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*regret*

You are cordially invited to attend a country style

South Carolina Bar-B-Que

Hosted by Mr. and Mrs. William C. Plowden, Jr.

and

Mr. and Mrs. Donald E. Shasteen

Date: January 31, 1984

Time: 6-8 p.m.

Place: Reserve Officers Association  
5th Floor  
One Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C.

RSVP: Jean Mondt or Shirley Morton  
523-9116 by Friday, January  
27th.

↓  
*Regrets*  
*to Blanche*  
*1/26/84*  
*JM*

**William J. Taylor, Jr.**  
Suite 400  
International Club Building  
1800 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20006  
Telephone (202) 887-0200

*Regret*

January 23, 1984

Honorable Morton Blackwell  
Special Assistant to the President  
for Public Liaison  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

The fifth meeting of the Presiding Bishop's National Episcopal Roundtable will be held on Thursday, February 9 from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. in the Abshire Conference Room of the International Club Building, 1800 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. A light buffet supper will be available for those who would like to extend the discussion beyond 6:00 p.m.

At our last meeting, Dr. Helen Kitchen spoke on the problems of South Africa, differing perspectives on strategic interests and moral imperatives and the advantages of "constructive dialogue." Almost all who attended the session stayed for an extended discussion over supper. A copy of her remarks is attached and a summary of discussion of the session will be available at the February 9 meeting.

Based on the deep interest and unfinished discussion of Dr. James Billington's presentation on "Value Formation in America" at our second meeting, Bishop Allen has asked us to return to the subject at our forthcoming meeting. Jim Billington has agreed to provide a brief highlight of the major points of his paper (copy attached). Dr. James R. Schlesinger has agreed to comment and lead us in a discussion of the ways in which Christians might respond to the major challenges in value formation.

Please mark your calendars for our sixth meeting to be held on April 12.

We look forward to our meeting on February 9 and to joining with you in this valuable sharing of insights and ideas. Please let Lela Palmer know whether or not you will be able to be with us. Her number is: 887-0200, Ext. 357.

With warm regards,

Sincerely,

*Called Regrets 1-27-84*  
  
William J. Taylor, Jr.



Introductory Remarks  
by Helen Kitchen  
Director of Africa Studies, CSIS  
National Episcopal Roundtable  
October 24, 1983

There is a tendency for Americans who think about South Africa to look at the country through very different lenses, and also for South Africans from various spheres of that society to have quite different perceptions of their country's problems and options. Let's begin this discussion by considering what is seen through four sets of lenses, two American and two South African.

1. There are significant numbers of relatively well-informed Americans who view South Africa almost exclusively in terms of the comfortable "Westernness" and anti-communism of its governing elite and business leaders; its strategic minerals; its geostrategic location; its natural beauty and man-created order and industrial development; and the warm hospitality extended to most visitors. Those Americans who view South Africa through these lenses perceive South Africa primarily as a white country.

2. There is another American perception of South Africa that focuses almost exclusively on South Africa's repressed Africanness -- on its 26 million or so blacks held in chains by apartheid and the repressive powers of the government and parcelled out against their will into economically unviable homelands created for divide-and-rule purposes.

For those who view South Africa only in terms of its Africanness, there is something close to a mental block about white politics, which is perceived as an irrelevant passing phenomenon -- almost an anachronism. Those who share this perspective at once abhor and underestimate the power of South Africa's security establishment.

Those who view South Africa through this set of lenses have very ambivalent feelings about the kinds of reform now underway in the workplace, in education, in improving the living conditions in urban townships. There is, on the one hand, a recognition of the importance of equipping South Africa's black population for a different role in the future. But there is also a deep suspicion of the South African government's motives in creating a black middle class culturally and thus perhaps politically alienated from its oppressed rural brethren.

3. In South Africa as well, there are clearly differentiable views on many matters, including the challenges that confront that nation in these last decades of the twentieth century.



