from the USA, United Kingdom and Peru.

RLI has also edited and published seven books in the field of integration of faith and practice, human rights, reli-



Sofia Cathedral



religious freedom, and peacemaking. The Bulgarian National Library thanked RLI for its book on monitoring religious freedom and announced that it sent copies to the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., the New York Public Library, Stanford University Library, British Library, Bodleian Library at Oxford University, National Library in Paris, and State Library in Moscow. Throughout the years, we also have organized more than 100 seminars and conferences for more than 1,500 participants, as well as 100 business breakfasts with more than 1,000 attendees. These activities and initiatives have been described in numerous articles and mass media broadcasts.

RLI is a sister-organization of Advocates Europe and Advocates International, the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Union of Jurists in Bulgaria, and Bulgarian Business Leaders Forum. We also coordinate the Balkan Human Rights Network – an international NGO which boasts the membership of many Southeastern European countries. RLI also had the honor of receiving special recognition from the 38th Bulgarian National Assembly for its contribution in abolishing the visa regime imposed by the European Union. In addition, RLI presented a report on the Bulgarian state of religious freedom at the 50th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva.

Advocates Europe

On September 11, 2001, RLI sent 21 delegates to Lisbon, Portugal, where sixty European Christian lawyers were gathered to establish Advocates Europe (AE). The purpose of AE is to encourage and enable lawyers to meet locally, organize nationally, cooperate regionally, and link globally to promote justice, the rule of law, religious freedom, reconciliation, and integrity. Associated with AE are European

advocates pledged to uphold Christian ethical values in the law. Since its establishment, AE members have participated in events and shared experiences with the members of the African, Asian, Australian, and North and South American Christian Lawyer networks.

Since 2001, AE has sponsored three Balkan and five European Conferences. Additionally, since 2004 AE has been the initiator and co-organizer of the annual European Religious Liberty Forum – an informal network of Christians working primarily to promote religious liberty in Europe. Today, we have 30 active members from 14 European countries participating regularly in the Forum.

AE currently has established key contacts in 35 European countries, twenty-four of which are sending a record-breaking number of delegates to the Global Convocation this October. The most active European networks are in Bulgaria and the UK, and there are growing networks in France and Ukraine. AE cooperates with networks in Germany and Holland, and networks in Romania, Serbia and Albania are expected to follow suit.

We have done more than we ever imagined and thank the Lord for His many blessing. Moreover, we look forward to seeing what the Lord has in store for AE and RLI.

Latcho Popov (teaching below), a lawyer in Sofia, Bulgaria, is in private practice and is also the head of the Rule of Law Institute. The Institute is engaged in many projects to promote religious freedom in Bulgaria and is now beginning to pursue biblical peacemaking as part of its agenda. Latcho is the European coordinator for Advocates International.



Freedom of Speech or Freedom from Hearing?

By Mats Tunehag

Should the press be prevented from publishing cartoons that may be offensive to Muslims? Should businesses refrain from saying "Merry Christmas?" Is it hate speech to say that homosexuality is a sin according to the Bible? The answers to these questions reflect the changing protections of the freedom of speech and freedom of religion in Europe and around the world.

The U.N. Declaration of Human Rights covers religious freedom. Article 18 of the declaration has three main components: to have, express, and change your faith. This implies, among other things, the right to take faith into the public arena, to meet with others of same faith, as well as the right to change faith, i.e. to convert. The freedom of speech also is foundational as well as essential for other freedoms and rights, including freedom of the press and the right to open political debate, freedom to manifest religious beliefs, and freedom of expression in art and music.

Unfortunately, there are increasing attacks on these freedoms, the very foundations of democracy, even in the Western world. Some individuals from Muslim, secular, and homosexual groups are demanding extraordinary restrictions on freedom of speech, which are negatively affecting other human rights. Just a few examples:

In October 2007, a seemingly innocent advertisement in the Stockholm underground caused a national debate. The advertisement, sponsored by the Swedish Evangelical Alliance, promoted keeping the legal definition of marriage as being between one man and one woman. The ad simply said: "mum, dad, kids." Some prominent politicians called for a ban of such messages. They argued that the ad could be perceived as offensive to people who are single, divorced or homosexual. Some even labeled it "hate speech".

Pakistan was the agent for the Islamic Conference-backed resolution that was passed by the UN Human Rights Council in March 2007 in Geneva. The resolution's basic message and purpose is to create a "criticism-free-zone" for Islam. It is worth noting that Islamic and other non-democratic countries voted for the resolution while democracies voted against it.

FREEDOM OF HEARING WILL KILL FREEDOM OF SPEECH.

The freedom to express one's views and opinions in writing, speech, and art inevitably means that others may differ or even take offense. It is the nature of freedom of speech. One cannot guarantee that nobody will ever be offended by a message — political, religious, or otherwise. One may say that Mohammed is the last prophet, another may disagree. Some will assert that Jesus is God and others may find that ridiculous or even offensive. Some may argue for homosexual marriage and others for limited abortion rights. But all these things are foundational for a functional democracy, which is based on the individual right to express and convey differing opinions.

Freedom of speech puts the emphasis on the speaker and what is said; the right to say basically anything, even things that are not true (for instance, that the earth is flat). Unfortunately, there is a reverse trend toward emphasizing the *hearer* and *what is being heard* or how things are perceived, including the possibility that an individual or group may feel hurt or offended by what has been expressed. This is a move from the objective (what was expressed) to the subjective (how was it received, perceived).

So where are we headed? Is there a trend toward "a right to NOT be offended" (in particular, it seems, for Muslims & homosexuals) and thus *limited* rights for others to express different opinions? "Freedom from hearing" will kill freedom of speech. The ramifications are not only a threat to religious liberty but to democracy itself — and thus, to everyone.



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Religious Freedom and Its Tendencies

By John Langlois



It seems like an eternity has passed since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The world had lived through 34 years of a Cold War and the dangers of "mad" Mutually Assured Destruction, a time when persecution of Christians and others was extreme. But a "New Era" had dawned, a new age free from persecution when democracy would flourish and humankind would be more secure. Two decades later, however, it all seems so naïve.

We have forgotten that our human experience on this planet is one of continuous spiritual warfare between good and evil, reflecting the real conflict "in the heavens" between God and Satan. The Wall did not divide the world between good and evil, and Satan merely changed his tactics but not his goal.

Since 1989, we have seen a huge escalation in religious persecution across the world. Christians in the Muslim world have endured a vastly increased level of discrimination and persecution in virtually all Muslim countries. The same can be said about Christians in India, persecuted by Hindus, and Christians in Sri Lanka, persecuted by Buddhists. The remaining Communist countries of North Korea, China and Vietnam continue to relentlessly persecute Christians.

Even in the so-called liberal "free democracies," true religious freedom continues to be an elusive goal. In Europe, the European Convention on Human Rights was supposed to be an instrument to protect citizens from oppression. It

guarantees religious freedom, yet maintaining freedom to maintain Biblical values is a constant spiritual battle. Those with "alternative lifestyles" use the Convention to achieve not only "equality." Christian teaching as well as Christian values are removed from schools in Europe so that "alternative lifestyles" and "alternative family structures" are promoted as equal to the traditional family structures that God ordained at Creation.

In our post-modern age, the lack of knowledge of what is right and what is wrong erodes religious truth. It is an age when there are no absolutes. Standing up for what one believes is regarded as irrelevant in a relativistic world where one's belief is considered personal and subjective to the person asserting it.

Ten years ago, religion was not on the world political agenda. Today it is virtually at the top. Unfortunately, it is often perceived not as a force for good, but as promoting intolerance, conflict, and communal disharmony.

Nearly two decades after the Wall came down, simplistic assumptions as to the way religious freedom can be achieved have all but disappeared. Like Hydra, the many-headed water serpent in Greek mythology, when we think we have cut off one head of persecution, two new heads appear. That will continue, especially as Christian lawyers battle the serpent on the front lines.

There will always be persecution. It is a continual battle which began with man's Fall in the Garden of Eden. Humankind is still in rebellion against God and will continue until Christ's return. Those of us who are redeemed by Jesus are called by Him as part of His Body to share the sufferings of our fellow believers who are being persecuted for Christ's sake, and in that way share His own suffering for fallen humankind.



John E. Langlois has been a leading member of the Bar of the Island of Guernsey, Channel Islands, for over three decades during which time he has specialised in offshore finance, companies and trusts. John is a board member of Advocate International, a board member of the World Evangelical Alliance and chairman of the WEA Religious Liberty Commission. Between 1980 and 2004 he served as an elected member of the parliament and government of the island of Guernsey for the majority of the time as a senior minister in the government. In 2005 he was awarded an OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire) by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth for services to the community and for his charitable work.



