

SRI LANKA

also available in the **Series on Religion, Nationalism, and Intolerance**

Ukraine: The Legacy of Intolerance

SRI LANKA
THE INVENTION OF
ENMITY

DAVID LITTLE

Series on
Religion, Nationalism, and Intolerance

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Nationalism is not what it seems, and above all not what it seems to itself. The cultures it claims to defend and revive are often its own inventions. . . .

—Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*

Nationalism is an invented political community, yet to describe it as “invented” . . . is to link it not to “falsity” and “fabrication” but to “imagination” and “creation”. . . . I do not believe there was “nationalism” as such in Sri Lanka a thousand years before the rise of the nation-state in the New World and Europe, but something . . . was there, ready to be transformed.

—Steven Kemper, *The Presence of the Past*

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Foreword

In the Cold War years, conflict among various religious communities was characteristically viewed through the prism of the East-West struggle. Few analysts of international affairs foresaw that with the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and elsewhere, religion would come to occupy an increasingly prominent place in questions of war and peace, and violence driven by religious belief would require more rather than less attention as a source of international conflict.

The Series on Religion, Nationalism, and Intolerance is one of the ways that the United States Institute of Peace is focusing on this challenging topic. The first volume in the series, *Ukraine: The Legacy of Intolerance* (1991), and the Sri Lanka study, taken together make a strong case for giving careful consideration to the role of religion in ethnic tensions and related international conflicts.

There is no suggestion in either study that religion alone is the cause of tension. Conflict, whether of the milder sort evident in Ukraine, or of the more violent kind in Sri Lanka, is normally a complicated affair. It is not necessary to believe that religion explains everything in order to appreciate the importance of religion in contemporary international conflicts.

The two case studies make clear that the nationalist impulse—the aspiration of an ethnic group to achieve political control over a given territory—often must search for legitimacy, which religion sometimes provides. Nationalists want their cause to have the broadest possible justification and

popular support, and religious traditions are an important means to achieving both.

In the independence movement against Russian control, the Ukrainian Catholic and the Ukrainian Orthodox churches supplied some sacred reference points around which nationalists rallied. At the same time, the long-standing tensions over jurisdiction and the restoration of church property between the Ukrainian and Russian Orthodox, and occasionally between the Orthodox and the Catholics, have been a continuing cause of antagonism within Ukraine.

In Sri Lanka, Buddhist revivalism was the result of many factors. It was a reaction to colonialism, to a deep sense of cultural isolation and insecurity, and to the modern imperatives of nation-building. As such, it sought to recover and restore to preeminence what revivalists took to be the ancient prerogative of the Sinhala majority, and especially of its language and religion. The influence of some Buddhist monks in the revivalist movement underscores the salience of religion. Tamil revivalists, responding in part to Sinhala assertiveness, employed appeals similar in form to those of their Sinhala counterparts by demanding a political arrangement favorable to protecting their ethnic identity and interests.

In short, the ongoing conflict between the Sinhala and the Tamils that has ebbed and flowed for close to half a century derives its emotional force, in part, from competing and mutually exclusive beliefs about legitimate rule and sacred authority.

By implication, both cases also demonstrate the relevance to conflict amelioration of the values of tolerance, pluralism, and nondiscrimination—norms that are enshrined in documents such as the UN Declaration against Intolerance. This conclusion is of special interest because such norms establish the terms of reference for the Institute's entire Series on Religion, Nationalism, and Intolerance, of which the books on Ukraine and Sri Lanka are a part.

Despite the driving force of religious commitment in both these communities, the idea of creating a genuinely multiethnic and multireligious national identity has significant support

in both countries. In Ukraine, the Popular Front in Support of Perestroika (Rukh) is an influential group that continues to advocate such views. In Sri Lanka many of the conditions of ethnic cooperation, such as lingual equality, increased minority autonomy within a federal system, and respect for ethnic diversity, enjoy substantial public acceptance today. Of course, there remain daunting obstacles to the realization of tolerance and pluralism in both societies, but there is also reason for hope and opportunity for amelioration of tensions.

The Series on Religion, Nationalism, and Intolerance is a project of the Institute Working Group on Religion, Ideology, and Peace, which was established to consider how religions and similar belief systems contribute to conflict situations, as well as to discover methods for managing such conflicts and encouraging reconciliation and toleration of communal differences.