The differences among South Africans are not only between blacks and whites, or between black radicals and moderates, or in the white community between Afrikaners and English-speakers, or in Afrikanerdom between the so-called verkrampte (hard-liner) and the verligte (enlightened) elements. Functional groupings too, see the universe within and outside South Africa in very different ways.

When Harry Oppenheimer, who until recently was chairman of the giant Anglo-American Corporation, announced in early October that he would vote "no" in the November 2 referendum on the proposed new constitution that would give Coloured (mixed race) and Indians a place and voice in parliament, he said that his decision was based on the belief that "the advantages of Coloured and Indian representation in Parliament is ... to be bought at the cost of further alienation of blacks" and that "this is too high a price to pay." Many English-speaking business and media leaders who will vote "yes" will do so because they believe that the constitutional change, despite being grievously defective by virtue of the absence of any reference to future black participation, represents a step in the right direction. Both the "yes" and "no" responses in this example are based on a recognition that the major challenges confronting South Africa are social, economic, moral, and internal.

4. The lenses through which the South African military has come to view the challenges facing their nation produce a quite different spectre. The military has tended increasingly in the 1980s to perceive South Africa as a fundamentally coherent entity that is the target of a master plan of "total onslaught" from outside its borders -- ultimately from the Kremlin.

A second and related image held by the military in the 1980s is that of a high degree of parallelism between the regional position of South Africa and that of Israel.

Like their Israeli counterparts, the South African military perceives the Republic to be largely and unjustly isolated from its own continent. In this circumstance, South Africa (like Israel) must rely ultimately on developing and maintaining unquestioned military superiority and the demonstrated willingness to use military capability and all other tools available to keep its neighbors cowed, off-balance, and economically dependent on the regional giant.

Again like the Israelis, the South African military (which has become in recent years an increasingly important part of the governing establishment) does not really trust the major powers of the West, especially the United States, but at the same time seeks by all means possible to add new strands of military, political, ideological, and economic strands to the web of relationships that bind South Africa to the West. In South Africa's case, as in Israel's in another region of the world, the hope springs eternal that the United States must eventually



come to its senses and recognize the crucial importance to American global interests of combining forces with South Africa in an anti-communists crusade to "save" Africa.

\* \* \* \*

This latter point leads me, by a rather mighty jump that skips many details, to propose to you that the gulf that we in Washington often speak of as separating "globalists" from "regionalists" could be greatly narrowed if both globalists and regional specialists devoted more attention to analogous traps and challenges around the world.

On this day on which we mourn the deaths of more than 200 marines in Lebanon, I think it is especially important that we recognize how what we have done and now decide to do in that part of the world will be seen in other parts of the world. When I read at an early hour this morning Dr. Kissinger's observations from yesterday's David Brinkley show published as an op-ed piece in today's Washington Post, I found myself reading the text a second time through South African eyes. One paragraph in particular caught my eye:

"I don't think Syria will withdraw unless the balance of power in Lebanon changes, and I must point out that the Israeli army is sitting 20 kilometers from where Americans are being killed and that there seems to be no coordination between our policies at all."

I will be surprised if this quote does not make headlines in Johannesburg, where it will raise new hopes in the military that the time will yet come when South Africa will be recognized as an indispensable part of a Western team defense against communism in Africa.

\* \* \* \*

The aspect of Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker's policy of "constructive engagement" that is least understood in this country, and yet is one of that policy's most important elements, is that the "constructive engagement" is with all the actors in the southern African region and not, as many critics allege, only with the government of P.W. Botha.

It encourages me to note, for example that despite the best efforts of the South Africans to equate the African National Congress with the PLO and thus maneuver the United States into a position where officials cannot be seen in proximity to an ANC member even at an academic conference, we appear to be holding firm to our right to dialogue with whatever southern Africans may have a role to play in shaping the future history of an area of

the continent that lies somewhere between enormous promise and enormous peril.

\* \* \* \*

If I were to suggest one overriding objective for U.S. policy in southern Africa, it would be to pursue on a long-term, day-in-day-out basis the mission of helping to educate (in the broadest sense of the term) the area's whites and blacks in ways that will enable them to save themselves from the Northern Ireland syndrome that we must never forget could be the region's worst-case future.



