

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Blackwell, Morton: Files

Folder Title: Moral Majority (5 of 5)

Box: 13

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: reagan.library@nara.gov

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

This in-depth article from the *Los Angeles Times* details the rise of Jerry Falwell, leader of the "Moral Majority", and affords a view of his philosophy in a Q & A supplement.

Rev. Jerry Falwell

The Prophet of 'Worldly Methods'

By ROBERT SCHEER
Times Staff Writer

As his private jet begins its descent into Los Angeles, the Rev. Jerry Falwell is just getting to the exciting part of his Armageddon prophecy—when the Russians will be destroyed by nuclear holocaust, floods, hailstones, fire and brimstone, and "blood shall flow in the streets up to the bridle of the horses."

He reports that he discussed this with Ronald Reagan just before he endorsed Reagan's candidacy for President and that Reagan told him, "Jerry, I sometimes believe we're heading very fast for Armageddon right now." But candidate Reagan also told him he would do everything he could to stop it.

Still, Falwell, who is 47 and the father of three teen-agers, is not optimistic. "I do not think we have 50 years left. I don't think my children will live their full lives out."

More Pressing Subject

However, by the time the plane lands, the reverend is back on the more pressing subject of the day, which is his claim that Penthouse magazine tricked him into an interview. Then, too, there's the problem of purchasing \$700 worth of gasoline for his plane when "we've got every card except Texaco and wouldn't you know that's the only one they take up here." After his aides fail in this negotiation, Falwell strides purposefully into the charter terminal and gets them to accept his personal check. He seems even more upset about having his credit challenged than by his appearance in Penthouse magazine or the prospect of Armageddon.

At the Los Angeles airport, a limousine is waiting to take him to the Beverly Hilton Hotel and later to an appearance on the Merv Griffin show. Falwell had been up that morning at 4 o'clock in his Portland motel room, waiting for a call from the "Today" show in New York that never came. He tells a reporter that he has slept only one night in the last three and that he has flown 13,000 miles in that time and he has now got to "head back east to do the Tom Snyder show."

In even the best of times, the Rev. Jerry Falwell, the popular Baptist television and radio preacher and chairman of the Moral Majority, is distracted by competing demands while he rushes about doing what he feels is God's work.

His efforts include lobbying on behalf of the Moral Majority organization he founded two years ago, which claims to have been influential in the election of Reagan and which, at the

moment, is determined to get sex away from homosexuals, out of the schools and off prime-time television.

He must also continue to raise the funds for and supervise a \$60-million-a-year religious operation, and that alone would keep him crisscrossing the country, meeting with the faithful—or, as he puts it, "getting the word out."

Getting the word out is what Jerry Falwell knows he is good at. He has been doing it for 25 years now and prides himself on his business acumen, organizational skills and mastery of the modern technology of broadcasting and direct-mail fund raising.

A visit with Falwell and his troops at his Lynchburg, Va., headquarters is affirmation of the reverend's oft-stated philosophy that the profit motive and private enterprise serve Christian values.

At first glance, the world headquarters of the Rev. Jerry Falwell appears to be just one more prosperous new shopping center dotting the otherwise barren gray, wintry landscape surrounding the Bible Belt town. And, indeed, a portion of the solid, low-slung buildings nestled securely in the parking lots still are used for retail purposes. But once inside the main building, a sprawling warehouse, one encounters a beehive of activity reminiscent of those huge, intricate James Bond sets depicting the enemy's headquarters, with microcomputers humming, word processors clicking and cash flowing.

Two and at times three shifts of hundreds of the faithful determinedly go about what the guide called "the Lord's work" of sending out fund-raising appeals and opening the thousands of letters that return with dollars and checks to support the myriad activities of the Rev. Falwell.

Ever-Expanding Church

In addition to having to purchase air time for his nationwide television and radio broadcasts, there's also the cost of his ever-expanding church in Lynchburg with its Christian Academy, expensive television and radio broadcast facilities, the affiliated Liberty Baptist College on 4,000 acres up the road, maintaining a national network of traveling salesmen for the church and, of course, the seemingly endless array of posters, books, "Jesus First" pins and fund-raising letters that the Falwell operation spews out with a ferocious regularity.

The church claims to be Lynchburg's fourth-largest em-

ployer after General Electric, Babcock & Wilcox and Craddock-Terry Shoe Corp. (A local joke has it that Lynchburg is famous for two products: Three Mile Island—B&W designed the nuclear plant—and the Moral Majority.) Falwell's religious operation sends out 500,000 mailings a week at a minimum cost of a million dollars a year for postage alone. The reverend requires more than a million dollars a week in receipts for his religious operations, just to stay even, and as a result, the cash flow has come to be viewed as a thing sacred.

When the cash flow declined two years ago, Falwell instructed the thousands on his direct-mail list that "this truly grieves my spirit. I also believe this grieves the Lord." But after the publicity surrounding his association with the Moral Majority during the last election season, the receipts on both the religious and political sides have come up nicely. Falwell has long appreciated the power of publicity.

Until 1970, Falwell's entire church operation ran on a modest \$1-million-a-year budget and he supervised all of the organizational details himself. For the first 10 years, Falwell had relied primarily on appeals over the air to his television and radio audiences for his funding.

New World of Fund Raising

But then he discovered the developing industry of computerized direct-mail appeals, and a whole new world of fund raising was revealed. Through the use of modern word processors, Falwell is able to send out letters that appear to be hand-typed and personally addressed to an ever-expanding list of "Faith Partners" and other consistent contributors to his cause.

Julie Hairston, religion writer for the Lynchburg News and Daily Advance, reprinted a typical exchange between Falwell's form letter and a widow in Oregon, which conveys the flavor of Falwell's appeal. The widow had become a "Faith Partner," pledging \$10 a month—the minimum—while nursing her dying husband. Unable at that time to attend her local church, she had started tuning into the electronic evangelicals and made her pledge to become a Falwell "Faith Partner."

In return, she received the following reply, signed by a machine's duplication of Falwell's signature:

"At this moment, I (Falwell) am being forced to make some decisions that are literally breaking my heart.

"And as one of my loyal Faith Partners, I knew you'd want to know immediately.

"I've just received the annual year-end analysis of 'The Old-Time Gospel Hour' television and radio stations. And I'm sorely disappointed to find that many of our stations are *not* self-supporting financially.

"Since we have no other means of underwriting a station except through the support of loyal friends like you and local people who receive the station, it may be necessary to remove 'The Old-Time Gospel Hour' from a large number of stations.

"This truly grieves my spirit. I also believe this grieves the Lord.

"And unless we can turn this situation around, I will have to stop broadcasting God's Word over these stations very soon—I may even have to cut the station over which you receive 'The Old-Time Gospel Hour' in your home...

"This is why I'm going to ask if you could possibly consider making a sacrificial gift to 'The Old-Time Gospel Hour'... And if possible send your full payment of \$120 for 1978 today."

This was followed a week later by a similar letter, which, like the first, was designed to appear as a personal communication despite the fact that tens of thousands like it had been mailed out. But that widow in Oregon indicated in her response that she was corresponding directly with Jerry Falwell and not with the IBM computer that had spewed out the letters she had received. On the back of one of those letters she had penned this response:

"Dear Pastor Jerry,

"I am so sorry you are so hard up for money for many things, especially for television time; yes, I will truly miss your Sunday morning service." She then went on to explain that her husband had just died and that as a result, "Pastor, I'll send you my whole Faith Partner's promise for this year now, but I won't be able to continue to send each month. I am a senior citizen and I have only so much coming in. I am looking forward to getting my special giant-print Bible..."

Fund-raising letters like that one brought in \$34 million in fiscal year 1978. Falwell told *The Times* that he had collected more than \$60 million last year and conceded that the publicity over his chairmanship of the Moral Majority aided the direct-mail campaign.

Local Antipathy

The rapid growth of the business has brought some serious financial problems in its wake, and it also has brought Falwell enemies, including many of the local inhabitants of his hometown of Lynchburg, where he has been the subject of a number of legal suits.

In 1973, the Securities and Exchange Commission filed a civil suit ordering Falwell to stop selling bonds and to get his finances in order. The action stemmed from a \$5-million bond sale that Falwell's church had undertaken. As a result of the SEC action, a federal district court appointed five prominent Lynchburg businessmen to oversee the church's troubled financial matters. Falwell feels that he was vindicated, in the end, when the overseers were removed, but the incident has left others in Lynchburg with a less favorable impression.

That negative feeling was reinforced a few years later by Falwell's involvement with a self-proclaimed Christian entrepreneur by the name of F. William Menge.

Menge had come to Lynchburg at Falwell's suggestion to join his church and became a member of the board. He also formed a series of business ventures and stated: "Our motive is to glorify Christ... We would like to inspire Christian businessmen around the world to step out and do God's work."

Left a Bundle of Claims

However, Menge is remembered more in Lynchburg for having inspired businessmen around the world to step out and sue him and his companies. Two years after moving to Lynchburg and inducing local people to invest in his activities, Menge filed for bankruptcy. Two months later, last September, he died after being thrown from a tractor. He left creditors—many of them in Lynchburg—with claims of almost \$9 million against him and his companies.

There are other cases that some Lynchburg citizens love to dwell on. They range from the case of the contractor who got a lien on Falwell's Liberty Baptist College for several hundred thousand dollars of unpaid construction bills, which Falwell later paid, to the financial troubles of a minister's insurance company with which Falwell's church was associated. One

suit currently is being pursued by the Lynchburg City Council in an effort to collect municipal taxes on the 4,000 acres that Falwell's organization owns in town.

There have been a number of complaints about Falwell's business practices and, as a result, the local mood seems to run largely against Falwell, except for the minority that belongs to his Thomas Road Baptist Church. The complaints range from comments that Falwell leans on local merchants to turn unpaid bills into contributions to the church, to the claim that he solicits money from the old that they cannot afford to give.

Some Lynchburg natives grumble about what they claim is Falwell's opulent life style and they cite his past string of private jets and his luxurious residence. The Falwell mansion sits conspicuously on a knoll bathed at night by floodlights that render the effect of a local White House. The house is surrounded by manicured lawns, a large swimming pool and barking dogs all nestled behind 10-foot-high walls that Falwell feels are necessary for his security but which many local people find offensive.

It is surprising to travel to Lynchburg and encounter hostility towards Falwell nearly every time the reverend's name is mentioned, because Lynchburg is a conservative town in the heart of the Bible Belt. Yet in one discussion after another with townsfolk working at the airport or the hotel or the A&P supermarket that rents space from Falwell, there was criticism of Falwell's business dealings and suspicion of his motives in combining religion and politics.

One of his critics, the Rev. John Killinger of Lynchburg's largest Presbyterian church, delivered a sermon last month titled, "Would Jesus Have Appeared on The Old-Time Gospel Hour?" Killinger suggested that if Christ had so appeared, he might have told the Thomas Road Church ministers: "You appear to be very religious before your television audience. But inside you are rapacious, unconverted wolves, seeking only a greater share of the evangelical TV market, without really caring for the sheep you devour. You take money from widows and children, promising the blessings of God. It is the blessings of God you take from them, only to build an empire..."

