

## Ecumenism Or 'Mystery Babylon'?

by Martin G. Collins

*Forerunner*, "Prophecy Watch," November 1993

The second ever "Parliament of the World's Religions" met in Chicago from August 28 to September 5, 1993, "to promote and encourage religious tolerance and interfaith cooperation." Participants formally signed "The Global Ethic," a code of ethics for the world's religions, condemning environmental abuses, sexual discrimination, social disarray and military aggression.

The parliament included 6,000 representatives from all the world's major religions, including the major branches of Christianity (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant) Baha'i, Buddhist, Confucian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Native American, Shinto, Sikh, Taoist, Unitarian, Zoroastrian and others.

This gathering comes 100 years after the first, and only other, "Parliament of the World's Religions" in 1893, which drew 400 participants and 4,000 visitors. According to Daniel Gomez-Ibanez, executive director of the 1993 planning council, "It has come to be remembered as *a landmark event* in the history of interfaith understanding because it provided a venue for *Eastern religions*, including Buddhism and Hinduism, *to establish a presence in the United States*" (our emphasis).

Speaking of the latter days of the descendants of Israel, Isaiah prophesied:

For You [God] have forsaken Your people, the house of Jacob, because they are filled with *eastern ways*; . . . they are pleased [margin: '*shake hands to make bargains*'] with the children of foreigners. (Isaiah 2:6)

Gomez-Ibanez continues, "Organizers of this year's event hoped to rekindle the spirit of the first meeting to promote religious tolerance. But they hope the second parliament will have more of an impact." The impact of the 1893 parliament was spiritually devastating to the U.S. as it opened the door for "foreign gods" to have an accepted foothold in this country. They have grown in influence and number ever since. What impact will this year's parliament have on the future of this nation?

It is interesting that the American government has permitted so many Muslim immigrants into the U. S. that Islam is quickly becoming this nation's second largest religion. If the immigration rate continues along with a high Muslim birth rate, it is estimated that Christianity may become a minority religion in America within 20 years.

The New Age influence was prominent at this year's gathering. The mood was set at the opening meeting with a silent meditation by Sri Chinmoy, a New Age artist and spiritual leader from New York. The Orthodox Christian Host Committee withdrew from the Parliament to protest the presence of neo-pagan groups, including witches. Most other attendees accepted their presence.

The Dalai Lama, the exiled leader of Tibetan Buddhists, spoke influentially during the parliament. In the keynote address at the closing session, he said that the world's religions should advocate birth control as a means of sustaining life on the planet. "If you look at each individual human life as precious, it is better to control that precious life instead of having too much precious life." This sounds dangerously close to government-imposed abortion of undesired fetuses, as in China.

To a world drowning in religious confusion, violence and social upheaval, this parliament and the global ethic seem like noble gestures. But God warns against signing agreements with other religions:

"And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars." But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? Therefore, I also said, "I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you." (Judges 2:2-3)

God commanded ancient Israel and their descendants not to even inquire about foreign religions, much less make agreements with them.

Take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, "How did these nations serve their gods?" (Deuteronomy 12:30-32)

Under the guise of tolerance and ecumenism, Satan is undermining the world's ability to discern the true from the false. In desperation many will be very willing to follow the lead of a strong religious leader who can—with signs and wonders—point them toward worshiping the Beast (Revelation 13:11-18). This Parliament of the World's Religions is a significant step in his plan to bring about his version of world government influenced and guided by his religious deception.