## VALUE FORMATION IN AMERICA

by

DR. JAMES BILLINGTON

Mr. Wheeler introduced Dr. Billington by quoting him: "In my view, the greatest and least acknowledged failure of American higher education to the broader society in the last fifteen years is its quiet but unmistakable renunciation of its historic function of transmitting moral and spiritual as well as intellectual values and standards from one generation to another."

"Help us to understand and not to complicate." The Bishop laid a heavy charge on us. This is a difficult problem, and part of our difficulty is the fact that even our attempts to reach a little beyond ourselves and our own little piles of acquisition proceed here under a term that is derived from economics, in talking about "values." We don't ask what you believe in anymore, or live by, but what are your "values." And increasingly on the national level the public debate about spiritual questions has to be subsumed under macro-economics, budget debates and statistical projections. Let me begin, then, by (1) noting the lack of a public vocabulary for dealing directly with what we want to talk about and (2) asking your indulgence for presuming to talk about this subject in a few minutes (particularly as I am going to try to talk about the opinion-forming elites, to which to some extent we all belong).



In 1970 I was asked by LIFE magazine to do a piece on "Whatever happened to national purpose," which was something they went looking for some ten years earlier. I talked to many of the captains of our economic establishment and repeatedly found them anxious to be on record as saying (in the then fashionable language of elite earnestness), "We must reorder our priorities." But, when asked for an example of a priority that they had personally reordered, they generally answered either by silence or by outbursts of considerable anger. Either response, by the way, I found preferable to that which I found in the trivial academic and journalistic subcultures from which I had ventured forth to ask the question in the first place.

Looking broadly at the world and the value systems which command allegiance and project dynamism beyond parochial borders today, one must speak of religions like Islam, (which is still growing vigorously, particularly in its fundamentalist variants in the Third World), and of secular systems like those of the new post-Confucian industrial societies of East Asia (in Japan and to some extent in Taiwan, Korea, and Singapore which have in many ways supplanted the North Atlantic nations as the model of modern materialistic efficiency and productivity).

But by and large - and this is what I am going to talk about basically - the modern world continues to be moved by three great secular ideals that arose out of the convergence of the industrial and political revolutions of Western Europe in the late 18th century and have become virtually universal ideals in the late 20th century: Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. This

was suddenly and spontaneously proclaimed as a comprehensive formula during the maelstrom of revolution in the early 1790s in Paris, the largest city in the most powerful kingdom of Christendom at that time. Liberty, equality, fraternity -- not faith, hope and love -- a new Trinity for the old, a magic label for each side of the omnipresent equilateral triangle of revolutionary symbolism which replaced the Christian Cross in the new semaphore of salvation. The Cross suggested man's sin and God's deliverance and was replaced during that period by a geometric form which suggested man's power to perfect his own condition and to build a new secular order. This process was to begin with the simplest form of enclosing space with straight lines, the triangle, leading perhaps as the Free Masons suggested to some utopian transformation of the world itself, perhaps even a new Temple of Solomon.

Liberty had been the first of these magic words, which one of the French revolutionaries called Le mot talismanique, the verbal talisman, to acquire a new and saving significance. Revolutions for liberty were the first kind to take place in early modern Europe, long before the French Revolution. These took place in the North Atlantic entrepreneurial Protestant world beginning in Holland in the late 16th century, spreading through England in the 17th, and on to America in the 18th, producing the prototypical revolution for liberty. All these revolutions mobilized property-owning, relatively traditional social forces for a limited political struggle to overthrow a perceived tyrannical rule and define a new constitutional order. The aim



was practical and relatively moderate: to restore concrete liberties and widen participation in central power.

The French Revolution began as a revolution of this type -- for limited constitutional liberties, but almost immediately after the monarchy gave way to a Republic, this seeming case of yet another practical political revolution for liberty was suddenly overtaken and transformed by a more authoritarian type of revolution which is far more typical of the modern world and almost totally misunderstood by people with our rather parochial and quite different experience.