But a visitor to Thomas Road Baptist Church might find that description a bit harsh. These days, Falwell seems somewhat eager to please—particularly in the presence of a reporter. While he clearly enjoys basking in the national publicity he has been receiving, he also carries the apprehensive air of one who may have taken on too much.

'There Is No Conspiracy'

He is defensive about published reports that New Right leaders such as Richard Viguerie and Paul Weyrich asked him to head the Moral Majority. "There is no conspiracy—I don't think I've had more than a couple meetings with those guys," he said. And he pointedly and frequently tells a reporter that the movement he heads "must now become more moderate."

In his authorized biography, Falwell is described as tall and trim, which once may have been the case. But the figure that one encounters these days could more properly be thought of as pudgy, which makes him appear far less threatening than his critics would have it.

And he is easy to talk with. His preaching in the Thomas Road church is more folksy than menacing, and once the cameras that beam his sermons to millions of viewers are turned off, he can become self-effacing and even kid around

about such secular subjects as the prospects for his favorite football team, the Dallas Cowboys.

But he is equally capable of harsh rhetoric, as on that Sunday in 1977 when he had Anita Bryant stand alongside him at the altar as he called for a return to the "McCarthy Era, where we register all Communists." And this time he added, "We should stamp it on their foreheads and send them back to Russia." A year later, reporter Mary Murphy wrote in Esquire magazine that she heard Falwell sermonize that: "If a man also lie with a man, as lieth with a woman, both of them have surely committed an abomination, and they shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them."

Looking Back 15 Years

Paradoxically, 15 years ago Falwell's was a strong voice raised against ministers who attempted to mix politics and religion.

His venture into political activism with the Moral Majority stands in sharp contradiction to his condemnation in the 1960s of ministers like Martin Luther King Jr., who launched the civil rights movement. In the early years of his ministry, Falwell was an ardent supporter of racial segregation—based, he said on his reading of the Bible—and scathing in his indictment of those religious figures who opposed it.

But even as he began to move away from the position that segregation was mandated by the Bible, he continued to condemn all efforts of ministers to change the secular world. In 1965, in a sermon entitled "Ministers and Marches," he stated, in reference to the Bible:

"Nowhere are we commissioned to reform the externals. We are not told to wage wars against bootleggers, liquor stores, gamblers, murderers, prostitutes, racketeers, prejudiced persons or institutions, or any other existing evil as such. Our ministry is not reformation but transformation."

He went on to add: "Believing the Bible as I do, I would find it impossible to stop preaching the pure saving gospel of Jesus Christ, and begin doing anything else—including fighting communism or participating in civil rights reforms... I believe that if we spent enough effort trying to clean up state and churches, rather than trying to clean up state and national governments, we would do well."

Change in Approach

Today, however, Falwell simply dismisses his earlier interpretation of the Bible as "false prophecy." Instead of condemning "reformation," as he once did, Falwell last May sent a letter to all of the members of Congress stating, "I have observed the sinful state of our nation... We all know about Martin Luther and his famous 'Ninety-Five Theses.' I have compiled a document of 95 theses which I believe could bring about moral reformation in America."

One of the theses condemned wheat sales and low-interest loans to Russia and China. Another argued that "any attempt to weaken our defense systems is both an act of treason and a crime..." One of the Falwell theses held "that the free enterprise system of profit be encouraged to grow, being unhampered by any socialistic laws or red tape," and another supported a balanced federal budget.

There also were the Falwell standards, such as the husband being "the divinely appointed head" of a marriage, and homosexuality, premarital sex, incest, child abuse and the equal rights amendment lumped together as being wrong because they are "anti-family."

He is quite willing to modify past statements, but some of those were made so recently and with such fervent certainty that his easy retractions or modifications seem almost flip.

Falwell is clearly alarmed by a growing chorus of criticism of some of his activities and speeches. When both he and the Rev. Billy Graham recently addressed a convention of religious broadcasters and evangelicals in Washington, D.C., Graham's remarks seemed directed at Falwell's style when he warned of "dangers" in the movement to spread the gospel through television and radio. Graham cited as examples of such danger infatuation with success, preoccupation with "perpetuating organization," excessive pride and reliance on "worldly methods" to sustain broadcasts. Falwell was stung by Graham's remarks and since has obtained a letter from Graham stating that he was not attempting to single out Falwell for criticism.

The criticism must have been somewhat perplexing to Falwell, who prides himself on his mastery of "worldly methods" and loves, in interviews and even in sermons, to dwell on the paraphernalia of his fund-raising activities—his computers and mailing lists. He at times seems infatuated with the expensive broadcast technology that his organization has acquired.

He can go on at length and in detail about the Arbitron demographic descriptions of various television markets and where his show stands in the ratings sweepstakes among those who practice the television ministry, as it's called in the trades.

Father a Businessman

The official biography, which Falwell will hand to a reporter after an interview over breakfast or lunch at the Lynchburg Hilton Hotel, proclaims that he acquired his business acumen from his father, Carey Falwell, one of the more prosperous businessmen in town, and that when young Jerry Falwell was in high school and at Lynchburg's junior college, he alone among his friends received a new car each year.

The elder Falwell controlled the oil company that supplied most of the area's residents and businesses as well as the big local nightclub and restaurant where one could drink the booze and hear the sinful sounds of the Dorsey Brothers condemned by the Baptist ministers up the road. Falwell recalls that his father had no use for religion, like his grandfather, who was "an avowed atheist." He claims with a hint of pride that "it was my grandfather, not my father, who was the bootlegger."

In the biography we are told that "Carey Falwell was a drinker" and died from cirrhosis of the liver.

When pressed, Falwell concedes that the basis for his father's drinking was his remorse over having shot his own brother in a feud over the family's business activities. This tragedy, so ripe for biblical metaphor, was enacted one morning in the Falwell family restaurant when the younger brother fired once and missed and Falwell's father then finished him off. It was judged self-defense but it left a permanent stain on the Falwell family name in the eyes of Lynchburg society.

Mother a Moral Force

Falwell extols his God-fearing mother as the moral force behind his own development. Helen Falwell followed the Long Beach, Calif., radio preacher popular in her time, Charles E. Fuller, and Falwell recalls that she would turn the radio on to the preacher's sermons while young Falwell lay sleeping.

While Falwell credits his father for his "business acumen," he states that: "I owe all my character to my mother, there's no

question about that. I owe everything I know about right and wrong to her. Mom was very authoritative, very moral, very much a disciplinarian. She taught us right from wrong from infancy. Dad never took much time to do that sort of thing but Mom did."

Yet Falwell talks a great deal about his "deep respect" for his father, that even though he was not a Christian, "he was a moral man" and "rightfully the head of our household." Falwell celebrates his father's strength and pre-eminent power in the family with an anecdote that he has used often. One of his father's arbitrary rules prohibited smoking in the house because he did not like the smell of cigarettes. Falwell recalls one vivid scene when his brother Lewis, eight years his senior, returned home after three or four years in combat in the South Pacific during World War II. As Falwell describes it:

"One Sunday at noon, Mom and Dad and all of us were around the dinner table, and I saw Lewis reach into his pocket and pull out a cigarette... Just as Lewis struck the match and almost got it to the cigarette, Daddy, who was sitting at the opposite corner, never said a word but just reached over and hit Lewis right in the mouth, smashing the cigarette, and laid Lewis out on the floor. Without missing a bite, Dad said, 'Nothing's changed here, Son' and went right on eating. When Lewis got back up to the table, he gave up cigarettes. We all respected Dad for that because he was very consistent on what he stood for."

Naturally, in that environment, Helen Falwell did not raise an objection to her son's being belted, for she accepted that as the father's prerogative. As Falwell frequently points out, this was a time before the government started meddling with children's rights.

Hers was a traditional role, as Falwell's biography notes: "Helen Falwell was always found at home tending to her responsibilities of preparing the meals, cleaning the house and clothes, and greeting her children when they came home from school. No doubt Helen Falwell's responsible care has a lot to do with her son's advice to today's women to stay in their homes and raise their families, and thus instill the necessary and spiritual qualities in their children at an early age."

Much of the program of the Moral Majority centers around a modern rendering of the spiritual qualities gleaned from Helen Falwell. The organization is very "family oriented" and interprets that to mean being against the ERA and for preserving in all ways the traditional role of women in the home.

This is not unusual in Southern Baptist fundamentalism, but Falwell has been criticized for having raised his views from the level of advice to his parishioners to a matter of state policy to be imposed on all.

Foreign, Domestic Policies

He has also been criticized for combining the "moral issues," which do derive directly from his theology, with questions of foreign and domestic policy, which are the subjects of serious debate among fundamentalists.

For example, Graham, at the Washington conference, took issue with those evangelists who, like Falwell, have been beating the drums for a massive military buildup. Graham, after observing that the arms race is "a complex issue and I do not believe in unilateral disarmament," added, "But how can we be indifferent to the millions and millions who live on the brink of starvation each year while the nations of the world spend \$550 billion each year on weapons?"

Falwell defends his tough stance towards the Soviets as a matter of biblical prophecy, which foretells the nuclear destruction of the world. That event is described in a mushroom-cloud-covered pamphlet entitled, "Armageddon and the Coming War With Russia," by Jerry Falwell.

In the Falwell prophecy, nuclear war will occur when the Russians—the "Rosh" mentioned in the Bible—using horses and spears, battle the Antichrist, who by then has taken over the Middle East. The Russians will attack on horseback first, with wooden spears, because those are weapons mentioned in the Bible. Only after that onslaught has failed will they resort to nuclear weapons.

Falwell's speculation is that the Russians at the outset will shun more modern weapons because of the future development of metal-seeking missiles, which therefore heightens the usefulness of wooden implements of war and renders the Cosacks and their horses invaluable.

It can all get somewhat technical, but those seeking more detailed information on "Armageddon and the Coming War With Russia" are invited by Falwell to join The Fifteen Thousand Club. "For your \$100 gift, you will receive: Armageddon book, Bible prophecy book, 8 cassette tapes by Dr.

Falwell and a personalized certificate."

If that seems a bit steep, the big blue bulletin board above the phone banks taking the hotline telephone call orders reminds you there is always the "I Love America Club," wherein you agree to send \$12 each month in return for "a monthly letter from Dr. Falwell, Hotline Report, Special News Periodical, Bicentennial Bible." For an additional one-time contribution of \$50 or more, they will throw in the "Parchment Christian Bill of Rights" and the "Beautiful Easy to Assemble Flag Kit." Now that does not entitle one to "Jesus First" pins, but another sign on that same blue bulletin board titled "Jesus First Pins Code" states that for \$25 you can get two bronze and two gold "Jesus First" pins.

For critics who might find this all too commercial for a religious enterprise, Falwell brings up yet another pamphlet that one can send for: "I think the Book of Proverbs—I have a booklet on that subject—is the premise for free enterprise, private property ownership, ambition, incentive, rewards, competition, all of that..."

