

for Religion

OFFICE OF PUBLIC LIAISON
RELIGIOUS OUTREACH
PARTIAL SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES
October 20, 1994

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Presidential Meetings

- o National Prayer Breakfast (2/3/94)
- o U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops: Oval Office meeting with Bishops Keeler, Pilla, McCarrick and Monsignor Lynch (3/5/93)
- o National Association of Evangelicals briefing (4/25/94) (See attached list)
- o Youth for Christ/USA (7/29/94)
- o Religious Breakfasts

August 30, 1993 (100 guests)
October 18, 1993 (Focus: Christian Evangelicals--12 guests)
November 30, 1993 (Focus: AIDS---14 interfaith guests)
August 9, 1994 (Focus: Civility---11 guests)
September 8, 1994 (60 guests)

General Briefings/Meetings

- o Apostolic Coalition (Evangelical Pentecostal churches)---briefing on health care (5/6/94)
- o National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) Federal Seminar ---briefing to college students (1/25/94)
- o Shared Vision----briefing to religious leaders supporting RFRA (7/14/93)
- o Wesley Theological Seminary: Briefed 20 theological students on the administration's domestic policy (9/19/94)
- o Briefing on Haiti with 10 members from religious community (Sept. 1994)

Social Events

- o Signing of RFRA (November 16, 1993)
- o Bill Signing Ceremonies
- o State Visits----Representatives from the religious community have been invited and attended all State arrival ceremonies
- o Middle East Peace Signing Ceremony
- o Dinner & Screening of "Abraham"

Media

- o Religious Media Roundtable with the President (12/16/93): Religious News Service, Madison Broadcasting Group, Associated Baptist Press, National Catholic Reporter, Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Christianity Today; First Thing, Baptist News Service, Christian Century, Catholic News Service.
- o Background briefing on RFRA Update to media (September 1993)
- o President interview with Christianity Today reporters
- o President interview with Peggy Wehmeyer of ABC World News Tonight (Aired: March 22, 1994)
- o Baptist Press Briefing with President (October 3, 1994)



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REMARKS BY GOVERNOR BILL CLINTON
B'NAI B'RITH 36TH BIENNIAL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 9, 1992

Thank you very much. It's an honor to join you today for your 36th annual convention. For nearly a century and a half, B'nai B'rith has set the standard of this nation for community service, individual responsibility, and opposition to every form of bigotry and intolerance. I want to thank President Schiner for his kind invitation to be with you today, and my long-time friend, Lynn Cutler, for her generous introduction.

A few years back I was the honoree at the B'nai B'rith dinner in Hot Springs, Arkansas, where I grew up, so I'm an old friend of your organization. Today we join together once again to pay tribute to your extraordinary contributions to the struggle for justice here in America and around the world. You've been there to help those in need in your own neighborhoods, establishing local volunteer efforts, helping the blind, settling refugees from the former Soviet Union, combating the scourge of drugs, and working to strengthen the education of young Americans.

Even when I was growing up in Arkansas, I knew the efforts of B'nai B'rith. Way back in 1914 B'nai B'rith opened the Levi Hospital in my hometown of Hot Springs, and today, because of your generous support, that hospital has become a major center for the treatment of arthritis and related diseases as well as a center for the rehabilitation of a wide variety of ailments, serving hundreds of patients every year without concern for their ability to pay.

There's also a B'nai B'rith senior citizens housing complex in downtown Hot Springs, two synagogues and a thriving Jewish community. So I grew up with a keen appreciation for the work of B'nai B'rith and I've always admired your commitment to helping others.

Wherever human tragedy strikes, at home or abroad, you've been there to provide assistance. You moved swiftly to address the crisis in Somalia, launched your own drive to help raise funds to stave off starvation of millions of Somalis.

You were there to help the earthquake victims in San Francisco, Mexico City, Iran and Armenia. You provided aid to cyclone victims in Bangladesh and pressed the world to act against the atrocities in Bosnia and you moved very quickly to respond to the urgently needed assistance for the victims of Hurricane Andrew.

What guides each of you is a belief in a covenant that we all share to enrich the lives of those around you, to fight bigotry, to protect liberty. As the high

holidays approach, each of you renews your commitment to your own covenant and as the shofar marks this period of reflection, let us join together to renew our dedication to the values we share in common.

America and Israel share a special bond. Our relationship is unique among all nations. Like America, Israel is a strong democracy, a symbol of freedom, an oasis of liberty, a home to the oppressed and the persecuted.

Yet in this world where the cold war has ended, peace is still a long way away in the Middle East. Israel is still surrounded by nations in pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, still at risk of Scud attacks by Saddam Hussein, and now facing new, more advanced Scuds from Syria. Still suffering the economic hardships of the Arab boycott, still waiting for an offer of peace from her Arab neighbors.

The current round of peace negotiations taking place in Washington is the best chance in a decade of bringing a lasting peace to the region.

When I met with Prime Minister Rabin last month in Washington, I made clear to him my determination to continue the peace process, if elected. I want to be very clear about this: there will be no hiatus in the current negotiations.

