We still debate—and must continue to debate—the relation of morality to politics; realism versus idealism; optimism versus pessimism; conservatism, liberalism, and radicalism. We must continue to debate these issues not only because they are perennial but because each generation, apparently, must work them through anew. And each generation will discover that beneath these shifting terms lie the values to which we give our deepest allegiance.

And it is here that what is most distinctive about Worldview is most evident. Although it is not evident in every article or every review, Worldview is infused with a passion. There are those who fear passion and enthusiasm in political affairs because they have so often run amuck. Crusaders, we know today, have a bad name. And that bad name attaches not only to their goals but to the passion that inspired them. There are those who, having learned this lesson well, assert that a rational person will acknowledge that the world is a place of good and evil to be accepted with patience, endurance, and modest expectations. Some of these people contribute to Worldview on occasion, for even a rationalist will sometimes have reasonable observations and proposals.

But what is distinctive about Worldview is a vision, a passion that G.K. Chesterton, a still undervalued social critic, expressed thus: "For our Titanic purposes of faith and revolution, what we need is not the cold acceptance of the world as a compromise, but some way in which we can heartily hate and heartily love it. We do not want joy and anger to neutralize each other and produce a surly contentment; we want a fiercer delight and a fiercer discontent.... No one doubts that an ordinary man can get on with this world: but we demand not strength enough to get on with it, but strength enough to get it on. Can he hate it enough to change it, and yet love it enough to think it worth changing?"

Passion is not enough. Hard political problems involve many quotidian and often unexciting details. The details, the facts, the nuts and bolts—these must be mastered. But the clanking political machine will not move without passion. Unless there is a fierce discontent with the colossal evils of this world and a fierce delight in opposing them we will rest in a cool stoic acceptance or sour frustration.

The vision, then, is of a world that is worth changing because it is worth loving. This is the vision shared by the editors, most of our contributors, and an increasing number of readers. Although the issues we cope with will present themselves under new guises, we will assert their relation to the values by which we will continue to assess them. This is the steady work, the sustained passion, the guiding vision of Worldview. It is carried on even as we acknowledge that the full realization of that vision lies beyond the purview of Worldview, or any other human agency.

**EXCURSUS II**

Peter L. Berger on The Third Jerusalem

Events have been moving rapidly in the Middle East and it may soon become evident whether Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem was indeed a breakthrough to peace or but another episode in an endless conflict. Yet the images that passed over the television screen during those momentous days will remain impressed on the mind regardless of the next turns in the political drama. They will do so for a variety of reasons: because of the intrinsic excitement of the visit, because of the powerful personalities of the men involved, because of the human poignancy of the hopes for peace that were made manifest. But there is still another reason why these images should be retained, and that is because they disclosed a vastly important religious reality.

One of the most beneficent aspects of the religious climate in this country has been a widespread and, at least in places, a deeper understanding of the commonalities between Judaism and Christianity. This understanding has been an important factor in the support given Israel by American Christians, and rightly so. It is impossible to grasp the phenomenon of the modern state of Israel without an understanding of the perennial Jewish dream of Zion. And, despite all the differences, this dream has an analogue in the Christian vision of Jerusalem. The city of David is also the city of Easter, as it is the focus of the eschatological expectations of both Jewish and Christian faith. What the unforgettable scenes of Sadat's visit have disclosed is yet another city—Muslim Jerusalem, al-Quds, "the holy one." It is a city sacred to Islam not only because it is from there that Muhammad undertook his journey to heaven, but because he did so from the rock on which Abraham almost sacrificed Isaac. In other words, the very reason why Jerusalem is a sacred place to Muslims points to the commonality between Islam and Judaism (and thus, implicitly, between these two and Christianity)—a commonality not just observable by an outsider but perceived, and indeed proclaimed, by Islam itself.