Times researcher Nina Green contributed to this article.

Q & A

By ROBERT SCHEER
Times Staff Writer

In the following interview with The Times, The Rev. Jerry Falwell, leader of the Moral Majority, discusses his views and his organization.

Scheer: A leader of the Santa Clara (Calif.) chapter of the Moral Majority organization, of which you are national chairman, was quoted recently as being in favor of capital punishment for homosexuals. Is that your position also?

Falwell: No, it is not. I don't know this gentleman. I have never met him. I totally disagree with that concept. I don't know that he said it. I, like you, read it in the newspaper but I would be very surprised and disappointed if, in fact, he does believe that.

Scheer: You had a similar problem with the head of the Moral Majority in Maryland, which you did charter, who went after a baker who made nude gingerbread cookies.

Falwell: Fortunately, it was less offensive than this Santa Clara incident.

Scheer: If it turns out that this person is, in fact, the head of the Santa Clara Moral Majority, would you ask him to leave?

Falwell: I have no control at all over the Santa Clara Moral Majority. They organized without any technical connection with the national Moral Majority. In reality, it is a free-lance group. We do not object to what they are doing. We simply cannot endorse everything they do. And the statement regarding capital punishment for homosexual acts, to me, is out of the question.

'Moral Perversion'

Scheer: What is your position on homosexuality?

Falwell: I look on homosexuality as moral perversion but I do not believe that homosexual acts should carry capital punishment, of course.

Scheer: Do you think they should carry punishment?

Falwell: Sodomy, in 49 of the 50 states, is a misdemeanor at this time. I think that is the way it ought to be.

Scheer: But that's for heterosexuals as well.

Falwell: Yes it is. Sodomy and adultery are misdemeanors.

Scheer: You put homosexuality on the same level as adultery?

Falwell: Oh, I do. The act of sodomy and the act of adultery are both misdemeanors across the nation and both promiscuous immorality.

Scheer: Are you at all worried about forging an alliance between the many people who commit adultery in this country and the people who are homosexuals?

Falwell: (laughs) I think they're a little bit incompatible. I don't think it would work.

Scheer: Do you see any danger in a climate being created in which homosexuals become scapegoats?

Falwell: I don't think there will ever be any more witch hunts on any particular groups in society. That isn't to say there wouldn't be sporadic happenings, such as the Nazis and the Ku Klux Klanners can create here and there. But I don't think there will ever be a general uprising of anti-Semitism, anti-homosexuals, anti-blacks, anti-whites, that could cause national danger to those clientele.

Denying Scripture

Scheer: As both the leader of the Moral Majority and a Baptist minister, how do you distinguish between your political and religious judgments? You often use the words "liberal" and "conservative" both in a religious and a political sense. Earlier you told a reporter liberalism failed.

Falwell: Theological liberalism denies the inspiration of Scripture. Political liberalism may or may not deny Scripture. For example, Sen. Mark Hatfield, whom I consider to be a friend, would differ with me on military matters. We would agree on the moral, the social issues, because he is a fundamentalist as it applies to theology. He believes in the inerrancy of Scripture. He and I would come to different conclusions on some political issues. That is both his right and mine as private citizens.

Scheer: But some of the conservative religious groups, in assessing voting records—I guess it was the Christian Roundtable—gave Hatfield a 24% correct-voting record. If he thinks he's interpreting Scripture, he probably would give himself a 100% voting record, wouldn't he?

Falwell: I feel it's possible for sincere, dedicated Christians to have different interpretations on non-essential matters. When I say non-essential, I mean matters that have nothing to do with one's relationship to God.

Scheer: Do you think there's a danger of the New Right going too far now?

Falwell: There always is. But I don't think the people that I know, who are on the conservative side of the spectrum, are radical or foolish. I think we all know that to do what our opponents did—and that's go so far to the right that it's ridiculous—will cause the same reaction a few years from now as has happened to them. I think what we have to do is come back to some reasonable middle-of-the-road position on the issues. There had to be some reactionary movement to slow down the liberal steamroller, because during the '60s and by the mid-70s, the liberal perspective on moral and social issues was literally bowling its way through, and people on our side had to do what those people did 25 years ago. We had to become revolutionary. Once a line of thought is invited to the table, radical action is over and then one can express his views; so can all the rest, and the end result is that somewhere in the middle of the road there's an acceptable and reasonable compromise. And that has happened.

Influence of Family

Scheer: Were you a political conservative growing up in Lynchburg, Va., and was your family?

Falwell: Yes, my father was very conservative politically.

Scheer: Did he support segregation?

Falwell: Yes, my father was supportive of segregation and so was I, even in the early years of my ministry. It wasn't until I spiritually developed and matured, as I see it, that I came to realize it was an unscriptural position.

Scheer: When was that?

Falwell: Probably 1963, -4, -5 that I totally repudiated segregation. It was a carry-over from my heritage. I would say that 99% of all Southerners, maybe Northerners, too, but certainly Southerners—I can speak to that—were segregationists, and once we became Christians many of us were still in that cultural society—an all-white church and pastors who preached it as the gospel. I don't think they were guilty of racism. They just believed it was a scriptural position and

sometimes misapplied Scripture to support it. It was only as I became a real student of Scripture that I saw it's not in the Bible. As a matter of fact, the opposite is there. And when I began to repudiate segregation, it cost me. Many of my friends thought I was becoming liberal.

'Not Preaching for Segregation'

Scheer: But as late as 1965 you gave a sermon criticizing those ministers like Martin Luther King who were involved in the civil rights movement.

Falwell: I preached a message on ministers and marches. I was not preaching for segregation. I was preaching against involvement in political issues, which, later in the osmosis of my spiritual development, I also repudiated. Obviously, I'm doing now what Dr. Martin Luther King did 15 years ago. I was under the illusion that everything's going to work out, that the statement, "Religion and politics don't mix," was biblical. I'd heard it somewhere. I just never asked for the book, chapter and verse...

Scheer: You cited chapter and verse in the Bible that says that one should not get involved.

Falwell: 'Course I did. I isolated verses to challenge the preachers, to stick totally to the spiritual issues, that the church was to preach the gospel to the world, period.

Scheer: You're not doing that now?

Falwell: No, I'm not, because I feel that one is always maturing. I think the only dangerous point that any Christian, or particularly a minister, reaches is when he thinks he has arrived and when he is no longer learning and maturing.

Changing Interpretations

Scheer: At that time, you were quoting the written word of God to support your position. Now you quote the written word of God to take quite the opposite position. That means it's subject to change and its meaning is not so obvious.

Falwell: Scripture is not subject to change.

Scheer: Your interpretation?

Falwell: Interpretation of Scripture is very subject to change.

Scheer: Is it possible that five years or five months from now you may reinterpret the Scripture in such a light as to think that maybe the ERA (equal rights amendment), which you now oppose, is not anti-Christian or anti-family?

Falwell: No, I don't think that's possible.

Scheer: I gather that one of your big battles today is over the content of television programming and movies.

Falwell: We have joined the Coalition for Better TV—the Moral Majority has. In the spring, we're going to be monitoring for three months every program, every advertiser, and determine who are the worst advertisers, who really is paying the tab for the most offensive, risqué programming.

Scheer: But isn't the other side of the coin that the public must want this because they watch those shows?

Power for Good, Evil

Falwell: You can take a child here on the street and give him a little drugs and say, "This won't hurt you," and the next time give a little more, and it doesn't matter—government, media, pastors, teachers, have to be aware of the fact that they have tremendous power over people, and they can use that power for good or evil. And I think that the television writers are not presenting life the way it is. Most of

them are presenting life the way they live it, and the way they want everybody else to live it.

Scheer: How do you know that?

Falwell: Most of the programming that's on in prime time—not most, much of it—today has become very suggestive, and some of its bedroom scenes are common. The program "96"—we monitored that one the other night.

Scheer: How do you know that's the way the writers live?

Falwell: I don't know that—I said, that's my opinion. I said my opinion is that there are writers who are presenting life apparently the way they want it lived, because whenever you argue with them they'll say, "Well, I'm presenting life the way it is."

'A Reckless Statement'

Scheer: The argument I hear is they're presenting life the way the public wants to see it, so they'll buy the advertised product. But you've made a pretty serious charge, in a way. You've said that they're motivated by the promiscuity in their own personal lives.

Falwell: Let me retract that. That probably was a reckless statement. I have no way of knowing how they live. I can only say that somebody knows a great deal about that way of life who writes it because, obviously, they portray it quite well.

Scheer: You often celebrate the market and free enterprise and all that, but isn't that what's given us pornography, prostitution, alcoholism?

Falwell: I don't think there's any connection between the free market and, for example, pornography or abortion or moral permissiveness, those situational ethics. I think that those moral problems exist and flourish in every political and economic structure. Those moral issues have to do with the depravity of human nature.

No Movies in 29 Years

Scheer: Last night you said you haven't seen a movie in 29 years. Why?

Falwell: I personally am not for the abolition of the movie industry. I think Hollywood puts out some very good films. I don't have the time or the interest to pursue them. I would say the majority of the families at (Falwell's) Thomas Road Baptist Church and in thousands of churches across America, like the one I preached in last night, would likewise share my views on that. They've also come to the conclusion, as I have, that there are some movies that are very debilitating and very degrading. The X-rated, R-rated movies of today, I think, are very dangerous to the moral values of the country.

Scheer: Obvious question—how would you know this if you'd never seen one?

Falwell: I don't think you have to take the cap off a sewer to know it stinks. I live in the real world. I travel 6,000 miles a week. People tell me constantly what they're seeing. I read, I look at the advertisements of the movies, I read a great deal about what these movies consist of. A long time ago, I came to the conclusion that the trend was in the wrong direction. That's why 29 years ago I quit going.

Scheer: What do you watch on television?

Falwell: Well, I'm a sports nut. When I can watch a good ballgame, our family—Jonathan enjoys some of the programs like "Little House on the Prairie" programs that have a good family emphasis. When they were smaller, they watched the cartoons. We watch musicals at times, of course the news, and

from time to time there will be a good wholesome movie on television which, for our family, provides a good opportunity to do something together. We would not average an hour of television a day.

Scheer: About your family—in your authorized biography, you state that your father was not a Christian.

Falwell: My father's father was an atheist. My father, as far as I know, never attended a church in his life. He loved his children, his family, he provided for us well, he loved us. Three weeks before his death, a layman visited him—I was 15 years old at the time. That layman opened the Scriptures and explained the Plan of Salvation to him. My father accepted Christ. I was not a Christian then, myself. I believe my father did become a Christian just before he died.

Scheer: Was he ill the three weeks before?

Falwell: Yes, he was dying. He had cirrhosis of the liver. My father never drank where it affected his activities as a businessman, but he drank every night, every evening, and the doctors reported that it damaged his liver. My father was always true to my mother, as was his father, a very morally committed man. It just had to do with his philosophy.

Scheer: That's interesting—to be an atheist and still be morally committed.