The recent elections in Israel have given this new government a mandate to move forward and Prime Minister Rabin has wasted no time in breathing new life into the negotiations. He's agreed to stop all political settlement activity and shift the funds to spending on infrastructure and education in Israel. He's freed 800 Arab prisoners and reversed 11 deportation orders of Palestinians.

He's pledged a gradual reopening of streets in what have been some of the most violent commercial and residential areas. He's eased restrictions on Arab laborers entering Israel. Israel has reaffirmed its recognition of the U.N. resolutions that are the foundations of the peace process and specifically applied them to the negotiations with Syria and Israel. And it now has under consideration a plan for full autonomy for the Palestinians that includes early elections.

Now it is time for the other side to reciprocate.

The peace negotiations will no doubt take time, but there is a simple step the Arabs should have taken long ago--an end to their illegal boycott against Israel. That boycott is economic warfare and that war must end now. It is time the administration made it clear that the United States will no longer turn a blind eye to this practice, by putting an end to U.S. government contracts with anyone who participates in the boycott. That is why I support Senator Al Gore's initiative to prohibit Defense Department contracts with any foreign companies that participate in the Arab League's boycott against Israel.

We need an administration that will promote action to stop the spread of dangerous missiles in the Middle East, and a strong international effort, and tough sanctions to keep weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of nations like Iran, Iraq, Syria and Libya.

I do not believe we ought to pressure Israel into making unilateral concessions in the peace process as this administration has tried to do. I believe we must stand by Israel in its historic effort to integrate thousands, and hundreds of thousands of refugees into its society, and I believe the United States should

serve as a catalyst and an honest broker in the peace negotiations. For in the end only Israel, the Palestinians, and the Arab nations can make lasting peace with one another.

The United States must not waver in its financial, security, and moral commitments to Israel. That is why I said early on in my campaign: it is in our nation's best interest to continue military and economic assistance to Israel, because this vital aid encourages long-term stability in the region and demonstrates United States' commitment to Israel's security and sovereignty.

I am especially disturbed by the long-term outlook for the spread of weapons of mass destruction. It is very menacing. That means that our commitment must include not only an effort to reduce this spread, but a reaffirmation of our strong commitment to maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge over its foes.

The sight of children huddled in basements with gas masks during the Gulf War brought home to every American just how vulnerable Israel is and just how volatile the region is.

Clearly we must meet our security commitments to our coalition partners in the Gulf. But any actions must be taken in close consultation with the Government of Israel. And arms sales must not undermine our commitment to Israel's qualitative edge.

As I have said repeatedly, any sale of F-15s to Saudi Arabia must only go forward in this context. I believe we can -- and should -- provide for the adequate defenses of our coalition partners in the region in a way that does not threaten Israel's security.

As I have said, I would support the sale of some versions of the F-15's to Saudi Arabia. But we must not sell any offensive version of the F-15s to Saudi Arabia that could threaten Israel, tilt the military balance, or erode Israel's qualitative military edge.

There is another threat to Israel that has gone long unaddressed. It is a threat that can weaken Israel militarily, economically and politically. It can hinder our ability to respond to crises that may affect Israel. That threat is the weakening American economy. Without a growing economy, without a strong, stable, and secure American middle class, America's commitment to Israel will always be under pressure.

It is time we had a president who will put our country back to work again, get our country moving forward again, have an America where our jobs are growing and our incomes are growing, not shrinking.

Senator Gore and I have a plan to expand the economy, to create jobs and strengthen our middle class and reduce poverty. It recognizes that our first foreign policy priority and our first domestic priority must be one and the same: a revitalized economy. For we can not be strong abroad if we are not strong at home.

Our plan creates millions of new jobs. We will rebuild our roads and bridges, we'll convert defense-based industries into peace time centers of cutting edge technology. We'll take every dollar by which we cut defense and put it back into

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the economy to create jobs for the 21st century. We'll give new incentives to the private sector to create manufacturing jobs and jobs in small business.

In short, we will put America back to work again. Not with more trickle down economics, not by going back to tax and spend, but by going forward to invest, to educate, to cooperate, to compete, and to grow.

Under our plan, health care will become a right, not a privilege. We must control the health care costs that are crippling our economy, ballooning our deficit, weakening the private sector. And we must ensure that every American has access to quality care.

And our plan will begin on the first day of our inauguration, not the last two months before our effort to secure reelection.

But you and I know this election is about more than the state of our economy and the government's responsibility to provide every American a decent chance at a decent way of life. It is also about the American spirit.

X About what kind of country we want to be and what kind of values we choose to cherish and to pass on to our children. R

Frankly, I'm deeply concerned by the cynicism, the intolerance, the ugliness that threatens our society today.

And no one knows better than you the danger of bigotry, anti-Semitism and intolerance that is on the rise, not only in America, but also abroad. Your own Anti-Defamation League has been at the forefront of the struggle against hatred and bigotry for nearly half a century. You understand the threat to our society of skinheads on the rampage, the surge of neo-Nazism at the extreme fringes of our own country, and the rise in hate crimes according to your own ADL statistics.

We're all aware of the troubling rise of anti-Semitism in the former communist bloc. Across the region neo-Nazis flourish, Jewish cemeteries are desecrated, and immigrants attacked.