As the basis for this publication series, the working group is conducting six two-day conferences over a period of four years. The group has already considered Ukraine, Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Sudan and Nigeria (together), and Tibet, and it will take up Israel in 1994. The cases have been chosen to assess differing cultural and belief traditions, various geographical and political settings, and diverse types of intolerance. Some of the cases—particularly Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Sudan, Nigeria, and Israel—are of special interest because at one time or another these societies have been committed to the principles of religious tolerance and pluralism. All the cases illustrate the ways in which the modern imperatives of nationalism set the context for much of the religious and ideological conflict that is becoming a major characteristic of our times. By focusing on these important examples, the working group hopes to draw useful conclusions about the causes of this type of conflict as well as prospects for its amelioration or peaceful management.

Richard H. Solomon, President
United States Institute of Peace

Preface

In keeping with the series of which it is a part, this volume approaches ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka with an eye to the special role of religion and religious intolerance.

Since the salience of religion may not be taken for granted, the book tries to sort out and trace just where and how the "religious factor" plays into the tensions between the Sinhala majority and the Tamil minority that have dominated life in Sri Lanka since the 1950s. It attempts to show that the struggle by Sri Lankans to define for themselves an appropriate national identity after independence from the British in 1948 is incomprehensible apart from the religious identities embraced by the two groups—predominantly Theravada Buddhism for the Sinhala and Saivite Hinduism for the Tamils.

The book is particularly attentive to the special circumstances surrounding the conjunction of religion and what emerge as conflicting and incompatible images of nationhood held by the two communities. The volume tries to show, accordingly, that the term "religious intolerance," if carefully understood and precisely applied, illuminates important aspects of the conflict.

The relevant "special circumstances" turn out, in part at least, to be of relatively recent origin. The colonial experience, especially in connection with the British during the nineteenth century, and the growing pressures of nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, provided the indispensable context for "the invention of enmity." At the same

time, the peculiar dynamics of that context prompted each party to turn back to its own ancient spiritual heritage, and to revive and adapt that heritage in helping to define its image of nationhood. In that respect, the sources of intolerance in Sri Lanka are a complex mixture of the modern and the ancient.

Laying bare the roots of intolerance requires, therefore, some attention to history, and in that regard, this study is a chronicle of the rise and manifestation of intolerance in Sri Lanka. But the results of the study also suggest a useful direction for overcoming intolerance, and in that way can perhaps contribute to a reduction of enmity in Sri Lanka.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part, "Belief and Intolerance," analyses the sources of "revivalism" in Sri Lanka, both for the Sinhala and for the Tamils. Here religious belief is shown to provide justification for certain forms of cultural and linguistic ethnocentrism. The second part, "Patterns of Conflict," recounts the record of the stormy relations between the Sinhala and the Tamils from roughly the 1920s to the present. An attempt is made throughout to connect the analysis with the broader concerns of the general study that are outlined in the section "About the Series."

This book is based on a conference entitled "Religious Intolerance and Conflict in Sri Lanka" that took place at the United States Institute of Peace on September 4 and 5, 1990.

The conference was organized around four major paper presenters. Sarath Amunugama, fellow at the International Center for Ethnic Studies in Colombo, Sri Lanka, presented a paper entitled "Buddhaputra and Bhumiputra? Dilemmas of Modern Sinhala Buddhist Monks in Relation to Ethnic and Political Conflict." Amunugama has published widely on Sri Lankan society and literature, including several books.

Patrick Peebles, professor in the Department of History at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, delivered a paper entitled "The Accelerated Mahaweli Programme and Ethnic Conflict." Peebles was a visiting professor in history at the

University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka in 1984, and visiting associate professor of South Asian history at Cornell University in 1988–89.

John Rogers, research fellow at the Center of South Asian and Indian Ocean Studies at Tufts University, presented a paper entitled "Regionalism and Ethnicity in Sri Lanka." Rogers is the author of *Crime, Justice and Society in Colonial Sri Lanka*.

H. L. Seneviratne, associate professor of anthropology at the University of Virginia, presented a paper entitled "South Indian Cultural Nationalism and Separatism in Sri Lanka." Seneviratne has conducted anthropological field work in Sri Lanka, specializing in the sociology of Buddhism. He is author of *Rituals of the Kandyan State*.