Falwell: I think there are lots of people like that. I have no problem believing that one can be an existentialist or an atheist, a humanist, many of the things with which I do not agree, and still be a good moral, productive citizen and parent. It's purely a matter of philosophical disagreement. It has nothing to do with condemnation of one's philosophy.

Scheer: How serious was his drinking?

Falwell: He'd come home and his first act after walking in the door was to pour a drink, hard liquor. And by 8 o'clock, he'd be asleep, in bed, he'd go to bed. So it killed conversation, it killed family fellowship at night, and that became his life style into the later years of his life. Get up during the night and do the same thing. And the next morning, except for the suffering from the hangover, up early and out to work. But that gradually slowed him down until it killed him.

Scheer: Must have been something troubling him.

Falwell: I think, frankly, that my father—I doubt if my father drank, I don't think he drank at all until he and his younger brother had a shoot-out and his brother was killed. He had a very wild brother and very unmanageable. They never got along, and two years before I was born, 1931, in one of the businesses that my father owned, his brother actually challenged him with a gun, and in an act of self-defense, he was forced to kill his own brother. There was no court hearing, there were no charges. But he never got over that. That was the beginning, my mother said, of his frustration, his drinking, and at times, after he was drinking, if he got despondent, his conversation would always center around that event.

Scheer: Was your mother very religious?

Falwell: Yes, she was very religious.

Scheer: The point made in your book is you represent a combination of your mother's spirituality and your father's business acumen.

Falwell: That's a fair appraisal. Most people who knew both of them make that application immediately, that your mother's warmth and love and humility, and your father's aggressiveness, are combined in you. And of course I have nothing to do with that—it's hereditary.

Scheer: Turning to the future—in your pamphlet on Arma-

geddon, you prophesy nuclear war with Russia.

Falwell: We believe that Russia, because of her need of oil—and she's running out now—is going to move in on the Middle East, and particularly Israel because of their hatred of the Jew, and that it is at that time when I believe there will be some nuclear holocaust on this earth, because it says that blood shall flow in the streets up to the bridle of the horses in the Valley of Esdraelon for some 200 miles. And it speaks of horrible happenings that one can only relate in 2 Peter 3, the melting of the elements, to nuclear warfare. But I think, at the end of the church age, when the church is raptured, as we use the word, or cached out, then uninhibited hostilities will occur on this earth.

Scheer: And Russia will be—

Falwell: And Russia will be the offender and will be ultimately totally destroyed.

Scheer: Well, the whole world will, won't it?

Falwell: No, not the whole world, because then our Lord is coming back to the earth. First, he comes to take the church out. Seven years later, after Armageddon, this horrible holocaust, he's coming back to this very earth so it won't be destroyed, and the church is coming with him, to rule and reign with Christ on the earth for a thousand years. And then comes the new heavens and the new earth and eternity. That's all in that book on Armageddon—that is just an outline.

Scheer: But will it be possible for Russia to be destroyed with nuclear weapons without it destroying the world?

Falwell: Yes, I don't mean that every person—Russia has many wonderful Christians there, too. The underground church is working very effectively in Russia, Red China. They're going to be taken out in the Rapture. The hostilities, the war, will be initiated by the Marxist cause, as we see it, because in Ezekiel 38 and 39, it mentions that Gog and Magog,

even mentions Rosh, the Old Testament word, we believe, for Russia, and Mesheck and Tubal which we believe, today, is Moscow and the modern province of Tobolsk. It will come down out of the north—that has to be the Soviet Union—upon the midst of the earth—Israel and the Middle East—and so we believe that hostilities will be initiated by the Soviet Union. That's why most of us believe in the imminent return of Christ. We believe we're living in those days just prior to the Lord's returning.

Scheer: By imminent, you mean a year or how long?

Falwell: Nobody is willing, of course—we're warned by the Lord not to set dates. The Lord said, "No man knows the day or the hour." Every religious group or leader who has ever set dates, I think, has dishonored the Lord and embarrassed themselves. It could be 50 years. I don't think so. I don't think we have that long. I think we're coming to an impasse. All of history is reaching a climax and I do not think, I do not think we have 50 years left. I don't think my children will live their full lives out, as I probably will.

Scheer: Have you ever discussed these things with Reagan? The whole question of prophecy? Does he agree with you?

Falwell: Yes, he does. He told me, back in the campaign in New Orleans—we were riding together, just the two of us, security officer up front, of course, with the driver—we were riding and he said, "Jerry, I sometimes believe we're heading very fast for Armageddon right now." But he said, "I am not a fatalist, I believe in human responsibility. I believe that God will respect us for making all-out efforts toward world peace," and that is where my commitment lies." That's where my commitment lies, too. The President is a man of great faith. He's a man who knows what the Bible has to say. That is why I trust him so implicitly.

A warning against the dangers of simplistic solutions to complex social problems offered by the evangelistic movement is the focus of this article by the Director of Communications for the United Church of Christ.

Reprinted by permission from *Television Quarterly*, Vol. XVII, No. III, Fall 1980

Old-Time Religion on TV— Bane or Blessing?

By REV. EVERETT C. PARKER

Today, ninety percent of all religion on television is commercial. Conservative religious bodies control 1100 radio stations and twenty five television stations outright, and they dominate religious broadcasting on virtually all the remaining commercial stations. The gospel on TV has become big business.

For example, Jerry Falwell of the Moral Majority is now seen on 320 television stations. He modestly admits to a fifty-six million dollar take. Pat Robertson, with his *700 Club* and Jim Bakker with the *PTL Club* (People That Love), have what amounts to independent networks of TV stations and cable systems. (Both Bakker and Robertson claim to have the gift of healing.) Bakker, who owns some TV stations, is under investigation by the FCC for allegedly fraudulent fund-raising over the air.

Among the other TV evangelicals are Oral Roberts, Rex Humbard with his *Cathedral of Tomorrow*, Paul Crouch with his burgeoning *Trinity Network* and Robert Schuller with his *Hour of Power*. Billy Graham, still a major figure with considerable drawing power, has distanced himself from the faith healers and the politically partisan evangelicals.

All together, these groups spend approximately one hundred and fifty million dollars a year on TV time, talent and production. This sum is greater than the combined missionary budgets of the major Protestant denominations. But—"the take's the thing," and their combined income for 1979 has been conservatively estimated at half a billion dollars.

There is little evidence that these "TV preachers," as the public tends to call them, are spending their tax-exempt profits on anything other than expansion of their broadcast operations (Billy Graham excepted) and projects that further their self-aggrandizement and political ambitions.

Certain questions are in order. How did fundamentalist Protestantism become "big business" in television? What would be a fair analysis of its scope, and the influence of its practitioners on the American scene? Where are its adherents going, and what may be their impact on the rest of us?

During the middle years of this century, the established Protestant churches were enjoying substantial growth and raising large sums of money. Some of them looked down on the Evangelicals, dismissing them as simple-minded believ-

ers in an archaic dogma. But by the middle 1970s, history was making subtle changes in the American psyche, and technological developments in electronic communications began to coalesce in ways that fostered the Evangelical cause.

Consider these factors: the intense cultural shock of Watergate, OPEC and economic decline, rising crime, family breakups, the decline in the quality of public education. Fear and discontent were rife. Students of human behavior began to note a shift in attitude from "we thinking" to a concern for "me first." Established churches, which had led the movement for social change in the 1960s, were less and less able to interpret changing values and to find meaning and direction for a society that seemed headed for chaos. Amid the chaos, people began looking to religion—that old-time religion, as the cliché has it—for hope and a sense of direction.

A second important factor in the Evangelical nascence was the election of Jimmy Carter, our first "born again" President. By 1976 the Gallup Poll was noting the sudden growth in the born-again phenomenon, with fifty million adults claiming they had experienced this form of conversion. (The figure has

since dropped to thirty million). The willingness of Americans to own up to their fundamentalist beliefs marked a turning point for the Evangelicals. They became convinced that their views were shared by a much larger proportion of American society than anyone had previously imagined.

The third and the determinative force that has catapulted fundamentalism into prominence is television. Our crisis-generated longing for comfort and certitude—especially among older people—has played directly into the game plan of the evangelicals. They have a message that is extremely simple and eagerly grasped: "Accept Christ and all will be well." The infallibility of the Bible and the absolute moral views of white, middle class society are part of this credo.

Television has conditioned Americans to accept a depressing mix of homogenized entertainment and hard-sell commercials. Television is therefore the perfect medium for a simplistic interpretation of Christianity that brooks no doubts about anything. Falwell, Robertson and Roberts—along with other TV preachers—use television precisely as do manufacturers of soap and soup and drugs. They have discovered how to select, out of all TV viewers, a specialized audience of some ten or twenty million. Using cheap satellite distribution to stations as well as cable systems, they have carved out a little empire of the faithful. Hard-sell telephone calls and computer-driven direct mail solicitation has made these men who profess to walk with God very rich indeed.

Who are these followers? The TV preachers claim to be as universal in their appeal as is the Gospel.

They say they reach a cross-section ranging from teenagers to senior citizens. They also take credit for a record number of conversions.

In truth, their shows are carefully designed to attract white, affluent (or not so affluent) churchgoers, offering them simplistic solutions to complex social problems. This target audience is made up of citizens who traditionally provide the income for local churches and missionary enterprises.

Independent research also indicates that the basic audience for Evangelical programs is made up of older, less educated members of society, people with low or middle incomes. Women, most over sixty, are predominant. Oral Roberts is their favorite.

Devotees of this commercialized religion usually send money to more than one TV program. This duplication accounts for the inflated audience claims. The oft-repeated figure—one hundred and thirty million viewers—may be out of line but the viewers who do tune in regularly say they feel a close relationship to the TV preachers. They also believe that their gifts are converting large numbers of people to Christ. Many who wrote to me after I had debated Jerry Falwell on television, saying that they appreciated the warmth and certitude of the TV preachers in contrast to the lack of spirituality and the absence of Biblical authority in their home town churches.

American citizens have a right to spend their money in any legal way they see fit. Television evangelists apparently satisfy a hunger in their lives, a yearning not fed by their local churches. But other Americans have the right to question the practices of commercial TV evangelism. Criticism is in or-

der on two grounds: the way TV preachers exploit a faithful trusting audience for their own personal gain and the danger some of them pose to our democratic system.

I will not dwell on the distortions of theology and the misinterpretations of the Bible that are the stock in trade of the fundamentalist TV preachers. I tend to wince each time I hear Oral Roberts promise that you need only to "accept Christ" to prosper in business. I'm also uncomfortable with Jerry Falwell's view that it is "un-Christian," indeed wicked, for women to wish to control their own bodies and their own destinies.

From a traditional Christian view, perhaps the greatest sin of the TV preachers is their pandering to the "me selfishness" of the fearful. They make the Gospel one-dimensional, limiting its scope to the personal: happiness, prosperity, security. They proclaim Jesus as Lord but never mention the God whose kingdom Jesus proclaimed. Jesus warned, "Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord' shall enter the kingdom of heaven." The TV preachers say, "Accept Christ and enjoy!"