Africa and Christian Lawyers

By Adebayo ("Bayo") Ademola Akinlade

Africa as a continent could easily become a world leader if its rulers and people decide to do the right thing by curbing corruption, upholding the rule of law, and respecting fundamental human rights. However, there are some powerful vices that have sought to destroy the continent and keep it underdeveloped.

The continent includes 54 independent countries and is projected to reach one billion in population before 2010. Its vast mineral deposits provide the world with much needed energy and other resources. Ironically, however, Africa also is the most deprived and poverty-stricken continent, as sickness and disease eat away at its population every day. Thirty-four out of 53 African countries are counted amongst the world's "Least Developed Countries."

ADVOCATES AFRICA

In 1999, on the invitation of Samuel E. Ericsson, founder of Advocates International, a group of lawyers from Africa met in the United States and started a network which at the time was called the African Christian Lawyers Network (ACLN). By 2005, the network had grown with contacts in over 35 countries in Africa and became Advocates Africa (AA) through electing its first Board and adopting a constitution.

AA is now a large network of Christian lawyers, advocates, judicial officers and law students organized into national associations located in the different African countries. The national organizations consist of local chapters and individual members.

African lawyers in general have a great potential to positively and effectively influence the destiny of Africa through constructive programs that mobilize and empower civil society. Legal professionals are placed at high levels of society and are ideally positioned to engage with people at grass-roots level to provide legal education and training on issues of democracy, human rights, good governance, and rule of law. At the same time, they can participate in developing and influencing political and legal systems in both the public and private sectors. Therefore, legal professionals contribute substantially toward the realization of the "African Century," as defined by both the African Union and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), by strengthening and developing African democracies through the legal profession.



OBJECTIVES OF ADVOCATES AFRICA

The main objective of AA is to engage African Christian lawyers, judges and law students to serve and assist governments and civil society groups with different aspects of constitutional development and democratic processes in their nations and regions. AA also will continue to inform, train and equip lawyers so that they can actively work for a more equitable and just society in their respective nations by "doing justice with compassion" as they practice law.

The national organizations meet in their respective countries each year, and gather every two years at continental conferences. The continental meeting is hosted on a rotational basis in the four regions of the continent. This continental meeting is essential as the national organizations gather to review and plan for the development of the continental network and strengthen their capacity to serve the people of Africa more effectively.



Gathering of African attorneys from left to right: Julien Bangwayenga (Burundi), Joseph Ndiawso (Senegal), Fatima Lopy Bago (Niger), Jean-Marie Kofia (Benin), Diane-Eli Tchikoua (Ivory Coast), Logan Binangyigye (Burundi), Alison Dians (Mali), Daniel Thera (Mali) Kossi Lou Deroua (Togo)

Moreover, individual members of the network meeting in small Christian lawyer groups who consider their profession to be a calling through which they are to serve humanity. The ethics and values they apply are synonymous with a Biblical standard of law and justice and are committed to serve individuals and their nations to build long-term sustainable democracies that will ensure civil liberties for all Africans.

AREAS OF OPERATIONS

The ongoing development of Advocates Africa seeks to serve Africa and make significant contributions to the transformation of nations in Africa in the following areas:

Legal Aid for the Poor

AA is dedicated to providing legal aid for the poor and disenfranchised. On numerous occasions, the AA network reaches out to help the plight and/or distress of individuals in need of legal aid by contacting members in the relevant country. The importance is particularly high in "Third World" countries where systems are not adequately developed to serve the people with efficiency or give adequate access to justice.

Constitutional Development and Democratization

Many African nations are currently working to build their countries into sustainable democracies. The cultural and socio-economic conditions of most citizens make them vulnerable to the exploitation of unscrupulous politicians and governments. AA, however, can be a strong resource of qualified legal professionals who are committed to strengthening their nations by equipping people to engage effectively in democratic processes. The establishment of civil rights are vital to this process in order to establish accountability and transparency in government. AA members also are used to monitor elections and evaluate other programs vital to the stability and development of emerging nations.

Combating Corruption

The notorious administrations in African countries demand that Africa's civilian population get involved in

fighting bribery and corruption. AA provides a civil society forum that can support and act on behalf of "whistleblowers" that report illegal activities, which are otherwise covered up by corrupt officials.

Defending Human Rights

AA is dedicated to protecting the right to life, religious freedom, freedom of expression, the right to legal representation, freedom of movement, residence and security, freedom of association and political rights.

Currently, Advocates Africa has initiated a program called "Project Nehemiah." The project is aimed at rebuilding the walls of justice throughout Africa. The individual national groups will plan and execute a project aimed at fostering the cause of justice for 52 days, starting on February 1, 2009 and ending on March 24, 2009. The projects will be significant enough to garner government recognition and will include the participation of as much of the population as possible.

AA chapters have impacted nations like Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, Burundi, Ghana, Niger, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, just to mention a few, and with a network of lawyers and judges in over 35 countries, we will continue to impact our communities and our continent by doing justice with compassion.



Adebayo ("Bayo") Ademola Akinlade is a Nigerian attorney. He currently serves as Senior Counsel & Africa Program Director for Advocates International and as Liaison to the 42-nation Advocates Africa. Bayo has visited 29 African nations encouraging lawyers to meet

locally, organize nationally, cooperate regionally and link globally. The end objective seeks to promote religious freedom, human rights, conflict resolution, professional ethics, rule of law and family values. Bayo resides in Pretoria, South Africa with his wife Lani, a Nigerian-trained lawyer who will soon receive a law degree from a South Africa law school. They have two sons, Samuel and Paul.



Uganda Christian Lawyers – Raised from the Dead

By Mike J. Chibita

It is difficult to believe that Marxism was a preferred alternative to Christianity on many campuses outside the Soviet Union a mere twenty years ago. In 1988, the ideological battle between Christianity and Marxism led to the birth of the Uganda Christian Lawyers Fellowship (UCLF). It began when law professors issued a silent ultimatum to students to choose between Christ and Marx if they wanted to continue being students at Uganda's Makerere University.

Christian students rejected Marx but were determined to achieve their dreams of becoming lawyers. In order to withstand the pressures, challenges, and stigma associated with refusing to support Karl Marx, the UCLF was born. It began with an initial membership of 10 students and expanded and thrived among Christian lawyers for several years.

The UCLF unfortunately began to run out of steam in the early 1990s, partly due to its leadership traveling abroad to study. However, the fellowship miraculously 'rose from the dead' following a meeting through Advocates International in 1998. Since that time, UCLF has organized the Advocates Africa (AA) Conference in 2001 and participated in all the other AA conferences held since the inaugural Conference in South Africa in 1999.

UCLF Fellowship

UCLF today boasts of having about 150 members in the legal profession, 220 registered members of its Resource Centre, and over 200 student members. The Fellowship

runs a well-stocked Resource Centre, strategically located near Makerere University, which began after a London law firm donated reference materials through the efforts of BMS World Mission staff in Uganda and the UK.

The fellowship meets every first Thursday of the month, has an active discipleship ministry at five law schools, and has a prison ministry which helps prisoners set their hearings for bail. The prison ministry is part of a Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) funded program for criminal public defense. UCLF has a goal to assist in 250 prison cases a year and also runs a legal aid program that handles around 100 cases a year.

UCLF Education Department

The UCLF legal education department runs a nationwide program that trains community activists, pastors, and community members on subjects including the rights of children, domestic relations, real estate and alternative dispute resolution. The legal education department works in partnership with the Baptist Union, Compassion International and the Ugandan Prison Service. The program trained over 600 community activists and produced numerous materials on making the law accessible. It also reached more than 3,000 members of the community as well as over 1,000 prisoners who have been educated to represent themselves in legal matters.

All of these programs have been achieved in the past two years. UCLF also hosts a program called the Paralegal Advisory Service, where a team of paralegals work with the police and prisons on reducing prison congestion as well as ensuring that the rights of detainees are upheld.

UCLF Today and the Future

UCLF members have been involved in testifying before Parliament and dealing with the press, alone and in coalition with like-minded groups, over various issues such as Sharia Law, Abortion, Prostitution, Criminal Justice Reform, Homosexuality and Land Law. UCLF holds an annual law conference, where issues pertinent to law, Christianity and government are discussed. In the past year, they also held a student conference, a legal education volunteer training conference, and a 'FOCUS conference' relating to popular stakeholder discussions on a controversial arena of law.

UCLF currently has five full-time staff advocates, a student worker and facilitator, a legal assistant, and four parale-





goals. UCLF offers internships for numerous students from the nearby law schools and from the UK, where the BMS and the UK Lawyers Christian Fellowship help coordinate interns for the Christian Legal Education, Aid and Research (CLEAR) East Africa program. UCLF also hosted groups from Burundi, Rwanda, the UK, and the United States on bench-marking and exchange programs.

We cannot help but declare that "...thus far has the Lord helped us." (1 Sam. 7:12)

Mike Chibita is an Executive Assistant to the Commissioner General of Uganda Revenue Authority, past President of UCLF, former Legal Assistant to President Museveni of Uganda, is married to Monica, have four children and they attend Kampala Baptist Church.