The revolution for liberty was overtaken in France by the classic prototype of the second form of modern revolution: revolution for fraternity. Its aim was no longer a republic with limited authority, rationally defended and held together by civic education, but a nation with unlimited authority, emotionally asserted and held together by a neotribal sense of brotherhood. Salut et fraternité -- "Health and Brotherhood" -- was what one Frenchman said to another during the reign of terror. The magic word "nation" replaced the older word "patrie" or "fatherland" with its more traditional associations, and soon expanded into "la grande nation," the original modern empire. The "great nation" of course turned eventually to the leadership of Napoleon, who in turn became the model for all the caudillos of revolutionary nationalism: this second form of the modern revolutionary tradition dominated Catholic, largely Southern Europe, spreading on to Poland and Latin America already in the 19th century and on to much of the Third World in the 20th.

By the time of the defeat of the last of four great French revolutions, in 1871, the age of revolutionary nationalism -- revolution for fraternity -- had found a serious rival: revolutionary socialism. This was the third ideal of the modern revolutionary tradition -- revolution for equality. This became the dominant form of the revolutionary faith in Central and Eastern Europe, particularly Prussia and Russia, with their authoritarian, hierarchical societies and their Lutheran and Lutheranized-Orthodox Churches. Egalitarian social revolution called not for a new republic or a new nation, but for some universal "community" of socioeconomic equality for which the Paris commune of 1871 provided a micromodel as well as a martyrology.

In the wake of World War I, of course, the social revolutionary tradition came out of the wilderness and into power in the Russian Empire. Since then Communism, the most totalistic form of the Social Revolutionary faith, has become the ruling and legitimizing revolutionary ideology of more than a billion people. The ideal of liberty and the ideology of liberal democracy is essentially that of the First or Free World today; the ideal of equality and ideology of totalitarian Leninism is that of the Second or Communist World today. The less developed and largely non-aligned Third World is the major ideological battleground of the other two and the locus of the continuing revolution for fraternity, producing militant regimes dedicated to revolutionary nationalism.



The United States of America is a pure creation of the first ideal, as is the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States. Our liberal democratic ideal and long years of isolation from the mainstream of European experience have combined with our open frontier and our idiosyncratic, highly successful form of capitalistic development to render Americans almost congenitally incapable of understanding the ideological passion and mobilizing power of the other two ideas. In recent years we have complicated our misunderstanding by constantly and falsely comparing revolutions elsewhere with our own revolution for liberty. Our type of revolutionary belief differed profoundly from both of these later, more authoritarian revolutionary traditions -- the nationalist and the socialist - in at least four key ways.

First of all, the North Atlantic revolutions in the cause of liberty were not revolutionary in the modern sense. No leader of the American Revolution called himself a "revolutionary." That was not their essential identity. They favored a revolution in the older Copernican sense of re-volution -- a revolving of society back from a temporary tyranny to what was presumed to be a more natural and just preexistent order. Both national and social revolutionaries arose from the French Revolution and used the word "revolution" in the altogether new sense that had never existed before the French Revolution: something totally new and totally secular, yet completely redemptive. The American founding fathers not only did not call themselves revolutionaries, they never saw the American Revolution as a totally

new start which promised to transform the entire human condition through political change.

Second, the early revolutions for liberty on the American model continued to affirm their inherited belief in the Divine Creator and in an objective moral order to the universe. They rejected the new post-French revolutionary idea that anything approaching salvation could be found on the purely political plane of existence whether through a new national brotherhood or an egalitarian community.

Third, while the struggle for liberty did in practice involve violence in the American and in other cases (such as the Belgian and Swiss in the 19th century about the only modern examples that are almost purely modeled on the American) this cause of liberty did not offer new ideological justifications for the systemic use of violence, as the other two did. Intensified fraternity among those within a nation necessarily required periodic violence against those outside. Their fraternity, as one perceptive critic noted already during the Reign of Terror, was "the fraternity of Cain and Abel." Radical equality required the violent leveling of hierarchies and breaking of barriers. From the French Revolution on, violence was necessarily rendered increasingly immune to criticism by national and social revolutionaries, who have taught the modern world to see revolutionary violence in a redemptive apocalyptic light as la lutte finale, "the final struggle," in the words of the Internationale. The violence to end all violence, can of course, be the most violent of all.