Within the last two weeks in Germany a holocaust memorial and an immigrant center were bombed. And anti-Semitic organizations like Pamyat in Russia are on the rise. It is the responsibility of our leaders to counter intolerance, bigotry and hatred.

As president, my commitment to opposing fear and hate and prejudice will not bend with the prevailing political wind.

It will be strong, steady, and certain.

President Bush's press conference on September 12th, 1990 was one of the worst days in the history of our democracy. His callous remarks against the American Jewish community and its efforts to participate in our system of democracy were an affront to the basic right of all Americans to speak freely.

I think patriotism requires all of us to love our country enough to right its wrongs. Patriotism is not silent in the face of wrong-headed policy, it is vocal. And while others criticize you, I applaud your patriotism.

A Clinton-Gore administration will never give sanction to intolerance and bigotry.

I must say I was also deeply disturbed by the tone of the first two days of the Republican convention in Houston, where it seemed that the Republicans were more interested in dividing the American people by claiming that some of us have values while others don't, rather than in uniting us in a common effort to overcome our problems.

* I will never do that, and you will not see a Democratic convention driving that kind of stake between the American people. I was raised in a different faith than most of you here. But we were both raised in a tradition which champions tolerance and which defends freedom.

* We both have absolute faith in the primacy of each individual's conscience and judgment. We believe everyone ought to have the freedom to worship God in his or her own way. We believe in the strength our country and our churches and synagogues draw from the constitutional separation between church and state.

That's another reason why this election is so terribly important. We desperately need to bring this country together, to redefine our covenant to one another, to reaffirm the relationship of neighbor to neighbor, family to family, this generation to the next.

We need to solve our common problems and move our nation forward together. We can and we must create a nation and a government we will be proud to leave to our children. We cannot have progress without restoring our sense of community. Whether we like it or not, we're going up or down together.

If we're serious about what this country means and can yet mean, then we know America is not just a place, it's an idea. An idea cherished and given life by Puritans and Catholics, by Jews and Baptists, by Republicans and Democrats, by women and men, by people of all colors, of all races, of all religions.

That means an America where hatred and bigotry are not tolerated, an America where we have a Supreme Court that will respect our Constitution, protect a woman's right to choose and protect the rights of all Americans.

* A Supreme Court that will free us of the need for Congress to overturn ill-advised rulings with legislation such as the Civil Rights Restoration Act and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

If we are serious about our covenant for a better America, then there is one sure place where all of us can meet. The one thing that most readily unites us across all the lines that divide us--it's our concern, our love, our hope for our children.

So let us join now to give our children enough faith in the beauty of the idea of America, that they can make it theirs, too.

This is a mission that guided the founders of our nation. It is the responsibility of our generation to carry on that dream. It was that idea which brought me and my wife to embrace the HIPPO Program from Israel in our state, to make it the largest program outside Israel in the world, so that we could give our poorest

children a chance at a better future.

Let me remind you of an incident that occurred when the delegations to the constitutional convention gathered in Philadelphia in 1787.

A time when most of the states still had laws requiring anyone who held public office to be a Christian. Some states even specified that they had to be Protestant, believe in the divine inspiration of the scriptures, or believe in the trinity. A man named Jonas Phillips felt the injustice of this practice so strongly that he wrote a letter to the convention delegates.

I am one of the people called Jews of the city of Philadelphia, he said. He did not think it right, he said, that any American should be singled out because of his or her religion, especially since he and many other Jews had been, quote, true and faithful patriots during the revolution.

Eventually the framers of the Constitution agreed and declared that there should be no religious qualification for holders of federal office.

One's relationship to God they said was and ought to be entirely separate from one's service to country. When Jonas Phillips wrote to the constitutional convention in 1787, he ended his letter with a prayer. May the people of the United States rise up as a great and young lion; may God extend peace to them and their seed after them, so long as the sun and moon endureth.

We are closer to that dream because of the important and committed work of B'nai B'rith. Let us join together now in our common covenant to begin the work of changing and rebuilding our country. Let us build a nation that our seed will honor as long as the sun and the moon endureth.

Next year will mark the 150th anniversary of B'nai B'rith. It's hard to predict the future, especially in my line of work. But this I'll promise. If you'll invite me, I'll be honored to celebrate your 150th birthday with you in Washington. Thank you and God bless you.

Thank you.