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The Ambiguity in Freedom of Religion in India

A commentary on anti-conversion laws

By Tehmina Arora

India has had a long and rich tradition of religious tolerance. The Indian Constitution in Article 25 guarantees each person the right to freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practice and propagate their religion. However, several states across India have enacted anti-conversion laws to regulate religious conversions. The framers of these laws, known as the Freedom of Religion Acts (FORA), claim that they are aimed at restricting conversions by the use of "force," "allurement," or "fraudulent means." But it is common knowledge that these laws target Christian work and seek to resist conversions away from Hinduism in general and to Christianity in particular.

The Acts require the priest conducting a "conversion ceremony" to obtain permission from or communicate with the proper authorities. The "convert" likewise is required to communicate his "intended" conversion to authorities. The law in one state (Gujarat) also requires that the administration grant permission before a "conversion ceremony" can be performed. The provisions are unjustifiable and often, when Christians inform local authorities about conversions, the information subsequently reaches Hindu extremists, who threaten and attack both the priest and the convert.

Presently, anti-conversion laws were enacted in the states of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh (before they were bifurcated into two separate states) in 1967, in Orissa in 1968, in Himachal Pradesh in 2007 and Gujarat in 2008. The north-eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh also passed a similar law in 1978, but it has not been implemented. Similarly, it awaits implementation in Rajasthan state.

Vague definitions provided in the law, moreover, make it very easy for extremists to file false police complaints against



Hindu Temple, India

Christians. For example, the term "allurement" is defined as an "offer of any temptation in the form of any gift or gratification either in cash or kind; and/or grant of any material benefit either monetary or otherwise." The ambiguous definition can potentially be misused to interpret even an act of helping the poor as a "temptation" to convert him/her. Additionally, the prayer of a Christian for the healing of a sick person can easily be termed as a "fraudulent means" to convert. For, if the sick person chooses to believe in the Christian faith after she or he is healed, it can be interpreted as conversion by "fraudulent means," which is defined as "misrepresentation or any other fraudulent contrivance."

The term "force" is defined as "a show of force or a threat of injury of any kind, including threat of divine displeasure or social excommunication." Therefore, any mention of forgiveness of sins, the free gift of eternal life, and heaven by a preacher can be treated as use of "divine displeasure" to "force" a person to accept Christianity.

These loose definitions followed by harsh criminal charges are largely applicable only in case of conversion to Christianity. The practice of "re-converting" converts to Hinduism has been kept out of the ambit of most laws. For example, Section 3 of the law in Himachal Pradesh prohibits conversion "by the use of force or by inducement or by any other fraudulent means," but stating that a person who is converted by any unfair means shall not be considered converted. Similarly, the Rajasthan anti-





conversion bill explicitly defines conversion as adopting "a religion other than one's forefathers" – along the same lines as the Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act (1978) according to which conversion means "renouncing an indigenous faith and adopting another faith or religion." Himachal Pradesh law requires any person wishing to convert to another religion to give a prior notice of at least 30 days to district authorities, failing which he or she can be fined with Rs.1,000 (\$23). However, "no notice shall be required if a person reverts back to his own religion."

The laws primarily make conversions difficult for Dalits (formerly known as "untouchables"), tribals (aboriginals), women, and children. For example, according to the Himachal Pradesh law, an offense related to unlawful conversion will be punishable with imprisonment of up to two years and/or fine of up to Rs.25,000 (\$570). However, in case of conversion of a minor, woman, Dalit or tribal, the imprisonment can extend to three years and fine up to Rs.50,000 (\$1,140).

The underlying assumption of anti-conversion laws, that unlawful conversions are taking place in various parts of the country, fails in light of the fact that not a single person has been convicted of forcible or fraudulent conversion by any court for over 30 years, when some of the first laws were passed. This is despite the fact that numerous Christian workers have been prosecuted on charges of "forced" conversions – which indicates that the law has been used by Hindu extremists to make false allegations.

How do anti-conversion laws and religious freedom in the Constitution coexist? The freedom of religion in the Constitution is not absolute and is subject to "public order, morality and health." Hindu extremists, mainly belonging to the *Sangh Parishad* (family of organizations linked with India's most influential Hindu nationalist group, the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* or RSS), build a case for the anti-conversion law by launching violent attacks on Christian workers under the pretext of "conversions," after which the *Bharatiya Janata Party* (RSS's political wing which rules several states) enacts the law, stating "conversions" are creating "law and order problems."

The Indian Supreme Court upheld anti-conversion legislation in its 1977 opinion upholding the Madhya Pradesh *Dharma Sasantatratra Adhiniyam* (Freedom of Religion Act) of 1969 in the *Reverend Stanislaw vs. State of*

Madhya Pradesh case. The court said that the right to propagate does not include the right to convert another person to the former's faith – on the premise that the latter is equally entitled to the freedom of conscience.

Currently, some groups are preparing to challenge the Freedom of Religion Acts in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh as many legal luminaries and human rights activists do not agree with the court's verdict. In fact, Christians hope that the court would one day reverse its own ruling.

Tehmina Arora is the General Secretary of Christian Legal Associa, the national network of Christian legal professionals in India. She is based in New Delhi and can be contacted at ila@cfonline.org.



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Latin America: A Network of Action

By Nina Balmaceda

The Latin American Christian Lawyers Network (RLAAC/Advocates Latin America) is a regional network of legal professionals and students founded to promote the integration of our Christian faith into the profession, seeking to promote justice, peace and human development in Latin America.

The primary purpose of RLAAC, which was established in 2001, is to foster cooperation among Christian lawyers in all Latin American countries. It coordinates the 19 national organizations of Christian lawyers in the region and is committed to the practice and promotion of the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the legal, social, political, economic and cultural spheres.

RLAAC lawyers are encouraged to view their profession as a calling and as a means to serve others, something many of them had never considered previously. The Christian lawyers affiliated with RLAAC at the local, national and regional levels encourage each other to bear witness of Jesus Christ through the legal profession. They not only embolden each other to proclaim the gospel but also to demonstrate God's love, justice and mercy and to embark on a constant journey to honor the Lord every day of the week, and not merely on Sundays.

Because of the very complex issues that affect Latin American countries, the Latin Network has established six permanent commissions: defense of life and family; peacemaking; religious freedom; anti-corruption efforts; human rights; and environmental law. What one Christian lawyer can do will have a very limited impact, but we strongly believe that when we get organized nationally, regionally and globally there is great potential for serving a world in need.

RLAAC also recently developed an electronic group that links more than 500 Christian lawyers in the 20 Latin American countries. The group provides the opportunity for a constant exchange of information and for dialog and discussion of relevant topics, all within an environment of respect to diversity of opinions and Christian love. In this way, Christian lawyers can obtain updated information about legislation and legal activities in different countries.

Although national cooperation among Christians is extremely important, there have been several occasions in which this was not sufficient for defending the principles of the gospel in our societies. In these cases, it has been necessary to call upon the regional and global communities of Christian lawyers. A critical example of one such situa-

Advocates Costa Rica members took part in a peaceful demonstration in defense of the family on the streets of San José on July 26, 2008.



tion arose when the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Uruguay approved a bill to legalize abortion in 2003. The Christian Legal Institute of Uruguay (IJC), under the leadership of Gianella Aloise and her colleagues, actively engaged many lawyers and different Christian groups within the country and called for the collaboration of Advocates International and the national organizations affiliated with the Latin Network. This global team published statements defending the right to life of unborn children. IJC leaders requested an audience with the Senate Health Commission which took place on November 13, 2003. During the audience with the Health Commission, the IJC presented their analysis of the bill as well as statements from Advocates International and the Latin Network opposing the approval of the legislation. As a direct result of the mobilization of Christian lawyers in Uruguay, Latin America and throughout the world, thanks to Advocates International, as well as many other sectors of God's Church, the bill was eventually rejected by the senate.

There have been similar situations which have been resolved by comparable teamwork with equally desirable results in most of the countries in our region. We are most often engaged in: opposition to the threats against the lives of the unborn, opposition to gay marriage, defense of human rights advocates, and intercession on behalf of people who are suffering unjust imprisonment. However, we understand that more must be done. For example, in the case of abortion, this cruel practice continues to take place

in Latin America everyday and under terrible conditions. It is essential to confront the roots of social injustice: violence against girls and women and the lack of opportunities for education and employment many times force women to seek abortion as a "solution" to their problems.

This is why the Latin Network places such importance on Christians becoming involved in the strengthening of independent and democratic civil societies, the promotion of social justice, fighting racism and sexism, and advocating for the needs of the poor and those marginalized by society.



