

As we try to explain in our "Statement of Purpose" inside the back cover of each issue, *The Social Contract* advocates a policy of restricting immigration by establishing reasonable limits, and then humanely enforcing them. In the course of working for immigration reform, we are frequently asked what groups oppose this approach. Several can be mentioned.

There are the agricultural growers who want a copious supply of docile and cheap stoop labor. There are the recrudescing sweatshop operators, running garment factories in the inner cities, who likewise want malleable and inexpensive labor. Then there are the putative ethnic group "leaders" who are looking for a larger contingent at whose head they can parade. We mustn't forget the bilingual education lobby, which has struck gold among the burgeoning ranks of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. The list could be extended to include the practitioners of immigration law, universities needing students to balance their budgets, corporations preferring to import rather than train workers — the catalog is lengthy.

We must also place "organized religion" among the opposition. The adherents of many faiths have often worked for high levels of immigration, sometimes for noble reasons, sometimes for ones that aren't quite so exalted. Many hold sincere ideas about the "brotherhood of man" or the "universalism that disdains national borders" which lead them to argue for unimpeded movements of people.

At a more practical level, leaders of some of these groups see increasing the number of their communicants through immigration as a way to guarantee the continuance of their sect, if not the road to more influence and political power. (For instance, see the filler item on page 89.) Even more venal (but not venial), some groups persist in the refugee business simply as a way of bringing in money and providing jobs for their bureaucracies through government payments for the resettlement of refugees.

In this issue, we consider the role of organized religion in the population/ immigration/ environment/ assimilation debate, realizing full well that we may be charged with being anti-religious in general, or

anti- any one of the specific groups we mention. We think that if religious groups wish to play the public policy game, they should not retreat behind charges of discrimination when their positions are challenged. As Harry Truman said, "If you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen." We, as public policy advocates, are willing to stand the heat, and we plan to stay in the kitchen; we hope the religious groups are similarly resilient. If so, the basic rules of the public policy game include proceeding in the open, subjecting one's positions to free, full and searing debate, and not falling back on the *argumentum ad hominem* when the going gets tough.

The other fundamental rule is that ours is a secular, not a theocratic, society. When it comes to a conflict between church and state, the latter, in general, prevails. Thus: polygamy was outlawed among Mormons, the use of drugs in religious ceremonies has been proscribed by the Supreme Court, and the claim of a First Amendment, separation-of-church-and-state justification for anti-social behavior has been denied. (In this connection, it will be interesting to see what the Supreme Court decides in *Pichardo vs Hialeah, FL* in which the issue is the use of animals for ritual sacrifice in the Santeria religion.)

In the ensuing pages, we look at the stances of the main U.S. religious groups on a variety of population/ immigration/ environment/ assimilation questions. Several of these articles we have commissioned; in others, we reprint statements by church leaders themselves (pp. 90, 102, 123) so you can make your own evaluation of the quality of their logic and the soundness of their positions.

As conservationists aware of the cumulative impact of numbers, we have paid particular attention to the internal contradiction in denominations that adopt positions which defend the environment but oppose the control of the numbers of people — the multipliers of environmental problems. Coupling an ethic of high fertility with today's medically efficient methods of death control, gives us the demographic disaster now in the making for the world. This is true whether the group is Muslim or Mormon, Hispanic or Hindu.

— John H. Tanton, Editor and Publisher

Washington Editor Roy Beck has had considerable experience in tracking the efforts of religious groups to influence social policy. From 1980 to 1987, he reported on religion and politics as associate editor and international traveling correspondent for the national United Methodist Reporter newspaper and the interdenominational National Christian Reporter. His efforts — such as breaking the refugee 'sanctuary' story in the U.S., and investigations of the Religious Right and the National Council of Churches — won national ecumenical press honors and the United Methodist Church's first 'Communicator of the Year' award. His book, On Thin Ice, (Bristol, 1988), explored the difficulties of the Religious Right and Religious Left in maintaining intellectual integrity while engaged in collective religious social action during the 1980s. He currently is completing a Handbook on Churches' Washington Advocacy Offices to be published this spring.

Religions and the Environment: Commitment High Until U.S. Population Issues Raised

by Roy Beck

The Earth is the Lord's, and people of faith must ensure that it is properly cared for — including curbing humankind's overpopulating ways, according to a powerful consensus that has emerged among America's religious leaders.

Officials from virtually every major faith and denomination in the country have been proclaiming in high-profile ways that protection and restoration of the natural environment is a top-priority spiritual mandate. Especially visible the last two years has been the new Joint Appeal By Religion And Science For The Environment (see boxes on pages 77 and 85). It has issued major statements that include population concerns and even the signatures of Catholic and Baptist representatives.

But an informal survey by *The Social Contract* discovered that despite the proclamations, the protection of natural resources within U.S. boundaries is not a top-priority action within religious leadership circles.

While sampling policies within the seven major U.S. religious groupings (see chart on page 79), *The Social Contract* failed to find a single denomination willing to preserve American eco-systems if it means tackling U.S. population growth.

True, large numbers of religious organizations and offices with paid staff have arisen to take some very specific actions that go far beyond merely avoiding styrofoam cups at church coffee hours. The rising tide of green religious groups forcefully advocates reducing per capita impact through the

kinds of strict regulations and consumption cuts necessary if any industrial nation is to achieve sustainable, high environmental quality.

However, while many churches acknowledge population growth as a critical factor in the world's environment, few churches even have statements that specifically note population as a factor in the welfare of the United States. Religious green leaders concentrate on reducing per capita impact while standing mute as the number of U.S. "capitas" soars. One begins to wonder if the strategy is to stop world population growth and world environmental degradation without any individual countries having to take action within their own borders.

RELIGIOUS GREENS UNFAZED BY 383 MILLION IN U.S.

Religious greens appear quite willing — whether unwittingly or intentionally — to allow the number of people impacting the U.S. environment to rise another 128 million to 383 million by 2050.

In fact, many of the religious offices — especially of the mainline Protestants, the historic peace churches, Jews, and Roman Catholics — have actively contributed to the fast-rising population through unswerving support of renewed mass immigration. Federal immigration policies will be responsible for almost all of the next 128 million people. (U.S. population would have peaked at 243 million in 2035 if not for post-1970 immigrants and their descendants, according to *The Social Contract* study