Finally, revolutions for liberty once in power sought to create complexity to preserve liberty rather than to simplify things radically in order to enshrine fraternity or equality. The prototypical doctrine was the American Constitution, which moved from the simplicity of declaring independence to the complexity of separating central powers and layering federal authority.

France, in contrast, moved from immense complexity of its reform struggles in the 1780s to the "terrible simplification" of the French revolution. From many estates to one state, from many titles to the one of "citizen," from many ways of addressing people to the one familiar "tu"; from many points of power to one; from a National Assembly to a 12-man committee to a 5-man directorate to one emperor; from the complexity of a discussion to the simplicity of a slogan. French revolutionaries sought to begin time over again with a new calendar; to reshape architecture with pyramids and spheres, society with triangles and circles; to link life itself with prime numbers, primal incantations, primeval nature. The classical no less than the Christian heritage was swept aside for the occult romantic Druidism of the pyramidal earth mound in the place of the High Altar in Notre Dame Cathedral, which was itself said to be a Christian camouflage over an earlier shrine to Isis, whose name in turn was allegedly derived from the first sound created when Promethean man stole fire from the gods, put it in water, and produced the first steam power with the sound "is-is."

The two new mythic ideals presented by the French Revolution, fraternity and equality, a nation of brothers or a commune of equals, first appeared as the supreme authority for man in two successive, very different waves of terrible simplification during the French Revolution. The first was heralded by La Marseillaise and culminated in the Levee en masse; the second was announced by the Manifesto of Equals (written by the man who called himself H.S.D. inside a triangle: his new name, (his first revolutionary psuedonym, standing for Homme sans Dieu -- the first truly liberated "man without God"). The very words that have been used ever since to describe these two new authoritarian ideals that dominate the modern world and make us a minority culture in it -- nationalism and communism -- were literally first invented during this period in the 1790s.

Thus, at the root of our shared identity as Americans is an inherited civic commitment to one set of civic ideals rather than either of the other two. These civic ideals were created at a time and place, as I have already indicated, that shaped the distinctive Anglican form of Christian communion, a form incidentally that played a leading role, as you are aware, in creating in this country a characteristic form of Anglican compromise by which the traditional form of religion was maintained without its traditional links with political power. Liberal democracy rooted in the Judeo-Christian faith is the heart of our inheritance -- something we should feel no embarrassment about affirming and defending. As Niebuhr once put it: man's capacity for good makes it possible; his capacity for evil makes it indispensable.



Because it is not "revolutionary" in the modern sense (or even in the silly, vulgarized sense that the word is used in the advertising world) of being totally new and totally secular, liberal democracy has a greater capacity to be creatively evolutionary than do the rival ideas. Liberal democracy in America -- unlike the illiberal ideals of nationalism or communism -- was based on a covenant before it was sealed in a constitution. Precisely because it is the least totalistic in its claims, liberal democracy is less threatening than are rival secular ideals to the preservation of man's sanity and his sanctity. The past is subconsciously within him, his source of sanity and of sanctity: a presence deeper within him than he is himself.

If the American system is different, then, from most of the world in its origins and early development (and I apologize for lingering on this, but it is simply not generally appreciated even among the educated) it has absorbed nonetheless some of the ideals of the outside world while moving from isolation to interdependence in this century. Created as the United States of America and never called a nation in its founding documents, we came increasingly to be called a nation in the 19th century, particularly during and after the Civil War; and we developed a kind of nationalist ideology in the late 19th and early 20th century which remains here, as elsewhere, the principal temptation of conservatives within our political system and sometimes seems in danger of decomposing into pure faith in material strength defined in statistics and expressed mainly in weapons.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Americans also domesticated their own version of a socialist ideology which has become the temptation of radical reformers on the left. Their passion for class conflict and radical redistribution of wealth often puts them in league with organized forces for social revolution and social redistribution globally. This socialist temptation on the left, like the nationalist temptation on the right, has its own characteristic American form of decomposition - concurrently into a kind of moral and intellectual disarmament in the name of universal ideals but to the unilateral benefit of totalitarian enemies.