Professor Vilma "Nina" Balmaceda teaches full time at Nyack College, New York. Nina founded the Christian Legal Society of Peru in 2000 and the Latin American Christian Lawyers Network (RLAAC) the following year. RLAAC is a regional organization that currently links Christian lawyers' associations in 19 countries of Latin America. She serves as Coordinator for Latin America for Advocates International, Inc. She got her Law degree at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru in 1994. She got Master degrees in International Peace Studies (1996), and Government and International Studies (1997), and her Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Notre Dame du Lac (2008). Nina is married to Roberto W. Chia and their son Roberto Alfredo is 8 years old.



Why a Brazilian Christian Lawyer Association?

By *Nadir Chagas Ribeiro dos Santos*
and *Gilberto Ribeiro dos Santos*

"... The godly have been swept from the land; not one upright man remains. All men lie in wait to shed blood; each hunts his brother with a net. Both hands are skilled in doing evil; the ruler demands gifts, the judge accepts bribes, the powerful dictate what they desire – they all conspire together..."

This is how Micah described the situation of Israel many years ago. It seems, however, as if the prophet was talking about modern day Brazil.

Brazil is the largest and most populous country in South America, with its 186 million inhabitants descending from Portugal, Europe, Japan, China, India and the Middle East. The country is rich with natural resources and exports

goods throughout the world. Brazil produces oil, energy, food, technology and has excellent universities. Yet, the number of people faced with starvation and poverty is overwhelming. Homeless people are everywhere, the lines at public hospitals are full of people begging for assistance, corruption is present in all areas, unemployment is a large and growing reality and many can not even write their own names.

The Brazilian dichotomy of rampant poverty despite abundant an abundance of resources is reflected in the legal profession as well. Brazil has excellent law schools, many wealthy lawyers, judges and prosecutors. However, the majority of Brazil's attorneys can barely survive on the income their fees generate. Some attorneys graduated from law schools that did not adequately prepare them to practice before the Bar. As a result, citizens in need of legal representation have to choose between hiring an attorney who charges exorbitant fees, or one who is ill prepared to attend to protect their interests.





God is faithful and there is hope in the midst of this situation: Christian attorneys are uniting to encourage and assist each other in their calling to serve justice. The *Instituto dos Advogados Cristãos do Brasil* (IACB) exists to encourage legal professionals to serve justice based on Christian principles, to promote high ethical standards and to offer training programs for all its associates to prepare them to be highly qualified professionals. Through IACB's ministry, many lawyers benefit from speeches, meetings with other law professionals, Bible studies, conferences, and advanced international legal studies, in partnership with the Latin American Christian Lawyers Network. In addition, we are negotiating agreements with churches in order to motivate law students and legal professionals to get involved in our vision and to follow Paul's recommendation in I Corinthians 6:1-6, edifying and encouraging each other toward faithfulness.

There are many goals yet to be achieved: there are not many Christian professors, therefore there are not many books written by Christian professionals. There is still a tremendous need to invest in professional development to enable attorneys to provide their clients with the best service and to bear witness of Jesus Christ in everything we do. We understand that there is a long road ahead, but we believe this ministry emanates from the Lord's heart and since it is not of human origin, while there will be difficulties, it will not fail.

We praise God that we are not alone. We have been richly blessed through brothers and sisters around the world through the Advocates International network; and we are grateful God gave us the opportunity to build strong rela-

tionships, develop abilities, and to be linked with its vision.

Why a Brazilian Christian Lawyer Association? We received a special call from God. He alone can bring transformation to Brazil's legal profession and every area of society in need of His touch.



Gilberto Ribeiro dos Santos is CPA and an attorney in São José. He is the founder and president of IACB. Nadia Cezar Ribeiro dos Santos is a translator and an attorney and serves as IACB's Cultural Director.



Changing the World One Region at a Time

By: Ruth A.M. Ross

William Wilberforce is known as a British politician and philanthropist, however, he is revered as a leader of the movement that abolished the slave trade 200 years ago. In 1785, he underwent a conversion experience which resulted in changes in his lifestyle and in his interest in reform. Wilberforce was convinced of the importance of religion, morality, and education. He joined a small band of influential leaders in England called the Clapham Group, all busy professionals who made time for Christian action and gave liberally and effectively to worthy causes. They were passionate about their faith, their families, their causes and their commitment to one another. The group's foremost endeavor was to rid the world of slavery. It took Wilberforce a lifetime of service but, indeed, it was a remarkable accomplishment.

It wasn't the first time a small band of committed believers changed the world. When Jesus first outlined a vision which would affect the entire world, it was presented to a small minority within the Roman Empire. In fact, most of the apostles came from the same area – the Galilee Region, north of Samaria. The power which Jesus promised disciples had more to do with *being* than *doing*. (Acts 1:8)

A similar occurrence is happening in the world today. A relatively small group of passionate, committed believers in the marketplace, legal professionals, are making a difference locally, regionally and even to the uttermost parts of the world. According to Sam Ericsson, founder and CEO of Advocates International (AI), "a Christian lawyer movement such as AI's is not something that is just started by a conference or by a [particular] ministry." This is certainly true. God must add His blessing to advance His purposes. We at *Christian Legal Fellowship* (CLF) have witnessed how God is using AI around the world.

Part of the mission statement of *Christian Legal Fellowship* (CLF) of Canada is to advocate a Biblical worldview of law and justice in the public sphere. While having no direct denominational affiliation, CLF has over 550 active members from over 30 Christian denominations working in association together to proclaim, love, and serve Jesus Christ through all that we do in the practice of law. Since 1978, CLF has built a steadily stronger voice for justice and religious freedom through an equipped, unified and mobilized membership. Here are just a few examples:



Court Interventions

Pastor Ake Green Case (Sweden) – In this case, *Christian Legal Fellowship* joined an international coalition in an *Amici Curiae* brief in support of Pastor Green's religious freedom and freedom of speech. In the summer of 2004, a Swedish court sentenced Pastor Ake Green to a month in prison after he was found guilty of offending homosexuals in a 2003 sermon. Canada's Bill C-250, which passed into law in 2004, has a similar clause to Sweden's, including sexual orientation in a list of groups protected against "unfavorable speech." There is a concern among many pastors and groups in Canada that Bill C-250 may result in similar prosecutions here. In January 2006, a unanimous decision of the Swedish Supreme Court completely exonerated Pastor Green.

Owens v. Saskatchewan – The case had been interpreted by some as promoting the Bible as "Hate Speech/Literature" based upon the decision of the lower court which left it unclear whether Biblical texts alone can violate the *Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. Mr. Owens published in a local paper an advertisement depicting two stick men holding hands with the universal symbol of a red circle with a diagonal bar superimposed over top. References to four Bible passages were also included. The CLF intervened to ensure protection for freedom of religion and speech. In a unanimous decision handed down in April, 2006, the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal overturned the lower court decision, clarifying that Bible passages did not violate the *Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*.



Conscience Issues: Marriage Commissioners Opposed to Same-Sex Marriage – Several governments have adopted policies insisting that marriage commissioners must perform same-sex marriage ceremonies if they want to keep their licenses. Several marriage commissioners in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland have filed complaints or have been charged pursuant to provincial Human Rights Codes. CLF members are working collaboratively on these cases to ensure these marriage commissioners' rights are not violated.

Sanctity of Life: R. v. Donald Spratt (Abortion Bubble Zone) Case – On December 17, 1998, Mr. Spratt was convicted under the *BC Access to Abortion Services Act* on charges of making a "protest" and "sidewalk interference" and given a thirty day sentence. Mr. Spratt's offense was carrying a cross approximately nine feet in height which said "abortion is murder" and praying for the pre-born in a protected area outside abortion clinics known as the "Bubble Zone." In June 2004, Justice Hall of the British Columbia Court of

Continued on page 28



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North America



Supreme Court, Canada

Appeal granted leave to appeal the 1998 conviction. The appeal is expected to be heard sometime in 2008.

Pro-Life Clubs – Christian Legal Fellowship supports pro-life students on university campuses across Canada. Their clubs are usually the sole promoters of the pro-life message on universities. At the moment, CLF is assisting several clubs being denied club status because they are considered “too controversial,” offensive or opposed to the official “pro-choice” position of the student union.

Discipleship and Multiplication

Part of CLF’s mandate is to train and mentor the next generation of Christian lawyers. In recent years, our student ministry expanded significantly and a considerable number of new members are law students. The students have taken the initiative to openly declare their love for Christ on campuses across Canada through fellowship,

Reis pictured here with her husband Patrick praying at a recent Advocates International gathering



evangelism, Christian care and compassion. As a result of the diligent efforts of CLF student clubs, the University of Western Ontario Law School awarded the CLF Chapter “Legal Society Club of the Year” in 2006. In 2007 and 2008, Canadian law foundations awarded grants to different CLF Clubs to help host and underwrite the cost of CLF’s National Student Conference. This is particularly noteworthy given there are no Christian law schools in Canada. We are encouraged to witness the difference these law students are making for the Kingdom!

