

Middle East Peace Summit, sponsored by the Council for the World's Religions, entitled "Islam and the Establishment of World Peace"

Frank Kaufmann
January 1991



Leaders discuss proposals for peace during the CWR conference in Cairo, Egypt.

As some of the most formidable military powers on the planet mobilized forces in preparation for the possibility of a war in the Persian Gulf, a war which would certainly be the most devastating of our time, Father took emergency measures to move for a peaceful resolution to the mounting tensions in the region. He explained to the Council of the World's Religions' staff that the present Gulf Crisis posed a real danger of a possible Christian-Muslim war. This would not only affect the region, but the entire world, and furthermore, not just our present world but would create scars of hatred that would take generations to heal. Even in his distant land of Korea he could not sleep knowing such tragic potentialities were at large.

Thus in mid-October, Father deputized Reverend Chung Hwan Kwak to drop all business and fly immediately to the Middle East to deliver Father's message of peace to Muslim leaders in the region. His address outlined the necessary vision, and clearly described the spiritual principles which must be applied if the tragic and virtually unthinkable conflict is to be averted. By the grace of God, Reverend Kwak and Father's message were enthusiastically received by those gathered, many of the most influential religious leaders in the Arab world.

The journey began with a three day visit to Syria. There Reverend Kwak met with Muslim leader Grand Mufti Ahmad Kuftaro to present Father's vision, and discuss strategies for serving the Divine Will at this crucial time. Furthermore, Reverend Kwak represented Father on a tour through the mosques, schools,

colleges and so on of the far-reaching religious, educational and socio- cultural movement of Mufti Kufaro.

Reverend Kwak, Mufti Kufaro and Mahmoud his son and heir, as well as several senior deputies, engaged in a series of meetings designed to investigate avenues of substantial cooperation between the two religious movements.

Finally, in Syria, Reverend Kwak met with a number of political officials to discuss with them the current situation, and to deliver Father's vision for peace. (Simultaneously, policy makers in the Bush Administration were being advised to be guided by the highest vision of Christianity.) The Syrian visit was reported on Syrian television as well as in the Syrian print media.

The second stop on the peace mission was the Muslim Leaders' Summit in Cairo, Egypt. On October 21, 1990, an international group of religious and social leaders gathered under the Council for the World's Religion's banner, "Islam and the Establishment of World Peace." Despite the short notice (less than one week), a serious and influential group gathered to discuss the present emergency, and to hear Father's message.

Among those represented were two Grand Muftis (Syria and Yemen), several faculty and department heads from the El Azhar University, leaders of Sufi orders, an Egyptian former ambassador, a former Prime Minister of Sudan, journalists, financiers and others. All present worked diligently throughout the day, following a fairly rigorous agenda. Morning sessions were devoted to reports from the local leaders on their various perspectives on the present situation.

After the luncheon banquet Reverend Kwak delivered Father's address. The remainder of the day was devoted to concrete proposals for implementing the peace vision. Finally the proposal for the Inter-Religious Federation for Peace, which was announced at the recent San Francisco Assembly of the World's Religions, was presented and discussed. In the following days, reports and speeches from the meeting were distributed to the region's major news agencies.

The Council for the World's Religions wishes to express its heartfelt gratitude to the visionary Muslim leaders who have so enthusiastically embraced and endorsed this call for peace.