Four respondents also participated. Stanley Tambiah is a professor of anthropology at Harvard University and the author of several books, including *Sri Lanka: Ethnic Fratricide and the Dismantling of Democracy* and *World Conqueror and World Renouncer*, a study of Buddhism in Thailand. C. R. de Silva, associate professor and lecturer at the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, is currently chair of the Department of History at Indiana State University. In addition to being the author of over ten books and over forty articles, de Silva edited *The American Impact on Sri Lanka*. George Bond, professor of history and religion at Northwestern University, has written extensively on Buddhism in Sri Lanka and was the recipient of a Fulbright grant for research in Sri Lanka. He is author of *The Buddhist Revival in Sri Lanka: Religious Tradition, Reinterpretation, and Response*. Sarath Perinbanayagam, professor of sociology at the City University of New York, Hunter College, has written several books on Sri Lanka, including *The Karmic Theater: Self-Society and Astrology in Jaffna*.

The author gratefully acknowledges the contributions of all those who participated in the original conference. Without their help—as well as that of the members of the Working Group on Religion, Ideology, and Peace, the conference speakers and respondents, and the many individuals, especially

in Sri Lanka, who have provided such invaluable information and instruction—the preparation of this volume would have been impossible.

In particular, H. L. Seneviratne's contribution was immeasurable. He helped plan the original conference on Sri Lanka; he has been a limitless source of background material and suggestions based on his own current work on the Buddhist monks of Sri Lanka; he has read and reread drafts of the manuscript, always giving pointed and incisive reaction; and he has spent hours helping to clarify and recast central ideas in this report. In addition, several of the conference participants offered invaluable advice on the manuscript: John Rogers, Stanley Tambiah, George Bond, C. R. de Silva, Sarath Perinbanayagam, and Vernon Mendis. Sarath Amunugama was his usual generous and affable self in acting as host for a trip the author took to Sri Lanka in the summer of 1991. Besides that, Amunugama made the results of his current research available and offered illuminating counsel regarding the themes of this book. Finally, he arranged interviews with numerous political figures, journalists, and religious leaders, together with several people whose views and reactions, both oral and written, have been very influential on this study: Neelan Tiruchelvam, Radhika Coomaraswamy, Reggie Siriwardene, K. M. de Silva, and S. W. R. de A. Samarasinghe. Special gratitude is due de Silva and Samarasinghe for lengthy and illuminating discussions, both in Sri Lanka and in Washington, D.C., as well as for the readiness with which each of them made available a number of recent writings on Sri Lanka. Both men, too, have offered very helpful comments on the manuscript.

Certain members of the working group went out of their way to make useful suggestions, especially John Kelsay, Rosalind Hackett, Ian Lustick, and Ann Elizabeth Mayer; many of those suggestions have been duly incorporated. Marion Creekmore, former U.S. ambassador to Sri Lanka, very kindly read the manuscript, and shared some very helpful observations and reactions.

Timothy Sisk, former program assistant, played an indispensable role by helping to plan and conduct the conference

and then by transcribing the proceedings. Scott Hibbard, the present program assistant, has performed invaluable service by aiding in the preparation of the manuscript. Special thanks also to Dan Snodderly, editorial manager at the Institute, for his graceful goading and expert assistance.

Nonetheless, the author bears the full and final responsibility for the views expressed in this volume. The views do not represent the position of the United States Institute of Peace or, necessarily, that of any of the people associated with the conference, or of those who have been consulted in the course of preparing this document. In a subject as sensitive as this one, involving many diverse and often conflicting interpretations, it is impossible to harmonize all opinions and suggestions. Judgments and selections must be made, and therefore some people who have so generously assisted the author will not be fully satisfied. That is both regrettable and inevitable. But whatever the remaining flaws in this study, it is much the stronger for having been subjected to such diverse, thoughtful, and challenging review.

About the Series

This six-part study of belief and intolerance considers how and why certain religious and similar beliefs create or contribute to hostility and conflict, as well as how and why they are frequently a cause of discrimination and persecution. In addition, it addresses the prospects and techniques for modifying and ameliorating conflicts that involve religious and similar loyalties and commitments. It asks how stable arrangements of mutual respect and forbearance come about. What are the resources, both inside and outside traditions of belief, that encourage “peaceful pluralism” and thereby prevent differences in basic outlook from leading to mistreatment, abuse, and violence?

Such an investigation is squarely within the mandate of the United States Institute of Peace. The Institute is an independent, nonpartisan government institution created and funded by Congress to strengthen the nation’s capacity to promote the peaceful resolution of international conflict (or conflict with serious international implications). The Institute pursues its mandate by awarding grants, by appointing scholars and practitioners as fellows, by producing publications and educational programs, and by assembling working groups to share ideas and conduct research.

The study is the project of the Institute Working Group on Religion, Ideology, and Peace. By directing the attention of twenty-five or so experts to the subject of belief and intolerance, we expect to draw some useful conclusions

regarding one aspect, at least, of the causes of serious conflict and the means of resolving it.