International

In the past few years, many countries have shown an inclination to invoke foreign law (in particular, Canadian law), resulting in the undermining of freedoms of religion throughout the world, especially in relation to marriage, the traditional family, and life issues. Notwithstanding this trend, our God is a redeeming God who desires to redeem legal institutions and systems as we diligently submit to His authority. With this confidence, CLF counts it an honor to address international audiences on lessons learned from Canada, and to build strategic and influential alliances shaping public opinion, legislation and advocacy.

Advocates North America

In July 2007, Christian Legal Society CEO Sam Casey and I had the unprecedented privilege of addressing Advocates Caribbean in Tobago, and subsequently in September 2007, the Advocates Africa Conference in Kenya. More recently, Sam visited with CLF chapter leaders in May in London, Ontario to encourage and challenge in

at our Local Chapter Taskforce Seminar, which is convened to expand and strengthen our ministry at the local level. The presence of the Holy Spirit was undeniably strong at these events and it was increasingly apparent that God is uniting us in purposeful fashion.

Recognizing that the Christian worldview is progressively under attack throughout the world, these amazing opportunities have of necessity and with unity, brought about the recent formation of the Advocates North American Region (made up of Canada, the United States and the English-speaking Caribbean). Last, but clearly we sense not least, the North American Region is taking its rightful and desirable place in this extraordinary global movement.

Global and Regional Celebrations

In November 2000, I had the privilege of attending the second (my first) Global Convocation in Washington DC. What an event that was! Now as we prepare to gather

for the 5th Global Convocation, I believe we will witness firsthand the miraculous work God is doing in raising up a global network of legal professionals united in purpose and passion for such a time as this.

Celebrating the Global Convocation in 2008 is of great significance to the *Christian Legal Fellowship*. Not only is this the first time we have suspended our national conference to participate in such a global gathering, it is CLF's thirtieth anniversary of incorporated ministry in Canada. May God grant us wisdom and strength to run the race until He returns.

As we stand together across borders and cultural barriers, and with God's help, we believe it is entirely possible for many extraordinary accomplishments to take place here in Canada, North America, throughout the regions, and even to the ends of the earth. To God be the Glory!



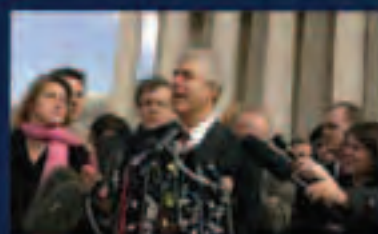
Ruth Ross is the Executive Director and General Legal Counsel of Christian Legal Fellowship (Canada), a national association of legal professionals working together to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in the practice of law. After completing her B.A. and LL.B. from Dalhousie University (Halifax, Nova Scotia), Ruth practiced law in four provinces of Canada — New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, British Columbia and Ontario, and is currently a member of the Ontario Bar. Ruth served on the Executive Board of Directors of CLF from 1993 to 1996 and was appointed Executive Director in October 2000. She resides in London, Ontario with her husband, Pat, where they enjoy an active family of five adult children and three grandchildren.

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Thunderings from Down Under

By Mark Mudri

The last Christian lawyer Global Convocation was a turning point in my life. My journey began by setting forth on a 30 hour trip to Washington, D.C., armed with a six-foot-long inflatable green crocodile. Advocates International President Sam Ericsson told me to bring my Aussie sense of humor. I simply obeyed. I carried that croc with me throughout the weekend, in case my accent left any questions about the country I represented.

The turning point came, however, as I spent several days with legal professionals from every nation, tribe, and tongue, all worshipping the Lord in an unprecedented demonstration of Kingdom unity. The experience propelled me into participating in the ongoing development of Advocates International in Oceania. I returned to Australia determined to get involved in God's plan in and through the legal profession in my home country.

Australia does not have a national Christian lawyer organization. There were several state organizations for Christian attorneys in 2004, but they faced great difficulty mobilizing attorneys for fellowship and action. In my home state, South Australia, the Queensland Christian Lawyers' Fellowship sent letters to the 3,000 lawyers in South Australia, inquiring about forming a Christian Lawyers' Fellowship. There was a significant initial response, but when the group organized its first breakfast, only five lawyers attended. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit decided to move and success became inevitable.

The Beginning

A local intercessory group called House of Prayer for All Nations Inc. – Adelaide, began to pray earnestly for the legal profession from the prayer tower in the heart of the city. Another breakfast was organized within three months. We were again concerned that the turnout would be low, especially because the breakfast was scheduled for the morning after the longest night of the year, and one of the coldest. We had nearly 80 practitioners at breakfast! The Lawyers' Christian Fellowship of South Australia (LCFSA) had begun. The fellowship, which could hardly attract five people just a few months earlier, had 78 dues-paying members, including Supreme Court judges, magistrates, senior barristers, and students.

LCFSA is now an emerging ministry touching members of the legal community through church services, Bible studies, prayer meetings, lunches, dinners, and pastoral care for the profession. Additionally, we are beginning to engage in religious freedom advocacy. Since that time, we have witnessed churches hosting services specifically for members of the legal profession, bringing together students, practitioners, and judges from many denominations to celebrate communion together and experience life-changing fellowship.

In September 2006, we joined forces with St. Mary Magdalene Anglican Church, whose three-course dinners for the homeless have become a cherished tradition. LCFSA coordinates more than 130 lawyers, law students and legal support staff, who continue to generously volunteer their time.

The fellowship also meets the legal community's needs by pioneering a chaplaincy program for attorneys. A Home





City of Adelaide, Australia

Group was commenced for new lawyers and law students to encourage them to integrate their faith and work. And for the first time, the judicial offices have begun a regular Bible study in the Supreme Court. The first series was called "A Prophet for Our Time."

Teaching Out

LCPSA recognizes that being a lawyer is one of the most stressful occupations on earth. Our members, therefore, have begun teaching out to their colleagues through the "B.O.P. Initiative." We capitalized on the familiar legal acronym that attorneys usually associate with "burden of proof" or "balance of probabilities," but in this context it stands for "breakthrough office prayer." We have provided printed cards that attorneys can carry in their wallets or handbags, providing names and phone numbers so they can call a believer at any time to pray with them and help them through a difficult time.

LCPSA, in coordination with denominational leaders, also launched "Peacewise," a ministry dedicated to pursue peace along with justice by applying Biblical principles to dispute and conflict resolution.

In November 2006, some members of the LCPSA joined forces with Operation Outcry, a ministry of the Justice Foundation designed to speak the truth about the horrors of abortion and minister to women who have experienced the procedure. We jointly facilitated a speaking event and more than 500 people attended to hear testimonies from women who have gone through abortions and have found healing, grace, and forgiveness through the love of our Lord Jesus Christ. The crowd gave the women a standing ovation (something very unusual in Australian culture), and counselors were available to minister to the many women in the crowd who sought similar healing.

The event was a catalyst for pro-life groups in the area to begin working closer together. It was clearly a Kairos moment. We were involved with God's unique plan to bring healing and exposure regarding the tragedy of abortion, while at the same time, unbeknownst to us, national television station aired testimonies of how abortion hurts women that same week. The women of Operation Outcry and Dr. Linda Schlueter, senior counsel for the Justice Foundation were warmly received in our parliaments and churches.

The Fellowship also is mobilizing attorneys to represent victims of religious discrimination and oppression. Earlier this year, four street preachers were arrested for alleged offences associated with street preaching in our main shopping mall. A legal team of at least nine lawyers and law students is assembled to assist these preachers on a pro-bono basis and to fight for religious liberty and freedom of expression. We look forward to developing this aspect of the ministry in the coming years.

We thank God for all He has done through the LCPSA once we learned to surrender the group to Him and make an effort through prayer to align our hearts with His. The Australia Christian Lawyers need your prayers and His wisdom as we continue to pursue our dream of becoming a national organization and serving the King and the Kingdom through our noble calling as legal professionals.



Mark is the principal of his law firm Mudri & Associates. He is serving his third term as president of Lawyers Christian fellowship and is the Director of Peacewise, a ministry geared toward "Promoting peace and reconciliation in relationships through biblical principles and the power of Christ." Mark resides in South Australia with his wife and children Rebekah, Joel and Angela Rose.





Coffee and Contemplation

by Glandion Carney



My favorite definition of contemplation is “the act of viewing steadfastly and attentively (as a piece of art for its own sake).” When we leave an art museum, having contemplated great art, we see life differently. Art affects us. When we contemplate the God of the universe, greater than ourselves and our lives, we are also changed – touched by God’s grace.

Why do we need to contemplate God? We either contemplate God or we contemplate other issues, passions, or problems. We need God’s view of ourselves and of the world. The distractions, temptations, and pressures of life can keep us from God and keep us self-centered. We need to take time, sometimes several times a day, to focus on God and turn ourselves back in God’s direction, to ask for his mercy and guidance, and for His view of the world.