Even in those rare instances where social and political outreach is called for, it is to put an end to some humane activity, or to foster right wing causes or to legitimize sexism, racism, police power and militarism.

And let us not overlook this: all the commercial religion preachers are politically ambitious to some degree. Robertson and Falwell, in particular, are reaching for political power. Their partisanship in the Presidential campaign made this clear.

Since colonial times church and state have had a testy relationship.

The First Amendment plainly set the bounds within which the church and the state may operate in relation to each other. The task of the church is to deal with people's faith; the task of the state is to govern. The founders of the United States—Jefferson, Madison, Adams, even Washington—had a profound fear of religion mixing in politics. The separation clause in the First Amendment does not deny the church the right to speak out on public issues. Indeed, the church has the obligation to uphold the quality of life and the humane values our forbears cherished and wrote into the Constitution.

The church and the government—without either attempting to function as the other—have an imperious common purpose: to nurture the welfare and the progress of the community.

The church becomes a danger to democracy only when it attempts to exert political power to impose its moral values and its practices on segments of society who—though law-abiding and honorable citizens—may not choose to live according to church dogma. Our government is for the whole people. It will become a tyranny if it is made the agent for imposing the moral imperatives of one segment of society on all the rest.

Jerry Falwell's influence—and wealth—are dependent upon his ability to rouse and then to assuage the anxieties and fears of his followers. Therefore, he must slay dragons and exorcise devils. It is not surprising that he sees only a terrible malaise in our society. Nor is it surprising that he limits himself to those "clear and simple" issues that spark intense emotional response: prayer in public schools, abortion, the status of women,

crime, communism. These are things he and his followers can get their minds and their anger around. These are colorful TV issues that play well.

The terrible and complicated issues—war and peace, inflation, energy, the Third World's poverty—bear just as heavily on the fundamentalists as on the rest of us. But they do not lend themselves to the simplistic appeals of TV sermons.

The Christian Right, with its vast TV resources, now demands loyalty oaths for political candidates and "right-thinking" philosophy for judgeships. Worse, they rate incumbents, not on their total records in office, but on their conformity to the so-called "Christian" stand on issues. The democratic system is put in peril by such practices.

Non-Christians and members of established churches have been struck by the way TV preachers—especially the Moral Majority orators—act as if they had a monopoly on morality, implying that Jews, Catholics and others belong to an immoral minority. They pointedly ignore the moral directives of the prophets to the rulers of Israel as well as the summation by Jesus of Christian morality as stated in the Book of Matthew: "I was hungry and you gave me food; thirsty and you gave me drink; naked, and you clothed me; sick, and in prison, and you visited me."

Because of television's impact, it is possible that we have over-estimated the influence of the evangelicals as a political force. One test of power is the amount of money they can generate from viewers. The five major religious programs took in five hundred million dollars in 1979. This is vastly

lower in real dollars than the two hundred million generated by the five leading *radio* preachers back in 1942.

Rev. Dr. Everett Parker is director of the Office of Communication, United Church of Christ, in New York.

The preceding article is adapted from the Helen Oliver Memorial Lecture delivered by Dr. Parker in October at the First Congregational Church of Portland, Oregon.

Professors Robert S. Alley and Irby Brown assess the impact of the evangelical right in this article from *Emmy* magazine and find that it would "narrow the American dream, invade individual privacy in the name of morality and generally seek to impose their own definitions upon us all."

ESSAY

M the MORAL MONOPOLY

The most critical and sensitive spot in the ethics of mass communications is the use of these media for the manipulation of people—specifically the manipulation of people for their own good.

by Robert S. Alley
and Irby B. Brown

WHAT IF a charismatic religious celebrity were able to turn the minds of millions of television viewers toward a narrowly defined deity? What if that same evangelist were capable of transferring a widely held American public belief in God into a commitment to his own particular theological persuasion? And finally, what if the general acceptance of a divine authority were to pass to a disciple, a "chosen" evangelist who possessed a specific political agenda? A scenario for John Mantley in his *Buck Rogers* series? A *Twilight Zone* flashback to the 17th-century Massachusetts Bay Colony? Although both are possible, it is, in reality, a clear signal of the potential that lurks behind future applications of today's television technology.

Indeed, the serious mood of concern that surrounds these issues was reflected in a speech by Robert M. Liebert, professor of psychology at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, when he addressed 250 religious leaders attending a symposium on the electronic church—sponsored jointly by the United States Catholic Conference and the National Council of Churches—at NYU in February of 1980. Remarked Liebert, "Make no mistake about it: nothing less than the definition of Christianity is at stake in this holy war."

The consultation itself was evidence that the "mainline" Christian churches were deeply concerned over the sudden successes of TV evangels. In the spring and summer that followed, rumblings among many Protestant leaders indicated

an awareness of a clear challenge to both church membership and contributions. These unmistakable threats to pew and plate had finally prodded the Christian religious establishment to respond to an extreme biblical fundamentalism that now all but controls religious broadcasting in America.

Fair warning had been offered 25 years ago, however, by at least one of the persons also in attendance at that New York meeting. Everett C. Parker, director of the United Church of Christ's office of communications, who collaborated in 1955 on an exhaustive study of conditions relating to religion and television for the National Council of Churches, concluded in that year: "The most critical and sensitive spot in the ethics of mass communications, we believe, is on the use of these media for the manipulation of people. . . . The sanction against manipulation, we further suggest, extends specifically to the manipulation of people for what is presumed to be their best interest." And the authors gave precise definition to their fears: "There is not as yet on the horizon of religious broadcasting the program that will compare in 'success' with the mass evangelist of earlier days. The danger is that there will be. The danger is that some creative genius will develop the program that is so 'successful' by the standards of the commercial users of the media that the fundamental purposes of the Christian church will be ignored or denied."

For the most part, the commercial networks have consciously sought to avoid—largely from self-interest, we imagine—such manipulation of audiences. In

the sixties pressure from the FCC, advertisers and vocal viewers tended to result in a certain blandness in prime time and an actual decrease in activism and advocacy. Most network executives appear to have been mild moderates lacking any signs of missionary zeal or nationalistic messianism. But America was passing, in its multicultures, into serious confrontation with issues of social justice, freedom and human rights, and because these network people were not, as Michael Novak noted in his introduction to the Aspen Institute's report *TV as a Social Force*, "a reactionary or frankly illiberal class," there have been numerous recent examples of programs concerned with these issues. Norman Lear's comedic art and the Smothers Brothers come readily to mind. But even in their advocacy of specific secular social values, these artists, as well as many other artists and journalists, have been expansive, inclusive, carefully avoiding assertions that all citizens must agree with their conclusions. They have encouraged instruction, not indoctrination; inquiry, not ideology.

If indeed commercial television has had any consistent "message" since 1948, it has overwhelmingly been one of tradition and the support of establishment figures. And any mild criticism of, for example, the institution of big business that may on occasion have been presented in an evening's entertainment has been more than offset by commercials such as Bob Hope promoting the oil interests for Texaco or Frank Sinatra advocating the virtues of Chrysler products. But neither criticism nor support of free enterprise has constituted excessive audience manipulation. Even as TV has supported general traditional values in such institutions as the family, it has simultaneously avoided dogmatic adherence to a single code of conduct designed to secure those institutions.

Obviously, wherever there is opinion there is subjectivity. The evidence, however, is strong to support the proposition that the TV producers have grounded social comment in commonly accepted secular history, with emphasis upon expansive constitutional principles. And it is safe to say religion has been left to the churches—both liberal and conservative.

Since the early fifties the fundamentalists have been known to roam TV channels on Sunday mornings, attracting few viewers while purveying for the most part an absolute religious exclusivism. Few but the faithful took note, and criticisms that occurred sporadically usually centered upon the matter of manipulation

of a small minority of the population. Mainline Christians, often not conversant with the intentions of TV evangelists, just did not take them seriously.

But now, with the emergence of the new breed of TV evangelists, the warnings of Everett Parker serve to underscore a real possibility that "reactionary and frankly illiberal" individuals may have discovered the means to manipulate the medium and, through it, the vast available audience. And even if Rice University Professor William Martin's recent study is correct in finding that at present the number of supporters of the TV evangelists is comparatively small, his findings should not allay concern over the future impact of electronic evangelism.

Historically this new religious movement appears to have been anticipated by Billy Graham. His radio show *Hour of Decision* consistently warned of dire consequences for the nation if Americans failed to turn to God and make decisions for Christ. His fundamentalism led him to identify particular nations, first Russia and then China, as the anti-Christ, thus driving him into commentary on foreign affairs. Further, his ideological alternative to communism became for him a touchstone of patriotism. When in 1968 he publicly cast his lot with candidate Richard Nixon, his political involvement became openly partisan.

Ranging across the nation, indeed the world, preaching "American Messianism," Graham became Protestantism's high priest, supported by liturgical church leaders who saw Graham as an appropriate leavening and evangelicals who viewed him as a gifted spokesman. Only a few thoughtful Christian leaders, such as Reinhold Niebuhr, were prepared to challenge his hegemony. Niebuhr warned an uninterested nation that the Nixonian Graham "has established a conforming religion by semi-officially inviting representatives of all the disestablished religions" to perform for the administrative family in the White House.

Yet Graham's career revealed two salient facts about TV religion: (1) there is a great deal of money in it; and (2) there is instant celebrity status and power available. The combination of these two phenomena suggested the potential for TV evangelism to enter "the power elite" and thereby exercise massive public influence.

For Graham the ideology was circumscribed by his awareness that his larger public was less committed to fundamentalism than he. Thus he was no advocate of a national fundamentalist theo-

cracy. He substituted a simplistic civil religion for his own obvious belief in biblical infallibility and the exclusive saving power of Jesus.

It was Graham's dual standard that generated considerable criticism and even ire among the religiously "pure," those literalist Christians who felt a sense of God-directed mission welling up inside themselves with respect to specific domestic and foreign policies. These were persons unprepared to accept a secular state and unwilling to act in cautious ways to achieve some moderate compromise for their God.

By the mid-seventies, some bright, active fundamentalists, recognizing themselves to be the "outs" in American church culture, still smarting from public ridicule dating back to the Scopes trial of 1925, resentful of their confinement to the Sunday-morning TV ghetto and conversant with TV technology (including the significance of cable and satellite), began a religious-broadcasting revolution. Their activity was based upon the Graham formula: TV religion means money and celebrity status, which leads to power.

Thus armed with an "infallible Word of God" and vocal leadership unaccustomed to compromise, a group of genuine religious fanatics is now the focus of national attention, particularly in the public pronouncements of Jerry Falwell, minister of the Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia. He and his compatriots, having revitalized the Sunday-morning television hours and expanded their ministry through other day parts and untold numbers of cable systems, are approaching a billion-dollar-a-year take. Some, like Falwell and Pat Robertson (*The 700 Club*), have established colleges for which they regularly solicit funds and students over the air. Falwell talks glibly of 50,000 students in the future plans for Liberty Baptist College. It and the Robertson college in Virginia Beach seek to capture thousands of committed youths for intensive indoctrination that will establish a missionary foothold of unparalleled proportions in the coming decade. A TV ministry augmented by local congregations led by faithful clergy trained by the masters will create a network of tremendous strength.

