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**The Evangelical Church & Human Rights in Peru**

PhD, Dario Lopez

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# **The Evangelical Church & Human Rights in Peru**

## **A Critical Evaluation of the Theology of Mission of the National Evangelical Council of Perú (CONEP) from 1980 to 1992, with Special Reference to its Understanding and Practice of Human Rights**

PhD Thesis, Dario Lopez, 1997

### **Abstract**

This thesis is particularly concerned with the basic issue of the "Right to Life" in a situation of extreme political violence over the period 1980-1992. There is an critical analysis of the religious and political events of the period which gave rise to the National Evangelical Council of Peru (CONEP) theological transformation.

The critical analysis starts from the assumption that, since any given social events takes place at a specific point of time, the theological perspectives which emerge from this socio-historical context are not peripheral to the social processes but rather in constant interactions with them. This study proposes that in a extreme political and social circumstances such as armed conflict or political violence, expressions of religious faith can be linked to individual and collective patterns of behaviour which are substantially different" of those that would be expected if one were to apply the traditional stereotypes of social passivity and political conformism which have been habitually associated with the majority of evangelical believers and churches in Latin America.

The involvement and commitment of CONEP in the struggle for human rights under a context of subversive and repressive violence is a very clear example of this. The process of theological transformation of this entity from an understanding of the struggle for human rights formulated primarily in terms of religious freedom to one which includes a political dimension and its consequences was marked by both internal and external factors. These factors, together with catalyst events such as violations for human rights of evangelical citizens (mass killing, arbitrary detention and unjust imprisonment, detention-disappearance), made CONEP examine and redefine its theological horizons and, therefore, its social action.