Gazing on God is a choice and contemplating Him sounds good. However, over time we may find that though we

like the idea of contemplation and know our lives are enriched and blessed and calmed by it, we don’t look forward to our devotional time. Contemplation becomes something we want to have done or something on a checklist for our day. The early Christians (after Constantine) fled to the desert to escape the ease of life. It was a new foe they named the noontime temptation. We call it boredom and it is a major hindrance to spirituality today. We want to be entertained, amused, distracted from the realities of life which are tedious, burdensome, and boring. When we face our realities, however, and bring God into the mundane, we experience His blessing, and His help in living truly Christian lives. (Christian Celtic prayers excel at including God in the routines.)

Coffee with God

Imagine two or three days a week sitting down with coffee and joining a conversation that has been going on forever

between the three persons of the Holy Trinity. They have been submitting themselves to each other in love forever. As we enter the conversation through contemplative prayer, the Holy Trinity, without ceasing ongoing conversation or activity, turns to us.

I am no expert on this subject, just a Christian brother, a fellow traveler, for whom contemplative prayer is still rather new. I clearly see the murkiness and duplicity of my own soul, and still desire to resolve my condition through entering into the divine conversation. When I am most aware of my weakness, I can only breathe the ancient prayer, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” Incrementally, old things are changing; my inner person is being renewed. I’m being changed as I have these conversations over and over.

Additionally, at this point in my life, my prayers no longer focus solely on God fixing me. Rather, I long to join Him in His redemptive work in the world. I ask Him to teach me to pray for the powerless, the broken, and the persecuted. I am no longer content with just fixing myself.

Passive and Active

Contemplative prayer, as I see it, can be either passive or active. In the active mode, we journal, possibly use a prayer list, read a particular book, and concentrate as we listen for the Holy Spirit to speak to us.

In a more passive mode, we simply allow the Holy Spirit to bring thoughts and observations to us. We can sit on a park bench, take a walk, or sip coffee. If we are waiting for God in any of these circumstances, he can impress us as we wait to pray for a homeless person who wanders

**IMAGINE TWO OR THREE DAYS A WEEK SITTING DOWN WITH COFFEE
AND JOINING A CONVERSATION THAT HAS BEEN GOING ON FOREVER BETWEEN
THE THREE PERSONS OF THE HOLY TRINITY.**

into the shop and be thankful for our own blessings; to feel the breeze or sun on our face and acknowledge the creator who is responsible; etc. We need those passive times. But we also need to schedule in the active, intentional times.

A friend whose parents were missionaries was sharing about life as a missionary family and that at one point there was hardly enough food and water and her father had to dig six wells on their station. However, long after they had returned to the U.S., he would occasionally comment, wistfully, about how, in Africa, the end of the day was really the end of the day. There were no electric lights, radio or television. The day was over and it was quiet. He missed the quiet and lack of distraction at the end of the day.

The days I do not choose properly are

my most difficult days. Sometimes I choose to contemplate God morning, noon and night, to regroup in His divine presence. I can have a great devotional hour in the morning, then drift. Then I need to reorient at noon. In general, though, I try to maintain a regular rhythm of conversations with God.

However, the love for both the beginning and end of the day, the times to be with God, is a result of contemplation. The discipline of intentionally accepting from Him a new day and committing it to Him; of accepting the end of work and activity at day's end, and commending it to God; of consciously yielding ourselves to his care as we sleep; may, at times, seem tedious and boring. But as we make the commitment to gaze on him, morning, noon and night, trusting that as we are

faithful, we will grow in our relationship with the Holy Trinity, we may come to delight in our conversations with Him as we discover that there is nothing or no one better to look at and think about. And we will begin to see ourselves being changed into the likeness of Christ.



Glandio Carney has served CLS as its senior chaplain since 2000. Glandion is ordained in the Christian Reformed Church, a board team member for Renovare, author of 8 books, a faculty member for the Academy for Spiritual Formation of the Upper Room, a United Methodist ministry, consultant to the Salvation Army in the area of spiritual care, and a sought after retreat leader and speaker on the subjects of spiritual formation and prayer. Glandion and his wife Marion are the parents of adult children and eight grandchildren.



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Law as a Calling

Reflections from a Christian Law Student from China

By "Eva"

AS AMERICANS AND CHINESE ALIKE FACE ATTACKS ON OUR LIBERTIES, CHRISTIANS SHOULD UNITE IN BOTH LEGAL STRATEGY AND PRAYER. THE BODY OF CHRIST IS EXPRESSED IN COMMUNITY...

Standing next to the lake used for baptisms, a pastor was praying over a group of new believers when government officials descended on the congregation that cloudy Sunday afternoon. The pastor's wife, two children, and the people gathered there looked on as he was beaten and taken away by the authorities.

This is not fiction. It is the reality for Christians in my home country, China. As a member of an underground church, I have personally witnessed—through the persecution my church endured—the rule of law being ignored and fundamental liberties being disregarded.

These instances of persecution have helped to form the focus of my legal career – to protect human dignity. Moreover, four years of legal education in China has deepened my insight into the areas of the Chinese judicial system where reform is necessary. I chose to pursue a legal education outside of China, in a country with a well-established judicial system, in order to further enhance my understanding of the reform needed in China.

My faith and my profession specifically led me to Regent Law School, an institution comprised of professors and students who share the same perspective that I do – “law is more than a profession, it is a calling”

During my two years in the United States, I have learned more than I could have imagined. At Regent, I have had the opportunity to closely interact with

professors, whose experiences and insights not only teach me about the law but also how to think like a lawyer. In addition, through class devotionals and class discussions, I have learned how to integrate my faith into my profession. Furthermore, by attending a variety of symposiums and seminars, I have learned to examine various issues through the lenses of law, history, economics, and sociology. Internships and work experience with the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) and the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) have provided me firsthand experience with the United States judicial process, particularly issues related to defending human liberties.

This past spring, I was a part of the “ACLJ Semester in D.C.,” where I truly learned the meaning of freedom. I was initially shocked to see people protesting in front of the Capitol every day. I asked my friend how to get a permit to protest. Surprised, he answered: “you just go and do it!” I learned the theory of *jus natural* in school a long time ago, but this was my first time to see the natural rights of man in practice. In China, a permit is required unless the law says you do not need one. In the United States, however, there is a “just go and do it” mentality unless a law specifically requires a permit. Even as a foreigner, I can “just go” to a congressional hearing; I can “just go” into the Supreme Court to hear oral arguments; and I can even “just go” stand on a sidewalk to

preach, express my views, or even speak against the Government.

Unfortunately, I have also witnessed the dark side of the freedoms available to Americans. Indeed, I have found that freedom can result in challenges against the tenets of the Christian faith. These challenges are actually similar to the challenges seen in China. Whether it is the killing of millions of unborn children, the imprisonment and torture of followers of Christ, the redefinition of marriage, or the “one child” policy, all attacks on religious liberty and human dignity originate from the same mistake: exchanging the truth for a lie.

As Americans and Chinese alike face attacks on our liberties, Christians should unite in both legal strategy and prayer. The body of Christ is expressed in community and this community of like-minded believers can be a source of encouragement and support as we battle for truth to reign in our cultures. For me, the knowledge that there are Christians on the other side of the Pacific Ocean practicing law with the same goals as myself will be a blessing for years to come.



“Eva” is a Chinese citizen who is a rising 3L at Regent Law School in Virginia Beach, Virginia. She is currently serves as a law clerk with the American Center for Law and Justice and as a consultant for Regent's International Law Journal. Eva is also a Blackstone Fellow, an alumna of the Alliance Defense Fund's elite legal internship and education program.