The American eagle in the Great Seal of the United States has a claw under its left wing holding a bundle of arrows. It needs to hold those arrows for protection, but it needs to hold them tightly lest they become an end in themselves and lead to the ultimate degradation of nationalism into the "-ism" of a thousand faces that derives its generic name precisely from the Italian word for that very bundle, "fascism." The same eagle has a claw under its right wing which holds an olive branch which it needs for its moral health but which also can become an end in itself -- the degradation of appeasing the appalling because its language is appealing; of irresponsibly blending into political movements whose dynamics and destiny are totalitarian simply because they speak of peace and camouflage rockets with olive branches.

But beyond these temptations on the right and left respectively within our system are the more prevalent and more



unrecognized temptations of the center: of our own dominant tradition of liberty. This is the temptation (unfortunately entertained at the highest levels of the American establishment and among conservatives and liberals alike) to decouple freedom from its Siamese twin of responsibility -- to decompose freedom, if you like, into mere self-indulgence and to see most if not all moral and political problems as essentially soluble through engines of self-enrichment and the mere material expansion and manipulation of the economy. It is essentially this materialistic perversion of the ideal of liberty -- this freeing of freedom from responsibility -- that probably represents the most immediate present peril to our civic health and perhaps even to our survival.

Where is freedom without responsibility better exemplified than among us, in what you might broadly call the American elite today. Conservatives seek freedom from the government without accepting greater personal responsibility for things government has been asked to do. Liberals seek freedom from personal responsibility by transferring as many problems as possible back to public bureaucracies.

Historically in our tradition and spiritually in our being, we know that there is only one answer to the inevitable question, responsibility to what? Responsibility to whom? "Great God our King" are the last words to "Sweet Land of Liberty." This was a very different transcription of the original British anthem than occurred, say, in revolutionary Germany which translated "God Save the King" into "Volks in Gewehr" (people, to arms!), which

is closer to the bloody lines of La Marseillaise and later nationalist anthems like The Star Spangled Banner (with its talk of rockets and bombs which replaced the earlier hymn which links God with liberty and is still, I am happy to say, sung at many of our Episcopal services).

But the simple fact is that while most Americans believe in God - and many fervently - most of the rich, the educated and the opinion-forming elite in our country do not. A recent survey of 140 randomly selected leaders of television showed that while 93% of these had a religious upbringing, exactly the same percentage, 93%, seldom or never attended religious services. If any major, nonclerical president of any large pace-setting research university in America is willing publicly to proclaim a Christian commitment the way Nathan Pusey did at Harvard twenty years ago, I have not heard about it.

The problem is even graver with what I would describe as the second historic belief of the American people which is in many ways only an elaboration of the first: belief in an objective moral order to the universe. The elite increasingly tends to believe in a subjective, esthetic disorder of their own creation. This city seems increasingly fascinated with the esthetics of power and increasing indifference to the content of policy. One reassures oneself of moral superiority to ordinary people by proximity to the arts, decorating one's pleasure dome with the icons of an indulgent modernity, creating (more out of spiritual boredom than reformist conviction) synthetic and transient trends in politics no less than fashion. 60 Minutes



last week gave an uncharacteristically unchallenged free ride to a brilliantly incoherent and semihysterical - but incontestably attractive - young head of the pro-totalitarian Green Movement in Germany, discussing the parties that transplanted our own ideal of liberal democratic institutions to post-war Germany with Mike Wallace's casual put-down that they had become "unbelievably boring."

In a world of moving pictures, pulsating sounds, swinging people and television-shortened attention spans, we are creating a new generation of "vidiots." The only surviving literary artifact may soon be adult books which are, of course, neither adult nor books. The only surviving art form may become the technologically stunning television commercial, which subliminally persuades us that a totally artificial, semi-poisonous substance like Coca Cola is in fact "the real thing."