The TV successes, a result of skillful use of media by fundamentalist Christians, have created a significant force not only in American religious life but in the political arena as well. And in 1981 the forces of the so-called Moral Majority and other TV-oriented religiously fundamentalist groups are basking in the knowledge that

they had much to do with the defeat of perhaps a dozen senators and representatives whom they found doctrinally impure in 1980.

This political action has naturally exposed the fundamentalists to some severe criticism. There is grave concern, for not only are they calling for violations of the constitutional provision for church-state separation, they are also seeking to eliminate the principle of religious freedom by constitutional change. And the fundamentalists are guilty of misapplying facts when they argue that their activities are only the conservative version of the type of political action engaged in by Martin Luther King, Jr., the Berrigans and William Sloane Coffin in the fifties and sixties. The current debate is not a liberal-conservative one, and to construe it thus is to allow the new breed of evangelist too easy an escape from analysis. The Berrigans, King, Coffin and scores of other religious leaders differed with their conservative opponents on the breadth of constitutional guarantees of freedom and justice, not on the values of republican democracy and the Bill of Rights.

The present engagement is precisely on this point: leaders of the Moral Majority and the Christian Roundtable are advocating a form of theocracy; and, fully protected by the Bill of Rights, they are utilizing the public airwaves to spread that message. In this effort Falwell, Robertson and Jim Bakker, to name a representative group, have determined to manipulate the medium for a "holy end." The talk-show techniques of *The 700 Club* are well known, and the biblical banter is hardly distinguishable from late-night Carson-McMahon exchanges. Falwell uses a harder sell than Robertson, but his genius at employing electronic techniques to spread his message are extremely effective in eliciting support from those of the TV generation.

Much of the moral indignation expressed by these spokespersons for traditional values is directed against the fare offered by the networks. In January 1981, the group Christian Voice announced the formation of the Coalition for Better Television, intended "to eradicate morally offensive productions from the airwaves." Nevertheless, most religious stations make considerable money from reruns of syndicated network comedies and dramas. Pat Robertson's Portsmouth, Virginia, pilot station, WYHA-TV, has used more than three dozen series since 1977; and in the *TV Guide* of January 24-30, 1981, the station ran a full-page ad for *Wonder Woman* that placed consider-

able emphasis upon the fulsome figure of Lynda Carter, an obvious promo for males attracted by such attributes. Make no mistake, the TV evangelists are no less aware of what sells than their competitors.

In spite of the smokescreen being laid down by columnists who claim, in constitutional tones, that the Moral Majority has a perfect right to express its political views, free expression has never been the issue; of course Falwell has every right to speak his mind. The debate should be focused upon the ideological presuppositions being advocated. It appears that while affirming belief in pluralism, this new brand of Christian political activist seeks to restrict, through constitutional change, the rights of those who differ. At best the Moral Majority would replace religious and political freedom with toleration, a condition in which the minority is beholden to the majority for any exercise of freedom.

The distinction between human rights and right beliefs is at the heart of this discourse. Beginning in this country with Calvinist divine Roger Williams and continuing with James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, the tradition was established for a nation committed to emancipation, human dignity, justice and liberty. As John Adams noted, such a nation would serve as a model for "the slavish part of mankind all over the earth." The American Republic practices a secular morality influenced by many religious philosophies, and certainly the Judeo-Christian ethic stands in judgment on those areas where the American humanist ideals incorporated in the Constitution have been compromised.

Critiques of the social order emanating from churches and synagogues have traditionally been expansive and inclusive, seeking the broadest application of democracy consistent with constitutional guarantees. The Moral Majority, through its use of television, calls Americans to retreat from such a democratic ethic in the name of an exclusive deity who supposedly reveals his plans only to those who have defined him properly. Certainly these citizens are entitled to serve such a being, but attempts to pass restrictive laws in his name is a call for confrontation with the American experiment. Such narrow sentiments were a hallmark of the majority of Southern Christian leaders who developed a slave theology for the Confederacy in the 19th century.

Unlike the theocracy of the Massachusetts Bay Colony or the Church of England in the Virginia Colony, the

United States is a secular, pluralistic state charged with impartially guarding freedom for the religious and nonreligious alike. The laws of our land recognize crimes, not sins. Crimes are based upon human relationships, sins upon relationships between certain men and women and their particular versions of God. Perhaps the biblical distinction between love (*chesed/agape*) and narrow legalism may be useful here. Many of the TV evangelists would seemingly be pleased to assume the role of national priest, urging through legislation the establishment of their peculiar interpretations of the Bible, thereby providing a kind of national liturgy. Herein lies the fundamental difference between the Baptist minister Martin Luther King, Jr., and the recent advocate speaking for a presumed moral majority. King sought to preserve rights rather than impose right beliefs.

The national media were selectively sympathetic to King but handled him with far less deference than they did Graham. The latter, claiming divine initiative for his pronouncements, established a loftiness that intimidated the press. Apparently the working press, in particular television, has been inclined to accept Falwell and other evangelists as merely successors to Graham.

In so doing, however, competent journalists have failed to identify a crucial distinction—that unlike Graham's tactics, this new television blitz advances a political agenda that disregards established constitutional principles. Lacking theological knowledge, the press has stumbled, and by its failure to pose insightful questions, it has allowed Falwell to go almost unchallenged.

In 1980 Falwell coursed through *Meet the Press*, *The Today Show*, *Tomorrow*, *Donahue*, and the weekly meeting of The National Press Club without facing more than a handful of probing questions, most of them from Phil Donahue. Reporters have addressed Falwell, as they did Graham before him, as if they were attending one of his church services, thus encouraging little sermonettes—a point Falwell made himself on his *Old Time Gospel Hour* November 17, 1980, when he rejoiced in his many opportunities to "witness" on television. On October 12 on *Meet the Press*, Falwell was allowed to go unchallenged as he identified Vice President Mondale as a "glossed-over atheist," contradicted himself on his earlier call for censorship of commercial television, fogged over his admitted statement that "God does not hear the prayers of unredeemed Gentiles or Jews" and lumped all

humanists as atheistic. Only *Newsweek's* Kenneth Woodward asked informed and thoughtful questions; and since he stood alone, he came across as the dyspeptic rationalist attacking the man of God. Falwell nearly turned *Meet the Press* into an extension of *Old Time Gospel Hour*.

More quietly Pat Robertson and his *700 Club* are spreading, on a daily basis, over a huge network, the notion that the Christian way requires particular attitudes toward economic policy, foreign affairs and domestic laws. Less flamboyant and potentially much more powerful, with his own network, CBN, Robertson's subtle approach is no less doctrinaire and exclusive than Falwell's.

But certainly Falwell is the focus of current attention. It is he who told his followers that his Christian Bill of Rights should be signed by them to be presented to the new president; "and when we

do—we are going to ask him to commit himself to uphold these Biblical moral principles for the next four years."

Yet there are signs of a stirring in the television community in response to this use of the medium for propaganda purposes. While in no way denying the right of the evangelists to employ TV for the promulgation of their ideas, Norman Lear, long an advocate of civil liberties, has recently led the formation of People for the American Way, a movement designed to use television as a means of identifying the genuine commitments to diversity and justice in our history. Supported by clergy of diverse backgrounds, PAW is an encouraging sign of health.

Americans are watching a historic engagement. There are those on the one hand who would narrow the American dream, enforce prayer by law, invade individual privacy in the name of morality

and generally seek to impose their own definitions upon us all. Their opponents are the advocates of freedom and diversity, no matter what political label they endorse. Television may well turn out to be the means of joining these issues, the theater in which renewed attention may be directed to the words of Madison: "We must take alarm at the first experiment on our liberties." ■

ROBERT S. ALLEY, PhD, professor of humanities, teaching in the Department of Religion, and IRBY B. BROWN, PhD, professor of English, are both University of Richmond faculty members. The two scholars have collaborated in directing several television workshops in Virginia, have conducted courses on television and culture in Los Angeles each summer since 1977 and are now engaged in writing a volume on television and the family, funded by the Markle Foundation.

T.I.O. QUOTE FILE

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL: TELEVISION AND PRESSURE GROUPS

"I am a conservative and shall remain so -- despite the humiliating, mindless arrogance of those conservatives who would heap upon my head the sins of the world for having the audacity to care not only for my own rights, but for the rights of those who disagree with me as well.

"I dream of an America that will yet find it in its heart to warmly embrace its God-given Constitution, an America free of bigotry or intolerance. But I fear, genuinely fear, an America in which minorities must stifle their voices and lay their freedom at the altar of the heartless and selfish majorities."

-- Terence Day
Journalist, Elder of the Mormon Church
Civil Liberties, Feb. 1981

* * *

"While we are committed to acting as a positive influence on programming, we have to function in the marketplace. We're in the market to buy time, and not everything we buy will please every viewer. But that's the essence of the pluralistic society in which we live. We don't believe any one group should be able to dictate to all others what their choices should be, and we decline to meet (the Clean up TV campaign's) demands."

-- Kathleen MacDonough
Manager of Corporate Issues, General Foods
Marketing & Media Decisions, Jan. 1981

* * *

"Attempts to control newspapers and magazines, or radio and television, by threatening or boycotting the advertisers who appear in these media lead down a dangerous road. If efforts to subvert or destroy a medium's economic base are successful, the public's freedom of choice, as well as a free and diverse press, are jeopardized."

-- Peter Allport
President, Association of National Advertisers

* * *

"I don't want a self-appointed arbiter of taste telling me what I can or can't watch on television."

-- Walter Saunders
Rocky Mountain News

"The anti-sex campaign looks to me like a farm team to channel people into the right-wing big leagues. I keep remembering all the people who joined the Moral Majority because they were 'pro-family' only to discover they were now also being counted as pro-MX missiles. Morality may or may not be in the eyes of the beholder, but I'm not all that comfortable leaving the 'beholding' to someone else."

-- Ellen Goodman
TV Columnist
Washington Post, March 25, 1981

* * *

"Freedom of speech, the defense of the artist, is a two-edged sword, as the pressure groups, with their monitors and newsletters and boycotts, are now demonstrating to the people who schedule old movies and make new ones. Today, no Charlie Chan movies. Tomorrow, no movies or series that mention abortion or ghetto criminals. And the next day, no news, no truth that anyone finds unpleasant."

-- Richard Reeves
"Don't Let Pressure Groups Strangle Creativity," Panorama, May 1981

* * *

"Despite the fact that most Americans quite obviously feel very strongly about moral issues, it is unclear whether there is a moral majority in America, or a minority. Only 24% of the population feel that all ten of the activities previously discussed* are morally wrong, but only 3% say that none are morally wrong. There is clearly a huge majority of Americans who are concerned about moral issues but prefer to evaluate each issue on an individual basis."