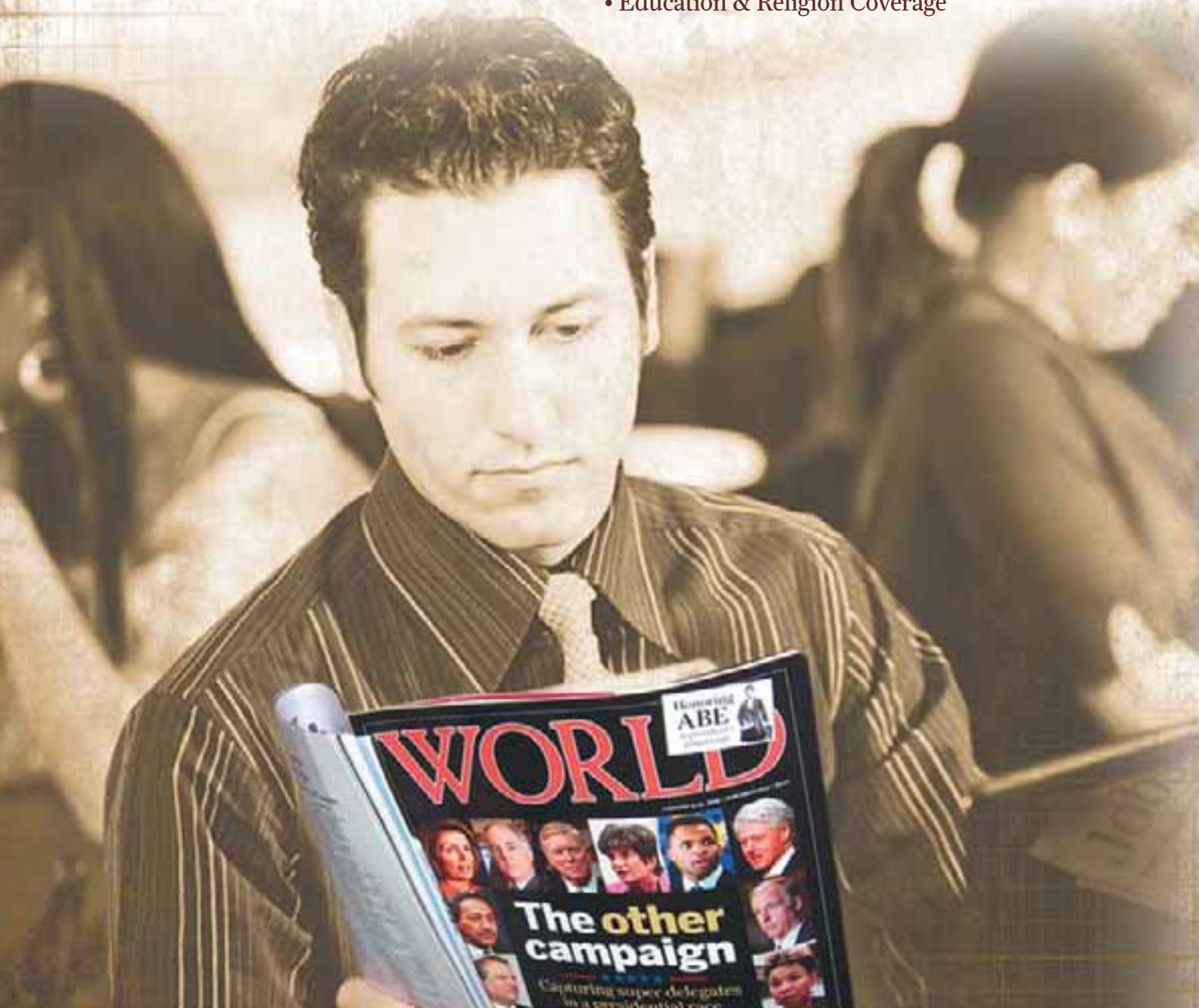
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Legal Aid in Mombasa

by Amy Woods



The criminal justice system in Kenya is the cause of many problems faced by its citizens. There is a continual shortage of government funding for the criminal justice system, resulting in the incarceration of individuals for sometimes as long as nine years awaiting trial, the absence of state-funded legal aid, and discriminatory laws and practices. Additionally, this is all exacerbated by the fact that the vast majority of people cannot afford lawyers.

CLEAR

Kenyan citizens are largely unaware of their legal rights afforded by their Constitution, and neither are they aware that they can seek redress nor do they know how to go about it. The Christian Legal

Education, Aid and Research (CLEAR) charity seeks to meet this need by providing civic education, *pro bono* legal advice and representation, and prison work, now an established field of work which makes up the majority of their criminal cases. The Kenyan Christian Lawyers Fellowship originally established CLEAR to provide the poor, oppressed, and marginalized with access to justice and to effect much needed changes in the administration of justice in Kenya.

The prison work involves weekly legal education seminars and advice sessions. The goal is to teach between 20 and 30 prisoners every week how to present their defense, how to cross-examine prosecution witnesses, and most importantly inform them of the rights they are afforded by the law and the burden on the prosecution. The accused have the right to see copies of the charges against them as well as prosecution witness statements. However, although we advise the accused to know the case against them, they must request the documents in court, at which point they are ordered to pay 50Kshs (less than \$1) to pay for the cost of photocopying. It may seem an insignificant amount of money, but for those in custody, most of whom only own the shirts on their backs, 50Kshs becomes an insurmountable hurdle.

Recently, a group of visitors saw this need and decided to do some fundraising. Using the money they raised and donated to CLEAR, we were able to buy a photocopier which operates at the courthouse, is self-funded and allows for charge sheets and witness statements to be copied free of charge.

While speaking to a number of prisoners during the seminars, the lawyers do intake on a number of cases. It allows them to select the dire cases that need representation. In order to obtain a fair trial, the accused must be on equal footing with his accuser and therefore must have a legal representative. Sadly, it is impossible to represent every deserving case, but here is one success story:

Brenda was in prison awaiting trial when we met her and decided to represent her. She had been a 'housegirl' for a family in Mombasa. This rather disrespectful name is given to those who work and live in a home doing such work as cooking, cleaning, and washing. They have little or no freedom and are entirely dependent on their employer for everything. 'Housegirls' and 'houseboys' are paid a daily rate sometimes as low as 50Kshs on the justification that they do not need to pay for rent and food since it is provided by the employer. It creates a dependence on behalf of the employer and leaves many people open to abuse. Brenda was one of many.

Upon returning to the house one day, Brenda discovered that some items had been stolen. Since her employer was at work, she informed one of the employer's relatives who lived nearby that there had been a break-in. She waited at the house for his bus to return and was later accused of stealing. The goods were never recovered, and the only evidence against Brenda was the testimony of the complainant. Additionally, Brenda had only been working there for a couple of months when her employer stopped paying her wages for no reason. She had kept demanding what was owed to her, and the relationship worsened. At trial, she was acquitted, but only after spending months in prison.

CLEAR DOES NOT TURN ANYONE AWAY. THE STAFF WORKS TIRELESSLY TO ASSIST THE POOREST PEOPLE IN KENYA IN SEEKING JUSTICE. FOR THEIR EFFORTS, EMPLOYEES ARE REWARDED WITH THE SMILING FACES OF THE CHILDREN OF FORMER CLIENTS, NOW WELL FED AND HEALTHY...

Helping Families

CLEAR also assists mothers who seek to be reunited with their children and/or also obtain maintenance (child support) from the father. A father involved in a maintenance case frequently acts on the mistaken belief that his ex-wife cannot “make trouble” for him if the children are in his custody. These cases present a number of challenges, including the reluctance of the Children’s Department to use the powers they were given by the Children’s Act 2001 to intervene. Some fathers will go to great lengths to avoid their responsibilities, like this story:

Debra first came to CLEAR for assistance in claiming maintenance from her child’s father. We filed an application in the Children’s Court, but the father, Alex, succeeded in preventing the case from proceeding by securing Debra’s arrest. Instead, she was in court fighting a charge of “robbery with violence.” In Kenya, the charge carries a mandatory death sentence, and bail is not available.

In the days following her arrest, Alex visited Debra’s mother and harassed her for money

in exchange for dropping the charges. He did not realize that the situation was no longer in his control. Debra is still in prison and will remain there until judgment. A criminal trial in Kenya is considered speedy if it concludes in six months, and a case like Debra’s is likely to take over a year.

Thankfully, her case has been picked up by Victor Kamau, a human rights lawyer based in Nairobi. He applied for judicial review seeking orders to prevent the prosecution from continuing the case or detaining her. We eagerly await the outcome.

Another case involved three brothers:

The boys’ mother died in 1998 and father had been neglectful, despite earning a good salary. He repeatedly defaulted on their school fees, which resulted in the school refusing to release their exam results. On a rare occasion, he would give them money, but it would be so little, they found themselves having to choose between essentials. It is a testament to the brothers’ integrity that out of the little money they were given, they would save a small amount each month to take to school to gradually pay off the outstand-

ing bill. The court eventually ordered their father to pay maintenance, the remaining school bills, and their continuing education.

Busy Days

These are examples of the many cases that are being handled by CLEAR. There are other cases of police violence, abuse in prison, and literally thousands of people with the prospect of trial without representation. CLEAR routinely has lines of clients filling their reception area and spilling out into the corridor seeking assistance with filing for maintenance orders in Children’s Court.

CLEAR does not turn anyone away. The staff works tirelessly to assist the poorest people in Kenya in seeking justice. For their efforts, employees are rewarded with the smiling faces of the children of former clients, now well fed and healthy having been awarded maintenance, or by being stopped in the street by someone with a big smile on his face asking “Do you remember me? You helped me when I was in Shimo la Tewa (prison). I was acquitted.”

For updates and news on Debra’s and other cases and the social enterprise project you can visit the website: www.clearinternational.org

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CLEAR has since been expanded into Uganda and founded a UK support base within the Lawyers Christian Fellowship in the UK, although as a human rights charity serving all faiths and none, donor sources are broad. This article is written by a recently returned intern – Amy Woods – who spent a year with the project between BVC & school.