The replacement of moral by esthetic criteria in modern liberal democracies is noticeable in politics, which is still our main purveyor of public values. This tendency began with Kennedy being elected by television and has reached new heights under Ronald Reagan, who is in many ways trying to govern through television - modelling himself on Roosevelt, the first to govern through radio. Television is simply and uncontestably the value former in our civilization, and the most ubiquitous teacher that any civilization has ever had -- running for 7-1/2 hours a day in 98% of American homes, exposing (as of four years ago) the average American by the time he is 18 years old to more than 13,000 killings, 100,000 violent episodes, and half a million

commercials - all immersed in a flood of fast-moving and semi-literate wise-guy dialogue. Television is corrosive, not just of religion but also of civic commitment and involvement. It encourages a passivity and spectatorism that destroys interest in issues and participation in their resolution - and thus the maintenance of elementary civil decencies and some measure of common purpose among a pluralistic people.

Since a belief in God, in an objective moral order and civic virtues have all weakened far more among the American elite than among the public as a whole, less articulate groups have begun to speak up for the traditional values that they rightly believe. They have called for prayer and "creationism" in schools, more moralists and patriots on television and in public life. Almost the only public morality that is publicly and passionately proclaimed by the mainstream of the university-media complex is their moral indignation against these other people. But denying something that may be negative does not lead to anything positive and tends to demean rather than redeem. Must we simply be forced to choose between those who are intellectually but not morally demanding on the one hand and those who are morally but not intellectually exacting on the other?

A final area where the values of the American elite are perhaps in even greater conflict with the values of the American people as a whole is in that area of authority that traditionally follows God and country -- the family. It is not just a matter of high divorce rates and greater sexual permissiveness and indulgence among the affluent and educated. There seems an



increasing inability even to distinguish between the liberal virtue of tolerating diversity in social arrangements and sexual practices and the perverse tendency to force the public culture to recognize all such norms as positive and of equal value in themselves. President Carter, a man of incontestable personal commitment to the monogamous family as an institution, found himself in his public capacity sanctioning the multiplicity of models called for in the new morality, when he agreed to rename his White House Conference on the Family a Conference on Families. As homosexuals have become powerful new special interest groups in America, they seek not just tolerance to which they have a right, but legitimacy which they also claim as a right. And in the universities to which American elites generally confine most of their late adolescent children, virginity has itself become a form of deviance from the norm of experimental cohabitation that is publicly unchallenged by any of the authority figures in the university community -- and perhaps least of all by the chaplains. Nothing perhaps better illustrates the erosion of moral standards and their replacement by amoral, aesthetic criteria than the dreadful new word invented by the elite to excuse it all: "lifestyle." If life is just a matter of style, one is just as good as another -- and another is probably better. Indeed the word "lifestyle" has become almost inseparable from the modifier "alternate." The problem is that there simply aren't any proven alternatives to the traditional family. For, quite apart from moral considerations, societies which endure have always been rooted in the family system of nurture.

One comes to understand the appeal of the fundamentalists and even of exotic sects as heroic if misguided efforts to provide islands of moral integrity in a sea of sloth and self-indulgence. Are those of us who are still in the denominational mainstream simply sliding slowly down through an ebbing civilization? Should Christians retreat to the catacombs if they are to avoid simply being swept up in the general decline into the secular parades that may lead us out of our degradation into some new form of tyranny? Are we doomed either to burn on the right or freeze on the left -- with the only question between them being whether our kind of society ends with a bang or a whimper?