*The ten activities are: adultery, use of hard drugs, homosexuality, having sex before the age of sixteen, lesbianism, pornographic movies, abortion, smoking marijuana, living with someone of the opposite sex without being married, sex between two single people.

-- The Connecticut Mutual Life Report on American Values in the 80's
Conducted by Research and Forecasts, Inc.;
Commissioned by Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Co.

"NFD's (the National Federation of Decency) narrow definition of sex on TV raises concern. Nothing is said of sexual stereotyping or what type of sex should be on TV or how much. The most troubling aspect is that the 'bottom line' to NFD's monitoring process is one broad question, 'Is this program constructive for your family?' Since all the monitors share a very conservative political outlook, it is obvious that their political biases will strongly affect the results."

-- Thomas Radecki, M.D.
NCTV Chairperson (National Coalition on
Television Violence)

* * *

"We don't favor boycotts. Boycotts hurt innocent people. In situations where an oppressed class has no legal recourse -- such as the California grape pickers -- yes, then I think a boycott is justifiable...but the middle class can take care of itself."

-- Dr. Everett C. Parker
Office of Communications
United Church of Christ

* * *

"...There's a little knob on that television set. It's the greatest invention since the image orthocon tube, and I think that it's a parent's responsibility (to use it).

"I think that going to the marketplace is very dangerous...bringing the advertiser, who is buying circulation, into the control room, into the newsroom, into the creative process. I have fought and others have fought for a quarter of a century to keep advertisers out of the creative process. They buy circulation, as you do in a newspaper. To bring them into the creative process, to scare them at the counter, is a witch's brew."

-- Fred Friendly
Former President of CBS News
Professor of Journalism, Columbia University

* * *

"None of us questions the right of any individual or any group to exercise freedom of speech in criticizing or objecting to programming...But it's an equal part of our responsibility to serve the needs of the entire audience, not just the self-proclaimed arbitrators of the nation's morals..."

"We cannot turn the clock back to please the Coalition; we cannot move the clock ahead in anticipation of new possibilities. Our challenge is to be responsible and responsive to today's needs of our diverse public."

-- Frederick S. Pierce
Executive Vice President
American Broadcasting Companies; Pres., ABC-TV

"We have seen repeatedly the brutal seizure and control of communications in authoritarian countries everywhere, and rightly deplore it. Democracies do it differently, by nibbling away through laws, through ideologically motivated court decisions, and by pressure from groups who want to suppress what they do not like. It is one freedom that cannot be qualified without imperiling the whole; the opening of one door leads to the opening of a thousand others.

"There is another kind of control to which all the media, individually and collectively, are subject -- and must be in a free society. Every citizen has the right to switch off his television set or change channels; to do the same with his radio; to not buy the newspaper he doesn't like, or the magazine or the book. It is utterly misleading to say that the choices are narrowing. Taken together, the media in America offer a diversity not even remotely equaled anywhere else on the planet -- more than any individual can cope with. These choices are increasing...

"At the moment, we still have the freedom to choose."

-- John Tebbel
"From Rags to Riches: The Media in
American Society"
Quarterly Journal, Library of Congress

* * *

"The Coalition for Better TV...is trying to dictate what the American public may or may not watch on television. Perhaps no one will miss the first program forced off the air in the name of morality. But the New Right's censorship crusade will not stop there. What will be the next target? A production of 'A Streetcar Named Desire'? A documentary on teenage pregnancy? The news?"

-- Peggy Charren
Action for Children's Television

* * *

"...No matter what high-sounding euphemisms the Coalition chooses to masquerade behind, achieving its goals would amount to censorship."

-- Howard Rosenberg
Los Angeles Times

* * *

"If all Printers were determined not to print anything till they were sure it would offend no body, there would be very little printed."

-- Benjamin Franklin

"A self-righteous people will find it difficult to deal with a righteous God."

-- Mineo Katagiri
Minister of the United Church of Christ
Northern California Conference

* * *

"When a partisan of the New Right declares that a specific position is 'of God' of 'the Christian view,' a move has been made from political-moral judgment to divine oracle. A human opinion is elevated to the status of revelation -- a violation of the sovereignty of God."

-- Gabriel Fackre
Professor, Andover Newton Theological School

* * *

"A self-proclaimed 'Moral Majority,' and its satellite or client groups, cunning in the use of a native blend of old intimidation and new technology, threaten the values (of our democracy). Angry at change, rigid in the application of chauvinistic slogans, absolutistic in morality, they threaten through political pressure or public denunciation whoever dares to disagree with their authoritarian positions. Using television, direct mail and economic boycott, they would sweep before them anyone who holds a different opinion..."

"What disgusts me so much about the 'morality' seeping out of the ground around our feet is that it would deny the legitimacy of differentness. We should all be dismayed with the shredding of the spiritual fabric of our society, with the urging to selfishness and discrimination all around us. We should be concerned that so much of our political and religious leadership acts intimidated for the moment and will not say with clarity that this most recent denial of the legitimacy of differentness is a radical assault on the very pluralism -- of peoples, political beliefs, values, forms of merit and system of religion -- our country was founded to welcome and foster."

-- A. Bartlett Giamatti
President, Yale University
Address, August, 1981

* * *

"One of the great strengths of our political system always has been our tendency to keep religious issues in the background. By maintaining the separation of church and state, the United States has avoided the intolerance which has so divided the rest of the world with religious wars..."

"The religious factions that are growing in our land are not using their religious clout with wisdom...The uncompromising position of these groups is a divisive element that could tear apart the very spirit of our representative system, if they gain sufficient strength."

"I'm frankly sick and tired of the political preachers across this country telling me as a citizen that if I want to be a moral person, I must believe in 'A,' 'B,' 'C' and 'D.' Just who do they think they are? And from where do they presume to claim the right to dictate their moral beliefs to me?...I will fight them every step of the way if they try to dictate their moral convictions to all Americans in the name of 'conservatism.'...They must learn to make their views known without trying to make their views the only alternatives."

-- U.S. Senator Barry Goldwater (Arizona)
The Congressional Record, Sept. 15, 1981

Voices from critical activists:

"After the Christian majority takes control, PLURALISM will be seen as immoral and EVIL, and the state will not permit anybody the right to practice evil."

-- Gary Potter
Catholics for Christian Political Action

* * *

"People want leadership. They don't know what to think themselves. They want to be told what to think by those of us here close to the front."

-- Rev. Robert Billings
National Christian Action Coalition

Liberty Baptist College

Box 20000
LYNCHBURG, VA. 24506

(804) 237-5961

DIVISION OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

April 26, 1983

OK.
But I take
no honoraria.
JAG

Mr. Morton Blackwell
Special Assistant to the President
for Public Liaison
The White House
Old Executive Office Building, Room 134
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

Beginning Fall Semester 1983, Liberty Baptist College is taking an exciting new approach to political science. I am honored to extend an official invitation to you to become, every semester, part of this enterprise to train tomorrow's conservative leaders.

Liberty Baptist College has launched an ambitious internship program. Each semester, twenty students -- sixty students annually -- will spend a semester working full-time on Capitol Hill, in government agencies, or with conservative lobbying and research groups, while earning twelve hours academic credit. This program, ~~as you might imagine~~, is rapidly becoming the centerpiece of political science at LBC, and we are reviewing the entire curriculum.

With funding from the Moral Majority Foundation, our introductory course in political science for freshmen and sophomores will ~~in~~ ~~the future~~ be taught by experts brought in from Washington -- by men and women of ~~power and influence~~ and conservative principles, and with proven track records in the real world of politics. These experts will actually teach in the classroom, and the students will take notes and be held accountable for the material covered. Required readings suggested by the guest lecturers will be placed on reserve or copies distributed as appropriate.

I have scheduled this course to meet every Tuesday and Thursday. There will be two sections: one will meet in the morning from 10:50 to 12:05, and another will meet the same day immediately following, from 12:15 to 1:30. Speakers will fly in the night before, come to the campus the next day, speak to the back-to-back classes, and fly back to Washington that afternoon. We will, of course, pay air-fare and overnight accommodations, plus an honorarium of \$100 per visit.

Letter to Mr. Blackwell

Page 2

My working syllabus for this course is enclosed to give you ~~some~~^{an} idea of the approach we are taking and how your contribution would fit into the course ~~as a whole~~. The topic and date I have in mind for you (circled on the syllabus) is as follows:

October 11 - "Political Organizations"

As soon as we can pin down the Fall Semester, I will be back in touch for Spring Semester. It is our intention to take this approach to introductory political science every semester.

I sincerely hope that you will be able to work ~~participation in this course~~ into your schedule. ~~I believe that~~ in the years ahead, as we see more and more bright, young, well-educated conservatives ready to assume command posts of leadership in Washington, we will all be very glad for this kind of course and for the innovative political science program at Liberty ~~Baptist College~~.

For the cause of conservatism,

Jerry H. Combee

Jerry H. Combee, Chairman
Dept. of History and Political Science

JHC/mb1

Enclosure

P.S. Mr. Blackwell, please accept my deepest thanks for what you have already done for us. Taking Ed Crowell on as an intern gave our entire program a level of excitement that it otherwise could not have achieved, and I was so grateful that you took time from your busy schedule to speak to our interns last week. Let me say again what a super talk you gave and I wish you well in the kind of political strategy you are proposing.

cc: Dr. Ronald S. Godwin
Vice President and Chief Operations Officer
Moral Majority, Inc.

Mr. Blackwell

TENTATIVE SYLLABUS

POLI 200

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

PROF. COMBEE

- I. Orientation: The Study of Politics at LBC -- Prof. Combee August 30
- II. Politics as A Christian Calling
 - A. The Crisis of Statesmanship -- Prof. Combee Sept. 1
 - B. How to Get a Job in Washington -- Sept. 6
 - **Richard Dingman - national political consultant, former Director of Republican Study Committee, U.S. House of Representatives
- III. Understanding Conservatives
 - A. Articulating Your Conservatism -- Sept. 8
 - **Richard Dingman
 - B. The Blessings of Liberty -- Sept. 13
 - **Congressman Phil Crane (R-Ill.) -- Recognized conservative leader in the House of Representatives
 - C. Christianity and the Constitution -- Prof. Combee
 1. Christ and Freedom -- Sept. 15
 2. The American Constitution and the New Science of Politics -- Sept. 20, 22, 27

TEST ---Sept. 29
- IV. Politics Today
 - A. Election Strategies -- Oct. 4
 - **Paul Weyrich -- The Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress
 - B. The Mentality of the Legislator -- Oct. 6
 - **Paul Weyrich
 - C. Political Organizations -- Oct. 11
 - **Morton Blackwell -- Office of the Special Assistant to the President for Public Liason
 - D. Political Action Committees -- Oct. 13
 - **Bob McAdams -- Asst. Director, Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress

E. Lobbying: What It Is and How You Do It -- Oct. 25

1. Professional Lobbying

2. Grassroots Lobbying

****Richard Dingman**

F. How a Bill Becomes a Law -- Oct. 27

****Richard Dingman**

V. Issues of the Eighties

A. The Moral Majority

1. Origins and purposes -- Nov. 1

2. The Moral Agenda -- Nov. 3

****Dr. Ron Godwin**, Vice President & Chief Operations Officer, Moral Majority, Inc.

*****TEST***** --- Nov. 8

B. National Defense

1. Defense Policy Today --Nov. 10

****Heritage Foundation** Policy Analyst

2. High Frontier -- Nov. 15

****General Al Knight** (USA ret.)

C. Economic Policy

1. Government Policy Toward the Economy Today -- Nov. 17

****Michael Horowitz**, Counsel to Office of Management and Budget, White House

2. Prerequisites of Economic Growth -- Nov. 29

****Larry Butler**, U.S. Chamber of Commerce

D. The Moral & Social Issues

1. Current Issues in Education -- Dec. 1

****Eileen Gardner**, Heritage Foundation Policy Analyst

2. Abortion -- Dec. 6

****Peter Gemma**, National Pro-Life PAC

3. Government and the Family -- Dec. 8

**Connie Marshner, Free Congress Foundation

FINAL EXAM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 12, 1983

MEMORANDUM TO: FRED F. FIELDING

FROM: Morton C. Blackwell *mb*

SUBJECT: Letter from Dr. Jerry Falwell

I attach a copy of a letter directed to the President from Dr. Jerry Falwell regarding the impending deportation of a 74-year old California woman who "has been a legitimate resident in the U.S. for over 35 years."