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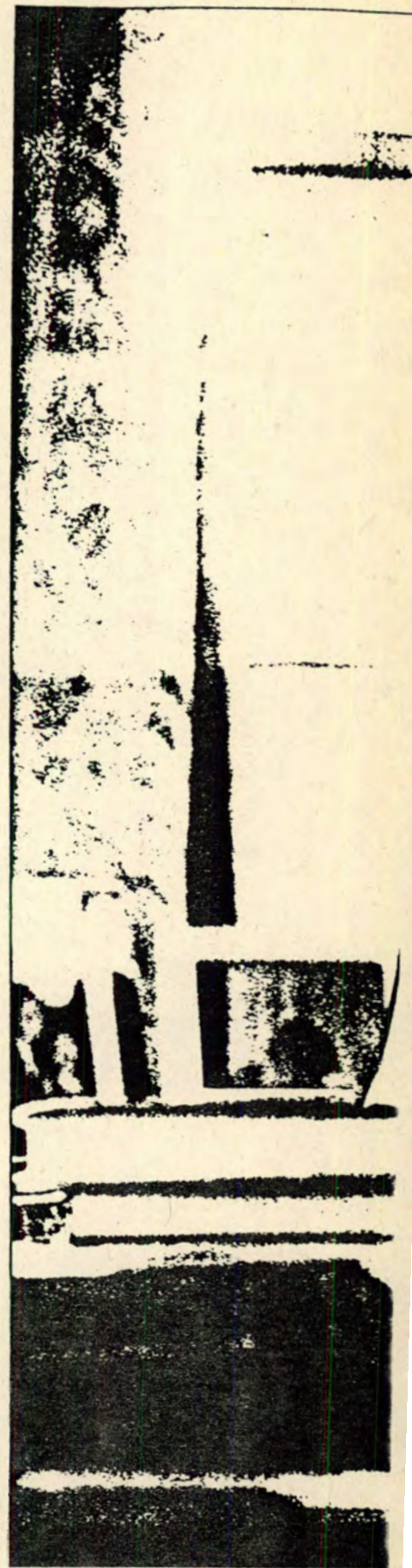
The Riddle of Bill Clinton's Faith

PHILIP YANCEY

President Bill Clinton's relationship with evangelicals has become a major news story featured in such media as National Review, New Republic, and ABC World News Tonight. Why is he opening White House doors to a group that by and large has not supported him with their votes? Some Christian leaders (and some journalists) have called it a cynical political attempt to confuse and divide an important Republican constituency. Others see his contacts with evangelical leaders as consistent with his prepresidential religious life. And many evangelicals doubt the sincerity of Clinton's faith because of his positions on key issues.

CHRISTIANITY TODAY asked Editor-at-Large Philip Yancey to review the controversy. Besides participating in a well-publicized White House gathering last fall, Yancey also recently joined Executive Editor David Neff in a private interview with the President that focused mainly on the topic of abortion.

Five separate times when conversation has turned to the President I have heard a comment like this: "No way he's a Christian! All that religious talk is just fake." When it comes to Bill Clinton, I sense in many Christians a feeling beyond anger, something closer to betrayal. Many





What are we
to make
of a pro-choice
President who is
reaching out to
evangelicals?

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evangelicals felt outrage during Clinton's first few weeks in office as he announced new policies easing abortion restrictions and expanding homosexual rights, and appointed staff members who seemed insensitive or even hostile to the religious community. More than a year later, they still wonder whether the President is merely posing as a Christian.

Recently, Clinton has made deliberate efforts to reach out to evangelicals. Several leaders have spent the night at the White House, and the President has hosted at least five breakfast meetings involving key evangelicals. My report in this magazine about one of those meetings sparked a flood of angry responses. "You say Clinton has biblical knowledge," said one caller, "well, so does the Devil! You people got snowed." Numerous letter writers contended that evangelicals were wrong even to meet with the President; six drew parallels with Adolf Hitler, who used pastors for his own purposes.

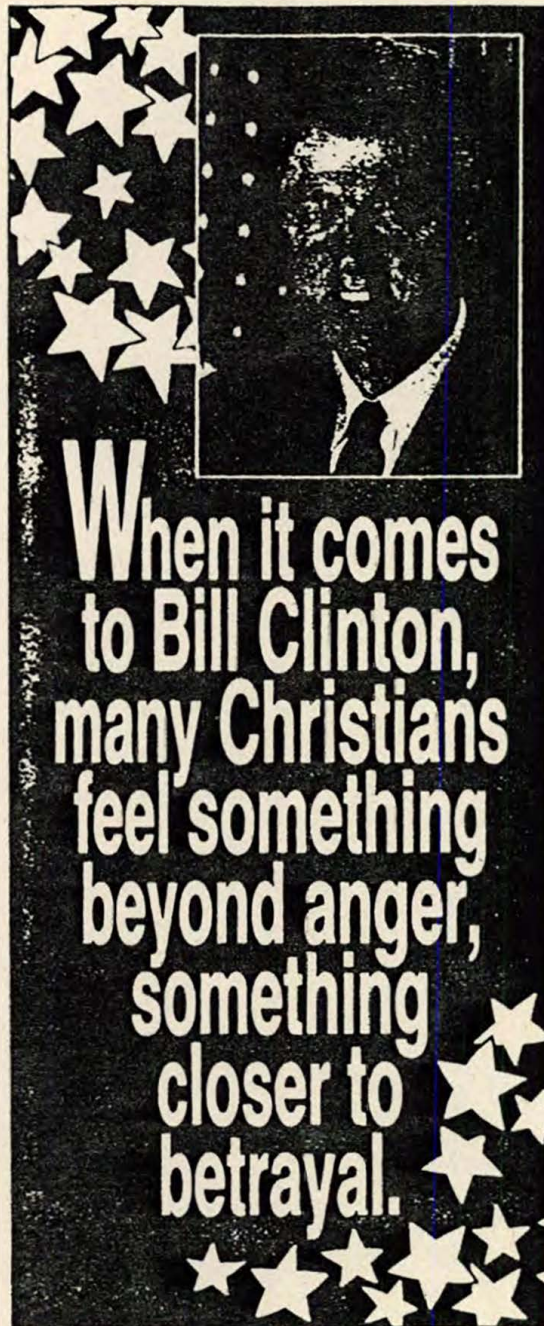
Clinton's critics remain unimpressed by religious words and other tokens of faith. One respected national leader wrote me that evangelicals are being "used effectively, although unwittingly, by the White House to confuse conservative Christians and divide the body of Christ." Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council says simply, "Judge by what he does, not what he says."