The context for this reflection will be six two-day conferences spread over a period of roughly four years. Each conference is devoted to an area of the world where serious intercommunal tension or conflict exists and where intolerance based on religion or belief appears to be a significant part of the difficulty. The working group has already taken up Ukraine, Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Sudan and Nigeria (in combination), and Tibet; it will consider Israel in 1994. Reports on these conferences, written by the director of the working group, David Little, will follow in due course.

The inspiration for the study is the momentous set of concerns enunciated in the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, adopted by the UN General Assembly in November 1981. In view of the fact, states the preamble, "that the disregard and infringement of human rights and fundamental freedoms of thought, conscience, religion or whatever belief, have brought . . . wars and great suffering to mankind," the General Assembly declares itself to be "convinced that freedom of religion and belief should . . . contribute to the attainment of the goals of world peace, social justice and friendship among peoples. . . ."

Widespread violation of religious liberty and freedom of conscience make such a study urgent. According to information compiled by the UN special rapporteur on intolerance and discrimination, "infringement of the rights defined in the Declaration against Intolerance seem to persist in most regions of the world. . . . They concern all the provisions of the Declaration."¹

The Special Rapporteur is concerned with the persistence of alarming infringements of other human rights arising out of attacks on freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief. Noteworthy among them is the growing number of extra-judicial killings that have allegedly taken place in the context of clashes between religious groups or between such groups and security forces. Resorting to violence or the threat of its use in dealing

with problems or antagonisms of a religious nature is also a disturbing development which, if unchecked, might endanger international peace.²

The most important factors hampering the implementation of the Declaration are: the existence of legal provisions that run counter to the spirit and letter of the Declaration; practices by governmental authorities; contradicting not only the principles embodied in international instruments but even provisions enshrined in domestic law which prohibit discrimination on religious grounds; the persistence of political, economic and cultural factors which result from complex historical processes and which are at the basis of current expressions of religious intolerance [p. 56].

In some instances, a state's constitution extends special privileges by conferring official status on one religious or ideological group. In others, special legislation favors one or more religions to the detriment of excluded groups, and in extreme examples, certain religions or denominations are declared to be unlawful and members are punished for belonging to those groups or practicing their tenets (p. 11).

Beyond legislative provisions, government practices and policies frequently violate the terms of the declaration by encouraging disparagement of specific groups by means of the state-controlled media, educational policy, or denying in practice any legal status or legal protection to the members of a religion not recognized officially. Governments sometimes tolerate and even encourage abuses perpetrated by one group against another, or directly interfere in the practices and activities of certain religious bodies (pp. 11-12).

Finally, political, economic, and cultural factors frequently breed distrust and bigotry.

Norms, judgments, prejudices, superstitions, myths, and archetypes whereby we model our behavior in society and which are culturally transmitted from generation to generation, as well as anachronistic and unjust economic structures that result in regional majorities of human beings sunk into misery and ignorance, all foster the germination of dogmatism, intolerance, and

discrimination, and with it persecution and armed aggression. These norms, judgments and prejudices, which give rise to deep feelings and to the transformation of unfocused emotions into sharp feelings that condition our ideas about equality among human beings, as well as tolerance and respect for the ideas and feelings of others, are a product of societal forces. This means that in order to eliminate discrimination and intolerance in all its forms there must necessarily be a change in attitude of the human being which will be a product of the needed social changes and psychic transformations of individuals.³

The declaration is clear that *all* forms of basic belief, and not just religious belief, are explicitly protected. People may not be punished or discriminated against, regardless of whether their basic beliefs are religious.⁴

However, the declaration is not altogether clear or consistent about the exact meaning of intolerance.⁵ At one point, intolerance is synonymous, and used interchangeably, with discrimination (see Appendix, article 2.2). To discriminate, according to the declaration, is to impose a restriction or preference "based on religion or belief" that denies basic human rights and freedoms, such as freedom of expression, freedom of worship, equal access to public facilities, and so on. It is presumed, incidentally, that the declaration also prohibits persecution, or the direct infliction of severe injury or distress, as simply an extreme form of discrimination.

At another point, however, the declaration suggests that intolerance and discrimination are different things. The title itself speaks of "the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance *and* of Discrimination" (emphasis added). What is more, states are obligated under the declaration to prohibit discrimination legislatively, but they are urged "to take all appropriate measures to combat intolerance" (see Appendix, article 4.2), as though they were dealing with distinct phenomena.

