only hint at their frustration or weave elaborate, bitter stories.

"I love Qaddafi, believe me," says one, "but the problem is those around him. Sooner or later, they forget about the people."

Qaddafi has transformed the country — especially its capital — since he took power at age 27. What was once a dusty Arab backwater is now a charmless jungle of concrete high-rises and bypasses. The dominant color in the city is green — not of grass, but of the myriad flags and signs (even automobile license plates) colored to evoke Qaddafi's revolutionary tract, the Green Book.

Western expatriates complain that life in Tripoli is dull. Nightclubs, theaters and concert halls have been closed; alcohol is forbidden. Yet despite the restrictions, millions of foreigners flock to the country in search of work. American citizens do not need a visa as long as they are invited by a Libyan organization.

To be sure, Qaddafi has survived a turbulent 25 years at the helm — a rare achievement in an oil-rich country — and has skillfully sidestepped numerous attempted coups. He crushed the latest, an army rebellion in October 1993, by ordering Libya's air force to bomb the rebels' barracks outside the town of Misurata. The attack caused such severe tremors that Tunisian radio at first reported a minor earthquake. The survivors, largely from the Warfella clan that previously had supported Qaddafi's tribe, were arrested and several are rumored to be awaiting execution.

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Technically, Qaddafi has no official function in the Libyan government. He calls himself "the Leader" and his position depends upon his ability to sustain a delicate alliance of tribes. Dissent among families at the top of state structures in Tripoli still presents the greatest threat to his rule.

Qaddafi tightened his security after last year's coup attempt. His normal retinue of female bodyguards has been beefed up by an unseemly crowd of soldiers who jostle around him at public appearances. He still lives in central Tripoli's sprawling El Azziziya barracks, which were bombed by American warplanes in 1986 — his wrecked house is now a showpiece for guests — but antiaircraft guns on the barracks roof and a couple of tanks at the entrance protect against unwanted visitors.

Expatriates working in the Libyan oil industry operate under tight security. Foreign companies need special permission even to operate a fax machine or a personal computer. Westerners must register their movements and are separated from ordinary Libyans. One positive aspect of the U.N. financial restrictions is that foreign companies in Libya are banned from handing over any hard currency to the Libyan government; many companies have been operating rent-free for 18 months.

Foreigners working in Tripoli expect the current stalemate to continue. They believe that Qaddafi's rule is a better alternative for the West than a radical Islamic regime, which could replace him.

To be fair, Qaddafi also has had his accomplishments during 25 years in power. He has resisted the militant Islamic influence that is causing such carnage in Algeria. He has championed women's rights to a level rarely seen in the Middle East — indeed, in the patriarchal Arab world, Qaddafi is known as something of a feminist.

He also has helped keep Libya free from a population explosion through extended free education for men and women — a better-educated population tends to produce fewer children. And since there are fewer than 5 million Libyans, an average gross national product of $30 billion gives the country a healthy per-capita GNP of $6,000. Generous oil salaries have attracted millions of migrant workers from other Arab countries, and they work on the building sites or in industry.

Yet even migrant workers are vulnerable to Qaddafi's whims. In September, Qaddafi announced that all 70,000 Palestinians working in Libya would have to leave the country. Their crime? Palestine Liberation Or-ganization leader, Yasser Arafat, had missed Qaddafi's party. •

Christian Coalition Dares Say the Word: Diversity

By Larry Witham

Labeled by its critics as intolerant and exclusive, the religious right is paying more attention to Roman Catholics, Jews and African-Americans.

During its annual "Road to Victory" convention in September, the Christian Coalition touted the diversity of the "religious right" — even as mostly white speakers addressed mostly white, middle-class evangelicals in the audience. Despite appearances, however, the coalition, often portrayed by detractors as theologically narrow and culturally exclu-

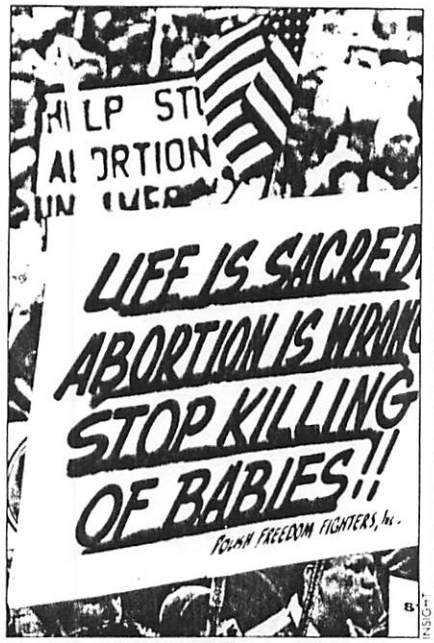
Reed: *Proud of the Pope's resistance.*

sive, is striving to broaden its base.