We cannot rule out the catacombs if we are true followers of Christ. All other allegiances are ultimately secondary, and we have to allow for the possibility that our particular form of society, even our cherished belief in freedom, may not be immutable, and indeed was not a part even of Christianity for the first millenium and a half of its existence. But I think there is a special providential importance to the cause of liberty which makes it important in realizing God's plan on earth and not merely rationalizing our earthly preferences. Because liberty, unlike the rival secular ideals of equality and fraternity, does not require a negative definition to benefit some at the expense of others. For all can be free if more are responsible. But only if freedom is increasingly channeled into the life of the mind and spirit. There alone, in an age of increasing material scarcity, is the discovery of one not at the expense of another



and potentially beneficial to all. For the pursuit of truth is the highest expression and celebration of freedom and may be the only way to keep us ultimately from the pursuit of each other. Our mental and spiritual faculties lift us above the apes, just as our animal nature keeps us lower than the angels. I believe that the historic and increasing involvement of the Episcopal Church, for instance, with educational institutions that seek to reunite moral and mental development, may be one of our most important denominational contributions to the broader society, particularly as the frontiers of freedom are moving from the outer material world to the inner work of the intellect and spirit.

One of our obligations as a people may be to recognize that, while the calling on an earlier America in a simpler world was to liberalize a conservative polity, a more mature America in a more troubled world may face the less appealing obligation to conserve the evolutionary liberal ideal against revolutionary new authoritarian challenges. Ultimately, of course, God alone will visit and redeem all three of these partial secular ideals of modern man. There can be no real fraternity without a common paternity, no brothers without a father; no equality except before God, since all things are equidistant only from eternity. And there is, alas, no freedom from unless there is freedom for. His end is our beginning, the only real escape from the dead end -- either of some new authoritarianism (where the end always justifies the means) or of continued indulgence and inevitable decline (with means having become the ends).

As the noisiest nation in human history, we need perhaps to begin with silence and to proceed by talking less and listening more -- to our brothers and sisters as well as our Father. We need to leash our appetites and unleash our minds -- binding both to the Spirit, infusing education with values as well as techniques, ends as well as means.

I believe that American Christians need -- and may even crave -- some new forms of shared discipline, perhaps even of new lay vocations or orders. Christianity is a perfectionist faith that forever challenges imperfect people with that same unsettling combination of toughness and love that the Master imposed on His first disciples. Sectarians and fundamentalists may err in providing a too literal and political translation of the gospel. Our own denomination may fail equally by making too few concrete demands in our daily life (and perhaps by offering too many general judgments on more complex and distant matters). One of our most subtle elite conceits may be avoiding commitment to the immediate by nourishing anguish over the remote.

The renewal of civic values may require social restrictions on television as well as some new forms of obligatory public service for the young. This would include, but not be confined to, military service and would serve democratically to reinvolve the elite in the responsibilities that are concomitant with freedom.

I believe that we still badly need more models of lay commitment to civic education in the schools as well as to moral



and religious education in the Church and home -- and, I would suggest, at least partially during release time from regular school.

We must be willing to do more things from the bottom up through direct human links of the kind our Lord Himself used to found His Church (and our forefathers used to found many of the institutions of this country) rather than to work through bureaucracies from the top down, as our urbanized elites still prefer. We must build more on family, parish, and the immediate rather than impersonal organization, media imagery, and largely symbolic causes. South Washington rather than South Africa, our parish rather than Councils of Bishops, warmth to poor people in the winter rather than a freeze for rich students in the spring. In God We Trust -- not in the Pharisees securely locked in a parochial tradition, nor in the Saducees confidently at peace with Roman power, nor in the zealots seeking violent insurrection against it. Least of all, in the mob that offers palms one day and thorns the next.

We are, as important recent book titles remind us, wayward pilgrims living with a broken covenant, unhappy within our own narcissism and with most of our leaders. But we may be moving beyond self-centeredness -- the "me generation" -- to a yearning for self-development that necessarily reaches beyond itself, creating (as Michael Maccoby's Leaders suggests) a thirst for a less authoritarian leadership that is more concerned with imagination than imagery, with human character than computerized qualifications. The Church that provided a large majority of

those who first declared our independence can surely contribute a small amount to this new kind of interdependence. But the commanding force now as then will have to be Spirit of the Holy, not the spirit of the times. As the Bishop of Oxford used to say when I was a graduate student: the Church that is wedded to the spirit of the age will be a widow to the next generation.