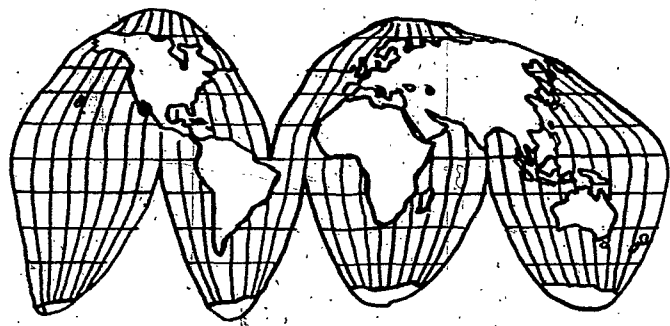


The nation and ...



... the world

From Courier-Journal Services

The Texas Conference of Churches has appealed to the state's Christian community to make a definite commitment to eat less and to help feed the hungry in the rest of the world.

Despite a Portuguese Catholic Church ban on clerical participation in politics, four priests are running for election as leftist party candidates in the national races.

A recent Gallup Poll showed that 78 per cent of U.S. adults opposed the Ford administration's proposal to provide \$522 million in additional military aid to South Vietnam and Cambodia.

Pinpointing Armageddon Has Witnesses Perplexed

Los Angeles [RNS] — Jehovah's Witnesses are having problems with eschatology.

In recent years, a good deal of publicity has centered on the idea that the sect was expecting the end of the world to occur in 1975.

A report by John Dart in the Los Angeles Times traces the origin of the belief that 1975 would be the end of the world to a book published by the sect in 1966.

After mounting expressions of concern, including reports of members selling their property to engage in evangelistic and missionary work, the sect's attitude towards 1975 was modified somewhat.

There has been some difference in what the publications technically said and how they were generally interpreted.

full-time missionary work, declared that "it is the Watchtower publications which are responsible for any and all speculation about the world's end in 1975.

An article in the sect's 1975 yearbook noted that the importance of 1975 "was deeply impressed on our minds back in 1966" by a Watchtower society book.

Although Witnesses are not now identifying 1975 as the end of the world, they are continuing to warn against taking a complacent attitude as the "last days" approach.

In the early years of the sect, Jehovah's Witnesses were anticipating Armageddon to occur in 1914.

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Working for Irish Peace

New York [RNS] — Sean Cooney, a Catholic, took the "unfashionable" course of suggesting that Americans use St. Patrick's Day to pray for Northern Ireland.

The two "ordinary people" from Belfast — a construction worker and a housewife — who have devoted their lives, often at some personal risk, to community development there, also took the opportunity to point out that the various churches of Northern Ireland have worked very hard to bring peace to that strife-torn country.

"Christianity has never failed in Northern Ireland," declared Cooney, "because it's never been tried. People have compartmentalized their lives and locked much of their Christianity away."

Both Catholics and Protestants are working together in community groups across Northern Ireland, said Mrs. Sloane, resisting military, para-military and political pressures.

Specific steps taken by the community developers in Northern Ireland over the past several years include the launching of small industries, the renovation of bombed-out housing, educational and recreational projects for children and aging, and the countering of suspicion and segregation in various parts of the six county nation of 1.5 million people.

The Belfast pair, on a three-week whirlwind tour of the U.S. to "sensitize" Americans to the situation in Northern Ireland and plead support for Colleagues from American Churches, Inc., took part in a news conference at Fordham University's Lincoln Center campus here.

And one of the things they told the press was how badly it was doing in reporting the activities of the 2 per cent in Northern Ireland who stand for violence and in failing to heed the work espoused by the 98 per cent who condemn violence.

In urging more activities like those sponsored by the Colleagues from American Churches, an ecumenical organization aimed at backing community development in Ulster, Cooney and Mrs. Sloane advised that Americans "make sure" the truth about Northern Ireland is really coming out.

The Colleagues organization, based in Wayne, Pa., is co-chaired by Father David Bowman, SJ, involved in liaison between the Catholic Church and the National Council of Churches, and the Rev. Wesley C. Baker, pastor of Wayne Presbyterian Church.

During the news conference, Cooney strongly rejected the widespread notion that what is going on in Ulster is "a religious war." He completely disputed the idea that para-military groups like the IRA (Irish Republican Army) or UDL (Ulster Defense League) have popular support.



Farringdon Gardens was badly burned out on Aug. 9, 1971, leaving some 200 families homeless in the mixed Catholic and Protestant residential area in the Ardoyne section of Northern Belfast (top photo).

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