Perhaps the proper interpretation is that, strictly speaking, intolerance refers to motives and attitudes, whereas discrimination refers to acts. Accordingly, "intolerance describes the emotional, psychological, philosophical and religious attitudes that may prompt acts of discrimination. . . ." ⁶ This

formulation raises the related question whether the outward expression of intolerant attitudes—such as taunting, insulting, or inflaming people because of belief—while not constituting actual discrimination as such, is still prohibited under the declaration insofar as it may be shown to incite discrimination. Such a proposition, of course, poses standard perplexities concerning the proper limits of free speech.⁷

Bearing the proposed distinction between intolerance and discrimination in mind, it will, in this study, nevertheless be convenient (and not altogether inconsistent with the declaration or with ordinary usage) to use the word *intolerance* occasionally in a less refined and more inclusive way to cover acts of discrimination (and persecution) as well as motives and attitudes that incite to such action. In that sense, *intolerance based on religion or belief* may at times refer to abusive practices as well as to the feelings and dispositions behind those practices.⁸

It is important to emphasize the specific and rather elaborate sense in which the word *intolerance* is used in the declaration to counteract the lingering suspicion that the very notions of tolerance and intolerance are outmoded and need to be replaced. The word *tolerance* recalls, it is said, arrangements in which a majority merely indulges certain unconventional beliefs as a matter of sufferance, not of right. On that basis, adherents are hardly given equal respect or treated without discrimination. According to this older notion, those unwilling to bear with such an indulgent system would be called intolerant. But under contemporary conditions, the idea of intolerance appears to convey considerably more than that.⁹

However accurate this observation may be historically, the concept of intolerance as specified in the declaration prohibits all arrangements that rest on or produce attitudes or conditions of serious discrimination or the demeaning of certain groups because of religion or belief. By implication, the idea of tolerance would exclude any such attitudes and conditions.

A central objective of the project, then, is to test carefully and thoughtfully the twofold proposition that intolerance, as described, contributes substantially to wars and great suffering

and that its modification or elimination helps to promote justice, solidarity, and peace.

Approach

The comparative study of intolerance and belief, such as is described here, has not been taken up elsewhere. It represents, it is hoped, a distinctive complement to related work in regard to nation-building, communal conflict, and human rights.

The study is not envisioned as a rigorous social-scientific exercise replete with quantified results aimed at verifying some comprehensive theory of intolerance. The subject matter is so complex and varies so from place to place that it appears at this stage to defy any such aspiration. A more exploratory, informal, and open-ended approach seems preferable.

Moreover, whatever explanatory account is finally adopted for why people believe as they do and what they make of their beliefs, there is no substitute for first determining carefully what those beliefs are and how believers themselves understand, defend, apply, and are disposed to alter their beliefs. Unless that job is done well, explanatory accounts will be deficient. In short, the study takes seriously the subjective meaning of belief as expressed by participants and informed observers of the areas to be examined.

It should also be said that—for working purposes, at least—a *belief* shall be understood as a state of mind disposed to regard a proposition or set of propositions as true. *Belief that* something is true seems to be a necessary condition for holding a belief, however expanded the idea may become when people talk, as they often do in discussions of religious and ideological matters, of *believing in* someone or something. The kind of special trust, confidence, or commitment usually associated with basic or fundamental beliefs of a religious or related sort seems to presuppose that those beliefs are taken to be true in the first place.¹⁰

This emphasis on belief does not mean that the investigation is indifferent to material factors, such as the motive to protect or achieve sheer economic or political advantage for

one's group. These factors are sometimes understood to be external to the core doctrines of the respective belief traditions and to condition in various ways the connections between belief and intolerance. Part of the task of the study will be to detect and trace those connections, at least informally and suggestively, insofar as they exist.

Such a task is, of course, notoriously complicated, because basic religious and other beliefs so readily become entangled with questions of ethnic, economic, and national identity and competition. On the one hand, religious or other basic beliefs are occasionally manipulated in the service of political or economic interests. Machiavelli's famous advice to princes comes to mind:

It is well to seem merciful, faithful, humane, sincere, religious, and also to be so; but you must have the mind so disposed that when it is needful to be otherwise you may be able to change to the opposite qualities. . . . A prince must take great care that nothing goes out his mouth which is not full of the above . . . qualities, and, to see and hear him, he should seem to be all mercy, faith, integrity, humanity, and religion. . . . [N]othing is more necessary than to seem to have this last quality. . . . Everybody sees what you appear to be, few feel what you are. . . . A certain prince . . . never does anything but preach peace and good faith, but he is really a great enemy to both, and either of them, had he observed them, would have lost him state or reputation on many occasions.¹¹

On the other hand, religion or similar beliefs typically play an active and prominent part in defining group identity and in picking out and legitimating particular ethnic and national objectives. For example, political and economic competition among groups is frequently couched in religious terms, and attitudes toward members of other groups and ways of treating them are themselves understood religiously.