Whatever else one may say about it, Bill Clinton's faith is definitely not a cre-

ation of White House spin doctors. He grew up in Bible Belt Arkansas in an era when ministers still conducted school assemblies and students read Bible passages over the loudspeaker every morning. Except for his grandparents, his family was nonreligious. His step-

father regularly got drunk and beat his wife; once he was arrested for firing a gun into the wall of his house. Partly to escape this domestic chaos, Bill began attending the Park Place Baptist Church from the age of eight.

Every Sunday morning young Bill Clinton would put on a suit and walk a



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mile down the sidewalks of Hot Springs to church, clutching his leather Bible. At age ten he made a public profession of faith and was baptized. A year later Clinton asked a Sunday-school teacher to drive him 50 miles to Little Rock to attend a Billy Graham crusade. He ad-

mired the evangelist, ~~but~~ resisting pressure to segregate his ~~crusade~~, and from then on Clinton set ~~aside~~ nickels and dimes to send to ~~Graham~~. Schoolteachers thought Bill himself might grow up to be an evangelist.

As he attended Georgetown, Yale, and then Oxford universities, Clinton's religious fervor cooled. He married Hillary Rodham, returned to Arkansas to settle, and became the youngest governor in the nation. He ~~had~~ an unbroken string of successes until 1980 when, in a stunning upset, he ~~lost~~ his bid for reelection. Clinton ~~felt~~ depressed and aimless. Problems in the marriage surfaced, and rumors about Bill's alleged extramarital affairs ~~resigned~~ to spread.

In 1980, two ~~events~~ occurred that Clinton now cites as ~~markers~~ pointing the way back. First ~~his~~ daughter, Chelsea, was born. ~~Second~~, he took a pilgrimage to Israel ~~led~~ by the Reverend W. O. Vaught. The minister became a kind of father figure for Clinton, and soon afterward Clinton joined Vaught's church, started singing in its choir, and for the first time in his life began serious Bible study. A ~~neighbor~~ says that C. S. Lewis's book *More Christianity* also played an important role in Clinton's spiritual renewal.

A friend asked me, "What kind of religious animal is Bill Clinton?" To give a fair answer I would point to a ~~series~~ like the platypus: part reptile, ~~part~~ mammal, part bird. Our first President to graduate from a Catholic college now attends a Baptist church and is married to a lifelong Methodist. In ~~fact~~, though, he may feel most at home with the more emotional worship style of African-Americans and Pentecostals. As governor, he would bring his ~~sermon~~ to an annual Pentecostal revival marked by glossolalia, clapping and rousing music.

Clinton says he ~~was~~ initially reluctant to talk about his faith in public life "because the story of the Pharisees made a big impression on me when I was a child. . . . And whenever I have spoken in a church, I always stand up and say, 'I come here as a sinner, not a saint, because I'm weak, not strong.'" Once, when asked if he believed in life after death, he replied, "Yeah, I have to. I need a second chance."

Clinton told *CHRISTIANITY TODAY* that "in some ways faith is harder for me, and in some ways it's easier" now

that he is President. Washington, "the most secular city I've ever lived in," is a challenging place in which to practice, say, the principles of the Sermon on the Mount. "Yet, believe it or not, even though I work long hours, I have more opportunities to be alone and to pray." Clinton claims he prays more as President, reads the Bible—he stayed up until 3 A.M. reading the Book of Joshua before the Middle East peace signing—and looks to his old pastor in Little Rock for spiritual guidance. "Rex Home calls me every Saturday night without fail."

The White House staff tries to free up three hours of quiet time each day in which the President can read, write, nap, practice his golf stroke, or do anything except go to meetings, and this is the time when Clinton prays and reads Christian books. Richard Mouw's *Uncommon Decency* and Tony Campolo's *Wake Up America!* were recent titles. "And it helps me. You'd be amazed what it does, because I read everything—government reports, histories, mysteries—but the time I spend reading these books . . . gives me a certain serenity that would not be there otherwise. I always keep one going all the time, no matter what I'm doing."

In person, Bill Clinton talks freely and convincingly about his faith. I have not met a single Christian leader who, after meeting with Clinton, comes away questioning his sincerity. One Christian college president is "absolutely convinced of his deep and sincere faith," and says the President knows his Bible. Another evangelical guest at the White House claimed that the President is "not only a Christian but an evangelical Christian"—who believes the Apostles' Creed and has a very high view of Scripture.