There is an ethical dimension to this, one that was reiterated a number of times during Sadat's visit. The God of Abraham is the God worshipped in common by Jews, Christians, and Muslims, and this God, who arrested Abraham in the act of sacrificing the innocent Isaac, even now does not desire the death of the innocent. He is the God invoked in the Muslim call to prayer, reiterated five times a day from all the minarets from the Atlantic Ocean to the China Sea—al-rahman al-rahim—the compassionate one, who has compassion. Thus a revelation of God's mercy stands at the beginning of what Muslims understand as the old covenant between God
and the Jews—the same mercy of God that, in the Muslim understanding, led to the prophethood of Jesus and to the final "warning" of Muhammad's mission. Because Sadat came to Jerusalem on a journey of peace, it was this dimension of Muslim faith that was so dramatically disclosed. In this respect it is very moving to compare Sadat's arrival with that of the first Muslim ruler ever to set foot in Jerusalem, the caliph 'Umar, who also began by visiting the Jewish and Christian holy places in an attitude of reverence—but 'Umar had arrived as a conqueror.

There is also what one may call an ontological dimension to this commonality between the three faiths deriving from the biblical tradition. It is finally more important than the ethical dimension, though it is inextricably linked to the latter. It has to do not just with the duties God imposes on men but with the very structure of the human condition.

At least since Tertullian in the third century an antithesis has often been posited between Jerusalem and Athens. There is no doubt much to be said for positing such an antithesis. All the same, on a world map of the religious quest of mankind this antithesis is not fundamental. Indeed, one of the great achievements of Christianity has been an integration between the Hebrew and the Greek discoveries about the human condition. The much more basic antithesis is that between Jerusalem and Benares. The fundamental religious alternative is between the perspectives deriving, respectively, from the ancient Middle East and ancient India. On the one hand is the confrontation with the God who is utterly transcendent but nevertheless acts in history, makes covenants with men, and is to be worshipped in acts of compassion and justice. On the other hand is the experience of the divine ground of the universe, an experience that typically relativizes both history and ethics. Needless to say, this antithesis is not total. There are striking parallels to the Indian experience in the mystical movements within the three branches of biblical religion, and the bhakti religiosity of Hinduism (and its analogues in Buddhism) can be interpreted as having many points of contact with the faith of Abraham. Nevertheless, there remains the fundamental alternative, which is most clearly manifested in the two perceptions of history, and by the same token of the religious significance of this world ("this aeon," in the words of the New Testament).

There is on the one hand the view of this world as but one pebble in the infinite assemblage of universes, as insignificant as all those others—one in a myriad of universes or Buddha-fields, all of which are equally meaningless and, in the end, equally unreal. Whatever is truly real is beyond this senseless cosmic bubbling. And, consequently, whatever human beings do in this world is, in the end, senseless and even unreal—part of lila, the game of the gods, and subject to maya, the power of illusion. Liberation, redemption cannot occur in this world; indeed, redemption means being freed from this world and from all its meaningless miseries and delusions. One of the greatest delusions is attachment to action and to the notion that one's acts in the world can change anything of importance.

On the other hand is the biblical view of this world as the decisive arena of God's acts of redemption—"the God who called Abraham out of Ur, who led Israel out of Egypt, who brought Jesus out of the grave, who spoke to Muhammad in the Night of Qadr. There may indeed be myriads of worlds, but all are subject to the power of this one God, and it is in this world that he chose to enact a redemptive drama of cosmic significance. It follows that this world is neither game nor illusion. Its reality derives from the ultimate reality that is revealed by these acts of God. By the same token, the activity of men can be either participation in or resistance against the divine process of redemption. Both the world and the lives of men are, in the broadest sense of the word, sacramental—imperfect, transitory, and stained, to be sure, but also the bearers of God's redemptive power.

Neither view of the world is to be dismissed as error or heresy. Indeed, it may be argued that one of the great challenges to religious thought today is the question of how, or to what degree, these two views might be reconciled. But that is another story.

One import of Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, whatever may be its outcome on the level of international politics, is that it constitutes a dramatic reiteration of the faith that the acts of men do make a difference, that history does have redemptive meaning, that human gestures on behalf of justice, compassion, and peace signal the presence of God, who is just, compassionate, and the author of peace. In this understanding it is not too much to say that Sadat's daring gesture was itself sacramental: It pointed to that final cataclysm, when God's judgment will re-
veal in full daylight both the reality and the meaning of this world. In the words of the Quran (sura 82):

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. When the sky is rent asunder; when the stars scatter and the oceans roll together; when the graves are hurled about; each soul shall know what it has done and what it has failed to do.