"I count myself as one who was proud of the way Pope John Paul II stood up to this administration" on abortion at the U.N. population conference in Cairo, said Ralph Reed, a Protestant who is the coalition's executive director. His remarks reflected the coalition's efforts to pay more attention to Roman Catholics, Jews and African-Americans involved in the conservative movement.

Though the vast majority of the 1-million-member coalition consists of evangelicals energized by Pat Robertson's 1988 presidential bid, more mainline Protestants, Catholics, Jews and Mormons have become supporters or sympathizers, judging by the range of participants at the convention, held at the Washington Hilton Hotel. Helen Dalton of Meadville, Pa., for example, is Roman Catholic. Like others who came to the nation's capital for the weekend event, she has performed volunteer work for a social-service organization — in her case, Meals on Wheels — and wants to make a difference in politics.

"If anyone is a born-again believer, the cry of Jesus's heart is to go into the world and help the poor and needy, the person who is down," says Genendal Fratautuono, a Protestant who gave up a good job in Virginia and moved to Gulfport, Miss., to take care of an ailing mother and other relatives. She noted that the city's crime rate has risen and its morality has declined as a result of legalized gambling, but she contends that her desire to end gambling and aid its victims is neither a liberal nor conservative cause. "The heart of the Christian is to do for others," says Fratautuono.



Pro-Lifers: *Half the U.S. population?*

A 1994 survey by the Ray Bliss Institute for Applied Politics at the University of Akron found that 27 percent of the electorate is "close" or "very close" in agreement with the "religious right." John Green, who directed the study, said the nation's evangelicals, along with mainline Protestants, Catholics, Jews and other religious groups open to the message of religious conservatives, account for half the U.S. population.

For secular liberals, "we are the makings of their worst nightmare — Jews and Christians united," said Rabbi Daniel Lapin of California. "I think our army is on the road to victory."

Hollywood media critic Michael Medved, one of the many Jewish and Catholic speakers who addressed the 3,000 conventioneers, noted that Jews sympathize with any group accused of religious conspiracies. "You hear the same kinds of lines anti-Semites were using," he said, referring to warnings about the religious right. "There are thousands of Jewish people who are not going to stand for that."

Critics of the religious right claim that there are fundamentalists who oppose gun control, ostracize homosexuals and blame poverty on the poor, and they point to fringe elements in the movement that have bombed abortion

Casey Goes to Bat for the Rights of the Unborn

Pennsylvania Gov. Robert B. Casey, the pro-life Democrat who was muzzled at his party's 1992 convention, is warning the Republican Party not to "edge away from its conscience on abortion by taking refuge in a 'big tent.'"

"Listening to the Republican leadership's comments of late, one is left wondering if the right to life is now suddenly negotiable," he told the September meeting of the Christian Coalition.

"On the great question of our day, where exactly are the leaders of the party of Lincoln?" Casey said. "In the end, will they stand and be counted, or cut and run, seeking refuge in the gray shadows of a 'big tent?'"

Lee Atwater, the late Republican National Committee chairman, created a storm that is still raging in the GOP when he used the term "big tent" after the 1988 elections to suggest the party seek accommodation with its pro-choice members to enhance Republicans' electability. The governor also criticized his own party. "It is for me the bitterest of ironies that abortion on demand found refuge in the national Democratic Party," he said.

Casey's uncompromising stand is more reminiscent of Republicans during the Reagan era — when their militancy helped make the GOP the home of abortion foes — than of current Republican leaders. From Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole and Sen. Phil Gramm to House Minority Whip Newt Gingrich and RNC Chairman Haley Barbour, many are determined not to let abortion divide the party and cost it elections.

Governor Casey belittled such finagling, saying that whenever such "noble causes are described as 'not winnable,' it says more about the leaders than the cause." He defeated pro-choice Republican Barbara Hafer by more than 1 million votes in 1990. With an eye on influencing GOP candidates and winning elections, coalition Executive Director Ralph Reed has hinted that a minor alteration in the party's abortion position that preserves a strong pro-life thrust might be acceptable.

Ironically, Democrat Casey addressed the coalition only hours after Democratic National Committee Chairman David Wilhelm had held a news conference at party headquarters to attack the coalition as a growing "radical right" influence in the Republican Party. "Does the Christian Coalition only support pro-life Republicans, or are pro-life Democrats also receiving the support of the nonpartisan Christian Coalition?" he asked sarcastically. **— By Ralph Z. Hallow**