Edward G. Dobson, pastor of Calvary Church in Grand Rapids, has impeccable credentials with the Religious Right: he graduated from Bob Jones University, worked for Jerry Falwell (writing the original platform for the Moral Majority), and served as editor of *Fundamentalist Journal*. Here is his response after a White House meeting with others involved in AIDS ministry: "Is Bill Clinton a Christian? I don't know. I'm not God. How do you know I'm a Christian? We look at clues and evidences. Does Clinton know the Scriptures? Is he affected emotionally by things like prayer? Does he go to

church every week, carry his Bible, claim to have a relationship with Christ? The answer to all these questions is yes. I believe he's more deeply spiritual than any President we've had in recent years.

"Next question," Dobson continues: "How can I reconcile Bill Clinton's faith with his policies? I can't. But that doesn't mean I won't meet with him and have dialogue. Falwell called the other day, making plans to go to Cuba in an attempt to see Castro. 'I've gotten a lot of criticism for meeting with the President,' I told him, 'but, Jerry, I have yet to meet with a Communist!'"

Ed Dobson, like others, has heard the charge that he is simply being used by the White House for political ends. "A Christian leader compared me to one of the false prophets who told Ahab and Jezebel what they wanted to hear. That hurt. But I'd go anywhere, including to hell, as long as there were no limitations on what I could say. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, Whom we wish to change we must first love. I'm trying to speak the truth in love, that's all."

Ed Dobson's dilemma, reconciling Bill Clinton's faith and his policies, lies at the heart of Clinton's problems with evangelicals. How has it happened that a President's policies have so thoroughly alienated him from a constituency he views as his spiritual kin? I had the opportunity to ask the question of Clinton himself.

"There are two big reasons," Clinton said. "First, over several years the leaders of the evangelical community have gotten more and more identified with the conservative wing of the Republican party.

"Second, some of those same people have made abortion and homosexuality the litmus test of whether you're a true Christian. Certainly these are not the most-mentioned issues in the Bible, but they're the things that have become the litmus test, and if you're wrong on them, it's almost like saying you're a fraud, you can't really be a Christian."

Church historian Mark Noll observes that evangelicals tend to remain aloof from politics except for occasional, impassioned campaigns. Some of these campaigns are highly moral, such as the anti-slavery movement; some are misguided, such as the campaign against Catholic immigration; and some are simply quixotic, such as the

crusade against the Masons. In abortion and gay rights, evangelicals have found two big moral issues that galvanize the troops to enter the political fray.

Millions of Americans make voting decisions on the abortion issue alone. To them, Clinton's support for abortion rights makes him a mass murderer. Nothing he might say about his personal faith could possibly counteract the devastating effect of that one policy. When Billy Graham merely agreed to pray at Clinton's inauguration, pro-life activists blasted his decision as "a great embarrassment for all who call themselves evangelical."

Clinton's early pro-choice and pro-gay decisions gave a wake-up call to the Religious Right. Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition has signed up 900,000 members, and Robertson sketches the political scene in apocalyptic terms: "America has become a predominantly anti-Christian pagan nation—and our government has become a weapon the anti-Christian forces now use against Christians and religious people."

Beverly LaHaye, president of Concerned Women for America, echoes the same call, but her "open letter to President Clinton" shows that the agenda for concern has expanded well beyond abortion and gay rights to include Clinton's "massive government intrusion into every aspect of our lives: dramatic tax increases, socialized medicine, government price controls, federal regulation of businesses and our free enterprise economy, official support of the efforts to redefine the American family, the use of federal tax dollars for abortion, and mandatory 'valueless' sex education and pro-promiscuity programs in our public schools."

In his January letter to supporters, James Dobson listed 53 separate "developments that served to undermine traditional moral values" in the previous year. "Can there be any doubt," Dobson concluded, "that a great Civil War of Values is being waged in Western nations. . . . [The family's] demise is being orchestrated at the highest levels of government, and by radical special-interest groups."

Dobson raised an excellent question: If Clinton is committed to having his high-level appointments "look like America," he asked, why are there so few evangelicals in key positions?

It is against this background that

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some evangelicals question the wisdom of even meeting with President Clinton. As one person wrote to me, "What some interpret as hatred are very legitimate emotions in times of national crisis: despair, anxiety, discouragement, and righteous anger. People are alarmed to observe that their government has suddenly lurched to the left. Everything they have believed and fought for has been undermined by this Bible-toting politician who claims to be a believer."

Those who read only the publications of the President's Christian critics might think that the administration presents a unified front against *all* their interests. In truth, Clinton himself has been making speeches eerily reminiscent of the Traditional Values Coalition. His aides report that the reality of violence in America, especially that involving children, has turned the President's focus in a new direction, causing him to give attention not just to government programs but to a spiritual renewal based on the value of hard work, self-discipline, and commitment to family.

In a speech to the Church of God in Christ last November, Clinton spoke of "the great crisis of the spirit that is gripping America today." Martin Luther King, Jr., said Clinton, "did not live and die to see the American family destroyed, to see 13-year-old boys get automatic weapons and gun down 9-year-olds just for the kick of it." Clinton went on to commend the black church for its important role in holding communities together.