Max Weber reminds us of "the need of social strata, privileged through existing political, social, and economic orders, to have their social and economic positions 'legitimized.'" Groups "wish to see their positions transformed from purely factual power relations into a cosmos of acquired rights, and

to know that [those rights] are thus sanctified."¹² The fact that human beings seem compelled to evaluate given political and economic arrangements in reference to sacred or cosmic standards suggests that religious and related beliefs play a special role in human experience and are more than simply the function of some prior material or external condition.

If religion and like beliefs were but the function of something else, it remains to be explained why conflicts over political legitimacy so readily and so recurrently get expressed in religious and similarly ultimate categories, and why those categories continue to have such wide and vital appeal. Why, exactly, does the struggle for dominance in so many places—in Sudan, Sri Lanka, Tibet, Ukraine, Israel—have such a conspicuous and enduring religious dimension?

These considerations support the importance of attending explicitly to religious and similar beliefs in a study of intolerance while not losing sight of whatever conditioning circumstances are found to be relevant. This sort of orientation seems important in respect to understanding not just the sources of intolerance, but also the means for modifying or eliminating them.

One way of refining this kind of investigation is to develop a typology of possible relations between belief and intolerance that accommodates and helps to clarify the complexity of subject matter that has already been alluded to. The following is a preliminary attempt.

The general distinction between belief as a *target of* intolerance and belief as a *warrant for* intolerance is suggested by what have been called the twin principles of the UN Declaration against Intolerance: the principle of "the freedom to manifest religion or belief, stated in Article 1," and the principle of "the freedom from discrimination based on religion or belief, set forth in Article 2."¹³

The first principle is designed to protect people from becoming targets of intolerance—that is, from being disadvantaged, confined, or injured for holding and expressing certain beliefs and for performing certain practices. While the way beliefs and practices are perceived varies according

to circumstance, three general categories of belief as a target of intolerance may be enumerated: the unorthodox, the politicized, and the seditious.

The first category, *unorthodox belief*, refers to a religious or ideological belief perceived as intolerable from the point of view of the orthodox belief system. The second category, *politicized belief*, refers to a religious or ideological belief perceived as threatening the existing polity simply by virtue of recommending an alternative government structure or character. *Seditious belief*, finally, refers to a religious or ideological belief perceived as constituting incitement to active rebellion against an existing government.¹⁴

The second principle of the UN Declaration against Intolerance is designed to prevent people from using religion as a warrant for perpetrating acts of intolerance—that is, disadvantaging, confining, or injuring others in the name of a certain religion or belief. Belief as a warrant for intolerance refers to a belief held by a dominant group that is taken to entitle that group to act intolerantly toward others.

It should be emphasized that the two kinds of intolerance are not necessarily correlative. There could be nonreligious grounds for discriminating against a religious sect, as, for example, when a secular state harasses a group of Jehovah's Witnesses who refuse to offer unqualified devotion to the government. Similarly, there could be religious reasons for discriminating against a group that itself is identified not by religion but rather by race, language, or some other nonreligious indicator. An example would be treating African-Americans or women unequally on the basis of a scriptural text or theological doctrine.

Primary Concerns of the Study

Sensitive to these categories and distinctions, this study has been conceived in light of three primary concerns:

1. To identify the character and degree of intolerance in each respective setting: Is belief the target of discrimination or

persecution or both? What sort of belief is targeted (unorthodox, politicized, seditious)? What form does discrimination or persecution take? Is belief a warrant for discrimination or persecution? What form does discrimination or persecution take?

2. To identify and analyse the justifications (religious or non-religious) for intolerant treatment, as well as the responses of those subject to such treatment. (Here the various connections among belief and political legitimacy, ethnic identity, and national identity would be relevant.)
3. To determine the degree to which existing beliefs (and their justifications) may be treated more tolerantly if they are the target of intolerance and may become more tolerant or "pluralistic" if they are a warrant for intolerance.

The foregoing comments about giving beliefs their due without ignoring conditioning circumstances would be particularly pertinent at points 2 and 3.