



WEA - Leadership Institute

World Evangelical Alliance

Strengthening National Alliances – developing effective leaders

Imagine

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June 2009

Volume 1 - Issue 4

Render to Caesar

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Did You Know?
National Alliances
expressed concern for

When Jesus confounded the Pharisees by telling them to give to Caesar what belonged to Caesar and to God what belonged to God, he enabled generations of stalwart and sincere Christians to debate the scope of Christian involvement in public engagement. Theologians have recognized in the Lord's response to this famous but feeble attempt to entrap, that Jesus divided the sacred from the secular, and at the same time, he strangely united them. Where do our responsibilities to the state end and our obligations to the divine begin? Can one render tribute to both God and the state? We are, according to Jesus, obligated to serve both God and state. This relationship between two authorities will require wise and biblical public engagement.

This is the perilous, but necessary walk of the Christian in the public square. The Leadership Institute recognizes the need to train National Alliance leaders to

public engagement and interest in training for public advocacy.

According to the WEA Leadership Institute Research Project:

- **68.8%** of respondents indicated that the National Alliance served their memberships by providing Government Relations (Representation and Lobbying).
- **77.8%** of National Alliances indicated that influencing national policy was an explicit goal.
- **73.3%** of those surveyed expressed the goal of increasing public visibility.
- When asked to indicate five areas of desired participation from the WEA the most frequent choice was representation in the global public arena, and the promotion of religious liberty was fourth,
- When asked to indicate five areas of training needs, equipping for public advocacy was within the top three choices.

For more information and benchmarks, download the survey results at www.weali.org ([click here to read more about this research and how to download the results](#)).

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develop and guide a policy of involvement in the arena of public engagement. In some of our countries where Christians form such a minority we cannot imagine the day when Evangelicals would enjoy any public involvement whatsoever.



The challenges regarding effective public square engagement are those which the Leadership Institute seeks to address.

On the other hand, some Alliances are already engaged in fervent public activity. Some of us cringe every time the media turns to some well-known pastor, and assume this person speaks for all of the Evangelicals in the country. It behooves us all to be proactive and not reactive.

This edition of WEA-LI Imagine brings our readers the first article relating to Evangelicals in the public square. Julia Doxat-Purser works with the Evangelical Alliance of the United Kingdom and teaches on the subject of Evangelicals engaging the public arena. We are sure you will enjoy her article “Honouring Christ in the Public Square”, which introduces the course module on Evangelicals in the Public Square.

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Honouring Christ in the Public Square

By Julia Doxat-Purser

“I have come to the conclusion that politics is too serious a matter to be left to the politicians,” said Charles de Gaulle, former President of France.

If this is true, does God want Evangelicals involved in politics? How can we honour Christ and be effective?

Politics is about politicians but also about all the people and processes that shape values, priorities and rules in society. Jesus told us to pray “Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” If He told us to pray such a bold prayer, then surely we can believe that God is at work in our nations. Our calling is to pray and to work with Him to demonstrate and spread His Kingdom’s values.



Julia Doxat-Purser is the socio-political representative and religious liberty coordinator for the European Evangelical Alliance (EEA).

Sometimes Evangelicals are nervous about socio-political involvement, seeing it as a diversion from evangelism. This module will show that public square engagement is part of the sharing of the Good News and that, as we demonstrate the values of God’s Kingdom, other people become interested in the King of Kings. At the same time, we will examine how wrong socio-political involvement can damage the advance of the Gospel, for example by getting too close to one political

party or by implying that some people are beyond redemption. We are Christ's ambassadors. This is an amazing honour but it should also humble us. Jesus' reputation can be damaged by our foolishness.

How can we honour Christ and be genuine salt and light when the world around us may be rotten and dark? The first half of this module will focus on the character of God and key theological principles. We will seek to understand God's view of people and the world. We will devise a values framework to shape our public square witness. We will move to a closer understanding of God's values and priorities. The course will equip participants to use Scripture properly to shape thinking on contemporary issues.



Leaders of National Alliances reflect on the role of Evangelicals in the public square.

As well as understanding and obeying Scripture, we also need to understand the public square and its power dynamics if we are to influence it for good. How does your political system work? How are decisions made? And how, therefore, might influence be possible? How can we earn the right to be heard by the powerful? What should an Evangelical Alliance do to justify the claim that it speaks on behalf of the Evangelical community? The module will seek to answer these questions and equip participants to make wise decisions about when and how to act, when not to and when and how to work with others.

Sometimes our efforts may seem feeble, even hopeless. Perhaps, we have few resources or our political context makes influence difficult. However, we will consider together what can still be done despite difficulty and how small actions can be used by God. We will also reflect upon our grounds for hope.

The World Evangelical Alliance encourages its members to help the poor by being part of Micah Challenge, to be advocates for persecuted Christians, to help the victims of human trafficking and to care for the environment. This Public Square module will equip Evangelicals with the biblical and professional foundations they need to be able to take up these and other causes effectively.

Just as the Lord helped Daniel and his friends to be better in wisdom and understanding than all the others in the public square of ancient Babylon (Daniel 1 17-20), may He graciously give us all that we need to honour Him in the public square of today.

Julia Doxat-Purser is the socio-political representative and religious liberty coordinator for the European Evangelical Alliance (EEA). Her main responsibility is to enable Evangelicals in Europe to engage effectively in the public square. Previously, she set up and ran the EEA's office in Brussels, influencing the European Union on behalf of Europe's Evangelicals.

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Give Credit Where Credit Is Due

In a world where technology and systems change like tires on a Formula 1 racecar, it is fascinating

to observe that educational institutions moving towards competency based curricula are now much more willing to extend credit for the completion of nonformal training programs. At the WEA Leadership Institute we have always held that we are not a school, but we do want to work with universities, colleges and seminaries to ensure the students of the Leadership Institute receive credit where credit is due.



Imagine the day when association and alliance leaders and staff can complete a course of study designed to prepare them to meet the challenges of running a membership driven organization, and receiving a certificate endorsed by an accredited and recognized university! This would mean a student could complete a Bachelor or Master's degree with a major or emphasis in association leadership. We are presently negotiating with two such universities and believe that from the very first course the Leadership Institute launches, it will also include the possibility of receiving an accredited certificate.

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Serving the Greater Cause

By Jonathan Lewis

The Leadership Institute faces enormous challenges to provide relevant training to its culturally amorphous, widely scattered constituencies. Variables include language, nationality, culturally prescribed values, vastly different organizational norms, and relevant academic levels of instruction. The curriculum research has given us a sense of cohesion in terms of the “outcomes” that the training should develop. But we are facing many challenges as we contemplate content development and where and how to start with its delivery in a sustainable and relevant manner.

In this regard, we have set some ambitious faith goals. One of these is to launch a four-course, university level Certificate in Association Leadership program this coming January. In order to do this, we are planning four courses with 10 sessions each. Each course will require about 600 pages of reading—most of which is to be collected from or written by our resource people around the globe. The Internet platform is ready to go, but we also want to provide video presentations with the reading materials, and accompanying prescribed forums and exercises. These video clips will take more time and resources to develop than our very limited staff can manage at present. Our main task right now is to identify the right experts to contribute to the content portions. This is an enormous task as we seek to hear voices from around the globe. But we know that the only way to reach this extremely challenging goal is taking one step at a time. Thank you for accompanying us on this journey.

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WEA-LI *Imagine* Monthly

News, Resources and Best Practices for WEA National Alliance Leaders, Members and Volunteers
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