Encouraged by the response to that speech, Clinton started using the bully pulpit of the presidency to stress family values and personal responsibility. He talked tough on crime and stressed the need for welfare reform. Shocking some Democrats, he even resurrected the infamous speech in which Dan Quayle attacked TV's *Murphy Brown*. "I thought there were a lot of very good things in that speech," Clinton told Tom Brokaw, and then *Newsweek*. "Would we be a better-off society if babies were born to married couples? You bet we would."

I witnessed a scene (barely mentioned in the press) that put Clinton's bully pulpit skills to an extreme test. On the same day as the National Prayer Breakfast in February, Clinton visited Kramer Junior High School, a rugged

inner-city school in southeast Washington. Clinton minced no words with the all-black student body. "I'm trying to do everything I can to give you more hope and more possibility for the future. But I can't lead your life for you. Every day you have to decide whether to be on time or not, whether to attend classes, whether to take drugs, whether to do your homework. And I'll be honest with you. The very best thing you can do to stay out of poverty is to make up your mind to wait to have a baby till you're old enough to take care of it and until you're married. You young men who get a girl pregnant and just walk away from her—you know it's wrong. It'll haunt you and stay with you all your life."

Clinton went on to talk in explicit terms about sex and about drug abuse. The speech offered an unusual glimpse of the power of the presidency, a view not seen by most Americans and one barely imaginable to Clinton's staunchest critics. Beverly LaHaye's open letter had called for Clinton to "Preserve the moral values on which America is founded, speak out against promiscuity among our youth, and advocate abstinence before marriage." At Kramer Junior High, though he stopped short of saying *abstinence*, he was clearly undergirding, not undermining, traditional values.

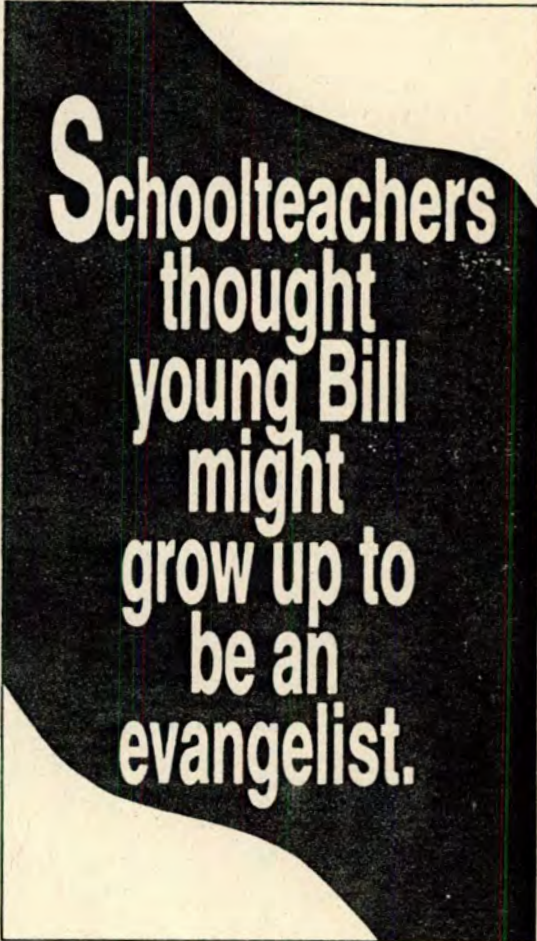
"That was a tough audience," Clinton told us with a sigh as he folded his long legs into the presidential limousine.

"Afterwards a girl came up to me, probably about 14, and showed me a picture of her baby. What I talked about is real life for these kids."

It was eleven o'clock in the morning. Already that day Clinton had addressed the National Prayer Breakfast, listened to Mother Teresa speak to the same gathering, met privately with her, and crossed town in the presidential motorcade to give the speech at Kramer. Now he was headed back to the White House, and he invited two of us from CHRIS-

TIANITY TODAY to join him for the ride. "I want to talk about the difference between what's immoral and what should be illegal," he had said.

At some level, of course, we all make distinctions between the immoral and illegal. Jesus said the greatest commandment is to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind," yet who would suggest codifying that in U.S. statutes? Christians look to the Bible for guidance on morality, but in a pluralistic society, when should our belief in morality translate into laws?



Schoolteachers
thought
young Bill
might
grow up to
be an
evangelist.

Clinton asserts that he, too, accepts the Bible as his moral authority. At the White House breakfast last fall, he stated forthrightly, "The Bible is the authoritative Word of God and contains all truth." Yet, he added, "there are people who read the same Bible, have the same convictions about its authority, and draw different conclusions."

As we rode in the limousine, Clinton cited abortion as an example of an issue on which Christians disagree. "When I was a boy, it was illegal. I remember a

motel near where I lived in Hot Springs where a man moved in and ran an abortion clinic. He was arrested, and I had to agree [with the decision].