Amy currently serves as a County Court Advocate in London and is looking forward to returning to Kenya to serve with the Legal Christian Fellowship again on a short term missions trip this summer.

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Notice of CLS Annual Meeting

Notice is hereby duly given that the annual meeting of the members of Christian Legal Society shall be held in the Yorktown/Valley Forge Room(s) of the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC on Thursday, October 9, 2008 from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. All members of the Society are cordially invited to attend for the purpose of meeting the Board of Directors, casting their ballots for the nominated directors, and receiving the report on the state of the Society.



*We, the present members of the
Christian Legal Society Board of Directors,
on behalf of ourselves, our colleagues on previous
Boards, and as representatives of all members of
our Society, express our love and appreciation to God
for giving us for 14 years His faithful servant*

*Samuel B. Casey
to serve as CLS' Executive Director & CEO*

*During these 14 years of selfless service and dedication
by Sam, God has used CLS to provide legal services
to the poor, increase advocacy for life and religious
liberty, and increase fellowship among Christian
attorneys and law students.*

*May the Lord continue to bless you
as you broaden your outreach to Christian
attorneys internationally through
Advocates International.*

A Father's Trust

David Naimo
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

*"Daddy, we keep
praying for grandpa,
but God isn't
answering our prayers
— why?"*



The topic of suffering is entering the conversation in my home.

My family is praying for my father. He had prostate cancer some years ago and the radiation therapy did not work and the hormone treatments did not last, so inevitably, the cancer is now spread throughout his body. He is on his third round of chemotherapy and is very tired.

Laura, my wife, and I and our six children (between the ages of 5 months and 10 years of age) pray regularly. We teach our children that there is a Heavenly Father who loves us and listens to us. He is someone who answers our prayers and counts the hairs on our head — someone for whom no detail about us is too small.

However, when the children see their grandfather becoming weak, and bald, and under the strain of chemotherapy — my children want to know why Jesus, who loves us, isn't taking care of grandpa. They love Jesus, they love their grandpa, grandpa loves Jesus, and they believe that Jesus will answer their prayers, the question is completely fair out of my 10 year old. I know what to tell my children, but a theological answer does not seem to do it when the 5 year old does not want her grandpa to hurt anymore. And the stark answer that "sometimes God says 'no' to your prayers is not sufficient for the whole truth. Impassively telling my children that God

can do what He wants and you have to live with it is not the answer that comforts them and certainly does not deepen their relationship with the Lord. God's love allows suffering? Yes, but why, dad, why?

Additionally, grandpa is not ready to go home. He loves his family and he wants to see his grandchildren grow older. He wants to spend time with them and get to know them as they grow and eventually be there when his granddaughters walk down the aisle and watch his grandsons grow to become men. He once remarked that God blessed our family with these wonderful grandchildren and feels obligated to be there for them as grandpa for many more years.

Honestly, this miserable disease has drawn my father closer to the Lord in many ways. The relationship between my parents is stronger than ever before. My father talks about and prays to the Lord regularly. He and the Lord are in constant communication and dad is counting on God to keep his promises.

Other people are watching him as well — my brother, our relatives, the neighbors. What does this God mean to you when it looks bleak? My father has been sharing Christ with his family, his friends and his neighbors for years. And now, they are watching that same God allow my father to suffer.

I realize that it in the end, as God draws my father closer to Him, that it is a process of becoming closer to and more like Christ. As Hung Kung writes about Christ on the cross, "Jesus found himself left alone, not only by his people, but by the One to whom he had constantly appealed...a Father whose goodness knew no bounds, providing for the slightest things and the humblest people, gracious and at the same time mighty, but this Father gave no sign, produced no miracles." Brennan Manning reflects on this passage in *The Signature of Jesus*, "it helps to know [when we suffer] that the Father is tracing in us the image of His Son, that the signature of Jesus is being stamped on our souls."


My brother and I were blessed growing up. We did not have daddy issues. My father loved us unconditionally (and as sons, we tried to test that theory often). But he loved us with an unwavering passion. We are not ready to say goodbye either in any way.

In the end, all I can say to my children is that we have to trust the Lord — no matter what He decides to do. My father knows Him and loves Him, so all the details are the Lord's to control. His purposes are higher than our purposes, and His ways are higher than our ways.

We are praying and trusting and believing that a miracle will still happen. We trust the Lord, no matter what. But please Lord, send a cure. Grandpa still wants to chase the grandchildren, fight with his sons, love and care for his wife.

I love my dad and he loves me. It is our relationship that helps me trust the Lord, even in this situation. And I am learning that I have no choice at the end of each day but to love and trust — both fathers.

David Naimo is pleased to complete his final issue as publisher and editor-in-chief of *The Christian Lawyer*. He accepted a job in the Spring, during the beginning stages of this issue, as Executive Director of FRC Action, the legislative advocacy arm of the Family Research Council, as well as heading up the FRC Action PAC.



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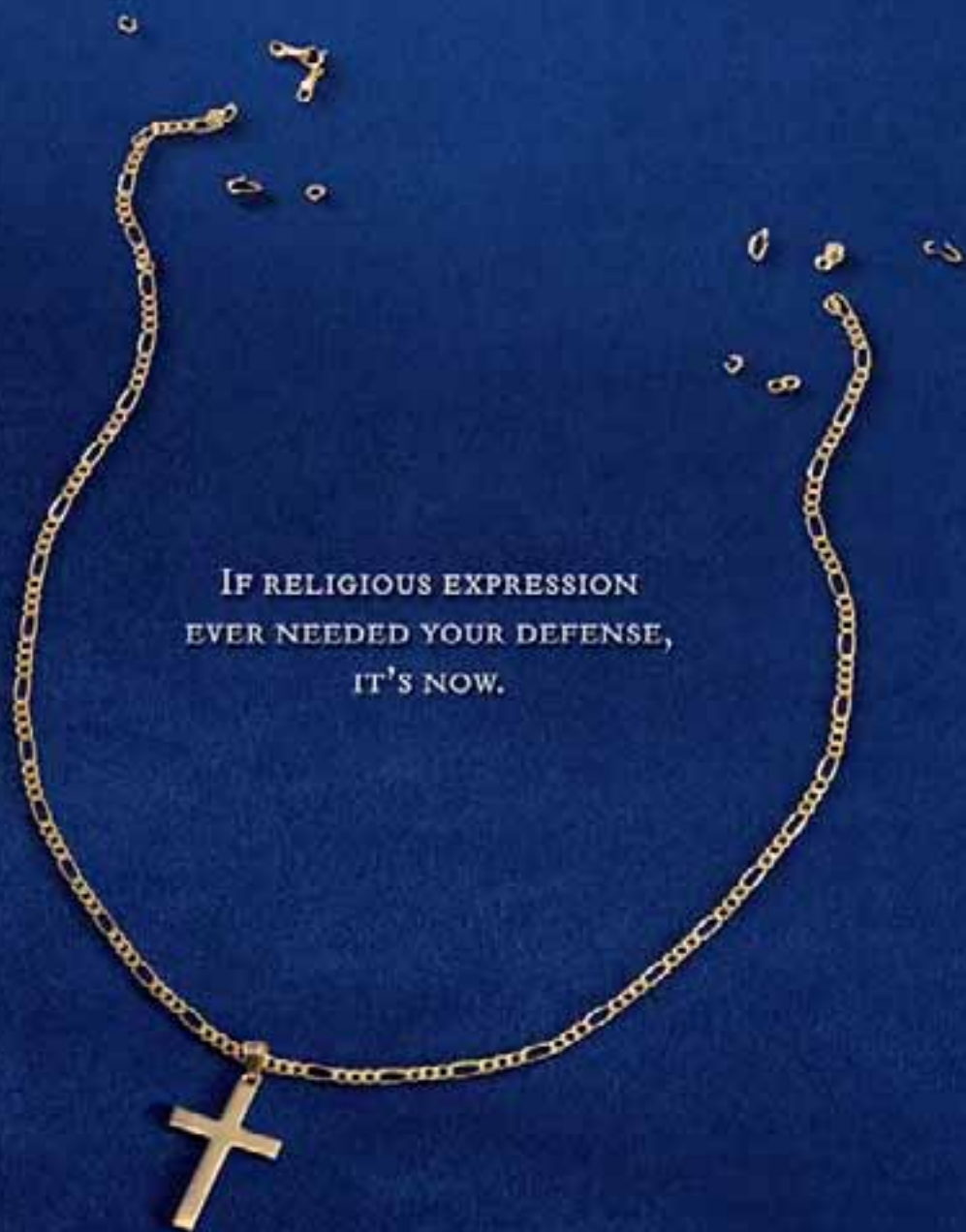
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