

# **Still hope that Iraq might become a democratic nation**

In Syria, Bishop Antoine Audo of Aleppo is telling us how displaced Christian Iraqis are being mistreated in Syria and fear returning to Iraq because of the mistreatment they expect to receive there from Moslem Iraqis (CR, Dec. 13).

In the United States Imam Yahya Hendi is telling us that Christians should appreciate their similarities with Moslems and be cooperative rather than confrontational as we strive to live together (Recent Hendi talk at St. Katherine Drexel Parish).

Instead of blaming Moslems for persecuting Christians, the bishop blames the Iraq war. He seems to forget that Moslem-dominated countries have been persecuting Christians for centuries, just as they are now as he himself observes. Under Saddam's iron-fist rule, Iraq was hardly a stellar example of Muslims and Christians living together in peace.

There is still hope that Iraq might become a democratic nation in which all of its citizens live together in peace as Imam Yahya Hendi would have us believe is possible - or should we distrust what the Imam says?