**EXCURSUS III**

**Richard John Neuhaus on Religion and Disarmament**

This May the U.N. General Assembly convenes a special session to focus on disarmament. As Homer Jack argues in his “Excursus,” the session is a special opportunity also for nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs, as they are called. Jack’s argument is notable for its sense both of urgency and of modesty. “Unless the arms race is halted and then reversed,” he writes, “it is hard to expect humankind to survive the rest of the century.” At the same time, the “success” of the special assembly must be measured in limited terms. Even if not a single weapon is demolished, says Jack, the assembly will be a success if it creates a “new impetus” for disarmament.

For twenty years now this journal has tried to address disarmament and other issues with a mix of urgency and modesty; with a restless patience that rejects excuses for delay and challenges accepted definitions of the possible—while always understanding that every solution is partial. In the petitioning and demonstrating that various groups will conduct around the U.N. special assembly it is appropriate that restlessness be more in evidence than patience. If such voices are to be effective, however, they should be voices of reflective restlessness. The lucidity and fairness with which they present the case for disarmament will have a lot to do with whether they are taken seriously or are justly dismissed as moralistic posturers.

The special opportunity for churches and synagogues to do something good about disarmament is highlighted by contrast with one sure formula for missing that opportunity. The sure formula for failure is represented by the initial appeal issued by the Religious Task Force of the Mobilization for Survival (MFS). Under the letterhead of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Task Force asks for the signatures of a hundred “religious leaders” on an “inspirational” pastoral letter to be read in the churches and synagogues of America. Already signed up are people who have frequently been in the forefront of religious witness for social justice; Bishops Paul Moore and James Armstrong, Dorothy Day, Sister Mary Luke Tobin, Lucius Walker, and Professor Robert McAfee Brown.

Unfortunately, the pastoral letter is, not to put too fine a point on it, an instance of simplism verging on deception. However honorable the intention, it employs ultimate symbols to advance partisan causes. Its error in substance and arrogance in tone guarantees its easy dismissal by political decisionmakers. In addition it will undoubtedly feed the popular cynicism that, as Homer Jack notes, so sorely mars American attitudes toward disarmament.

The “inspirational” pastoral letter leaves no doubt as to the causes of the arms race. Leaders are “indifferent to the arms blizzard and its fallout on our people.” This presumably includes leaders such as Jimmy Carter and Paul Warnke, the chief U.S. disarmament negotiator. Ah, but the signers of the letter are not speaking merely of individuals and their intentions but of larger and more systemic wrongs: “Governments have become the instruments of corporate greed. War is their business, and business is flourishing; so what’s the problem?” This is not an anarchist jeremiad against government as such. The guilty governments are those that have become the tools of “the corporations [that] sell abroad...the big buck leading to the big bang.” One assumes this does not include the Soviet Union, which has not gone so far down the road of détente as to become captive to the profit lust of ITT.

The epistle of pastoral edification continues: “The situation is beyond control.” If true, one wonders about the point of a letter calling for “mobilization.” Unless of course it is simply “to announce the word of Isaiah and Jesus [and] to include ourselves in the circle of faithful witness.” That, however, is not mobilization to change anything but a call to the pure heart to separate themselves from a hopeless situation that “mocks the spirit of the Lord.” One part of the letter calls down the judgment of God upon an evil beyond repair, while another calls us to “common action” to “drive out the noon-day demon of despair and give flesh to our hope for a habitable future.” The rhetoric is that of apocalyptic withdrawal, but the proposed remedy is that of an easily identifiable partisan agenda.

American policy is the unqualified culprit of the arms race. “Our No. 1 export is—death.” It might be countered that our No. 1 export is food, or technology, or bourgeois democratic ideals, or Hollywood images of consumer paradise—but these too are presumably all “instruments of corporate greed” and therefore, in the terms set by the letter, aptly summed up in the one word “death.” The signers go on to deplore “an ever new, more hellish parade of weapons; Trident, Cruise Missiles, now the Neutron Bomb.” The Fastback Bomber and Russia’s massive military buildup in Eastern Europe—to mention but two factors on “the other side”—apparently do not count in the equation. Some revisionist writers on the cold war argue that the Soviet Union has, for the most part, simply