I am wondering if the original was sent to you for response?

I would appreciate any advice you might give me regarding what I should tell Dr. Falwell about this matter.

MCB:jet

1 Attachment a/s

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM FOR FAITH RYAN WHITTLESEY

FROM:

MORTON C. BLACKWELL *MB*

SUBJECT:

Meeting with Dr. Jerry Falwell

At 2:45 today I will be with Dr. Falwell and you in your office. At Dr. Falwell's request we are adding Dr. Ron Godwin, Executive Director of the Moral Majority to the meeting and briefing later in the Situation Room,

Yesterday I spoke to General Bovarie on the NSC staff. He is producing sets of talking points on the nuclear freeze and other defense issues. He says these should be more useful to Dr. Falwell than currently available materials.

I have requested from Lee DeLorme at DOD public affairs office four enlarged graphs and charts I found in the Secretary of Defense's February 1 presentation to the Senate Armed Services Committee. These are the best graphics currently available.

It is clear that we need to develop more and better graphics specifically on the nuclear freeze issue.

As to text, there is such a mass of data that our best hope is that NSC or DOD experts can give us more marketable material. I will work with them on this and try promptly to produce the condensed text requested by Dr. Falwell if General Bovarie's product today is inadequate.

499 So. Capitol Street
Suite 101
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 484-7511



THE MORAL MAJORITY, INC.

M E M O

TO: Morton Blackwell (cc: Mrs. Faith Whittlesey)
FROM: Dick Dingman *RBD*
DATE: November 4, 1983
RE: Tuition Tax Credits

Today I attended a hastily called meeting of the TTC coalition and Sen. Dole's senior staff. Mr. Don Susswein was the chief spokesman for Dole.

He began by saying there was "a problem" with using the Math-Science bill as a TTC vehicle, notwithstanding "our agreement" to use it. We quickly told him we had no such agreement and did not want Math-Science used.

Susswein then tossed the ball to us saying that time was running short and there wasn't much left to use as the vehicle. Bill Barr said selection was their problem, not ours. Various bills were then discussed.

I asked Susswein if he sensed any sort of a "full court press" on this issue from Ken Duberstein. He said he has not discussed it with Ken but has talked with Kable several times. It was clear from his response there was no "full court press." We clearly spelled out the nature of our meeting with the President and Ken's commitment to the "full court press."

Susswein played the role of a loyal soldier going through the motions but did not seem genuinely committed to success. We made it clear we were reluctant to choose any specific vehicle as the best because there might be political nuances unknown to us. However, we felt the Women's Pension Equity bill might be best, with some revenue bill next best. Two or three times he raised the possibility of the unemployed health benefits bill. We strongly discouraged that vehicle.

In summary, he seemed in agreement with pursuing the Women's Pension Equity bill as the best choice.

Dept. of History and Political Science
Liberty Baptist College
Lynchburg, VA 24506

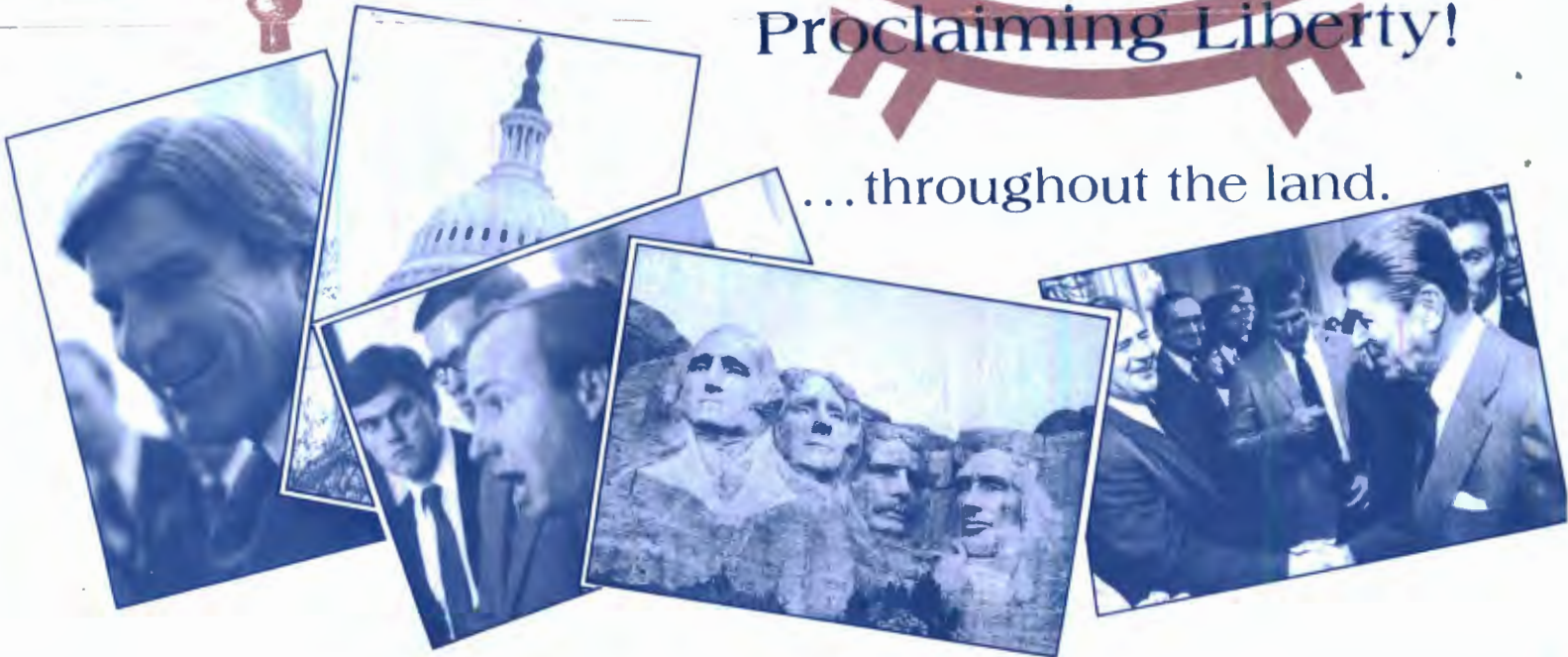
History and Political Science

at

Liberty Baptist College

Proclaiming Liberty!

...throughout the land.



DO YOU ENJOY SUBJECTS LIKE HISTORY AND POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT?

BUT DO YOU WONDER: Can you get an accredited degree in history or political science from a fundamental Christian college, and will you be able to get a job?

YES! — on both counts... at Liberty Baptist College in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Liberty Baptist College is a miracle school... a school greatly used and blessed of God.

Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and schools, LBC is training and preparing a generation of young leaders to go out into all walks of life and literally shake the world for God. Already LBC graduates are manning command posts of leadership in America — in government, in education, wherever the job calls for drive and determination, vision and values.!

I am interested in Liberty Baptist College.
Please send me an application for admission.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____
SCHOOL CURRENTLY ATTENDING _____
GRADUATION DATE _____

Return this form to: Admissions
Liberty Baptist College
Lynchburg, VA 24506

History and
Political Science

HISTORY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE AT LBC

The Department of
History and Political
Science at Liberty
Baptist College is unique
in the world of
fundamental Christian
colleges - - -

- - - Action - oriented curriculum:
- Washington Internships Year-Round
- Spend a semester working in Washington getting valuable job experience and employment opportunities
- Campaign Management experience
- - - **NINE** full-time faculty... 2/3's with Ph.D.'s
- - - Offering majors or minors in:
HISTORY
POLITICAL SCIENCE
HISTORY EDUCATION
SOCIAL SCIENCE ED.
- - - Preparing students for careers in
 - Civil Service
 - Foreign Service
 - FBI, CIA, U.S. intelligence
 - U.S. Military
 - Teaching
 - Campaign Mgmt. & Staff
- - - Preparing students for graduate study in
 - Law
 - Public Administration
 - History
 - Political Science
 - Management
 - Area Missions
 - Seminary

★FACULTY★

Boyd C. Rist
Chairman, Div. of Social Science
(Ph.D. Candidate - Univ. of Va.)
U.S. History Middle Period, 1760-1860

Jerry H. Combee
Chairman, Dept. of History
& Political Science
(Ph.D., Cornell Univ.)
Political Ideas

Mark W. Steinhoff
(Ph.D., New York Univ.)
Ancient, Medieval, Oriental

Douglas B. John
(Ph.D., Univ. of Kentucky)
Modern Europe

Barry Fowle
(Ph.D., Univ. of Maryland)
Colonial and 20th Century

Gordon M. Patric
(Ph.D., Univ. of Illinois)
National Security

Stephen P. Witham
(M.A., Univ. of Notre Dame)
American Government

★Adjunct Professors:★

Harry E. Caltagirone
(Ph.D., North Western Univ.)
International Relations

William Matheny
(Ph.D. Texas Christian)
History of Christianity
Latin America

Cline E. Hall
(Ph.D., Univ. of Tennessee)
American South

Donald Rickards
(Ph.D., Hartford Seminary)
Islam, N. Africa

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Write, call, or visit
Prof. Jerry Combee, Chairman of
the Department of History and
Political Science. (804) 237-5961,
ext. 308
Liberty Baptist College
Lynchburg, VA 24506



LIBERTY BAPTIST COLLEGE

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Digital Collections

This is not a presidential record. This marker is used as an administrative marker by the Ronald W. Reagan Presidential Library Staff. This marker identifies that there was an object in this folder that could not be scanned due to its size.