"When I was a young man, I think I just automatically assumed that life began at birth. In the last seven or eight years, however, I've spent an enormous amount of time thinking about this—about the biological reality of how people are formed about what point in time the various functions develop in an unborn child, about whether it would ever be possible to go beyond the viability tests to make any more sophisticated judgment about personhood—which is really a spiritual determination and not a biological determination. . . . The truth is, no one knows when the spirit enters the body. I have . . . read all the scriptural verses cited as authority for the abortion-is-murder thesis, as well as all those verses cited on the other side—what the root words mean and all that stuff. It's a much graver issue to me now. I think having a child made it so.

"Abortion has now moved beyond the point of serious argument to a shouting match. A lot of pro-lifers in the Christian community think it's self-evident and not even worth discussing [whether] the Bible clearly says the spirit enters the body at the point of conception. . . . I've heard it argued by dedicated Christian theologians both ways." Clinton added that abortion should not be done casually: "My position has always been that abortion should be safe, legal, and rare."

Clinton has indeed helped to make abortion safe and legal, but hardly to make it rare. His public statements on the issue have changed dramatically in the past few years in a direct correlation to his national rise to prominence. In 1989, he opposed abortion but said he would allow it in the case of rape and incest or to save the mother's life. In 1990, he affirmed that abortion should be illegal when the unborn child can live outside the mother's womb, and he opposed public funding for abortion. Just one year later, in 1991, he said he supported the *Roe v. Wade* decision.

Clinton defends this shift by saying the approach to specific moral issues in a democracy should change as popular opinion changes. A moral issue should only be made a legal issue if "there is a consensus in the community that is sufficiently overwhelming to bring in the criminal law." As the consensus has

changed on abortion, so has the issue in Clinton's mind. On many moral issues, in fact, it seems that the Clintons tend to follow rather than lead the public. Hillary Clinton, for example, sought out a minister for spiritual guidance on capital punishment and the Gulf War, and then rejected his counsel mainly on pragmatic grounds—popular support for both policies ran too high.

We talked about the distinctions between morality and legality for 20 minutes in the limousine before continuing the conversation in the Oval Office. Clinton seemed tired, still struggling with laryngitis. He frequently sipped water from a plastic Dixie cup.

A presidential motorcade does not slip quietly through the streets of Washington. At least 16 vehicles were involved: motorcycles, four-wheel-drive Blazers for the Secret Service, vans full of reporters. A police car blocked off every side street, with an officer standing by to enforce the blockade, and at major intersections, clumps of drivers stopped by the motorcade had gathered to wave to the President.

I had come away from my previous meeting impressed by the President's listening skills. He made excellent eye contact, remembered names and faces, and gave each person the impression of full attention. This time, though, in his own limousine, he appeared to have trouble concentrating. Although we were talking over matters of great moral—and explosive political—significance, Clinton was looking left and right, searching out every last clump of bystanders to wave to. His aides had told me this Clinton trademark causes scheduling nightmares for his handlers: he never leaves a hand unshaken, a crowd unaddressed, a baby unknissed. He is a consummate politician.

Two hours before, we had both been present for Mother Teresa's speech. It was a remarkable event. The Clintons and the Gores sat at elevated head tables on either side of the podium. Rolled out in a wheelchair, the frail, 83-year-old Nobel Peace Prize laureate needed help to stand up. A special platform had been positioned to allow her to see over the podium. Even so, hunched over, four-feet, six-inches tall, she could barely reach the microphone. She spoke clearly and slowly with a thick accent in a voice that managed to fill the hall nevertheless.

Mother Teresa said that America has

become a selfish nation, in danger of losing the proper meaning of love: "giving until it hurts." Both contraception and abortion, she said, distort love. "If we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill each other? . . . Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want." She proposed a simple solution for those pregnant women who don't want their children: "Please give me the child. I want it. I will care for it." Already she has placed three thousand children with families in Calcutta.

Mother Teresa filled her talk with poignant stories of people she has ministered to, and no one who heard her could go away unmoved. President Clinton himself brought up her stories in our conversation. Mother Teresa, like saints and prophets before her, sees the world in stark, binary terms. In her talk, she managed to reduce the abortion controversy to its simplest moral terms: life or death, love or rejection. Ten feet away from her sat Bill Clinton, a politician stuck with the practical details of implementing policy on a contentious moral issue. When does human life begin? What moral laws should we impose on a pluralistic society? How do you get people who care so much about unborn babies to care also about the full-term babies born in certain neighborhoods and countries?

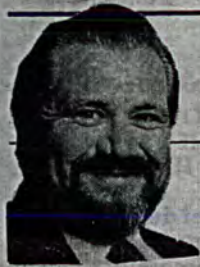
Indeed, from the perspective of the presidential motorcade—flags flapping from the antennae, police sirens blaring, streets blocked, the press pool reporting in on cellular phones—everything looked very complicated. As our interview progressed, the simple clarity of Mother Teresa's address, which had obviously touched Bill Clinton, seemed to be slipping away.

It occurred to me that Mother Teresa probably would not make a very good politician: she would have little patience with public relations, compromise, and writing regulations. Likewise, in a political system where you never stop running for office, Bill Clinton would not make a very good saint.

As we talked about these moral issues—human lives—even as we reflected on Mother Teresa's stirring words from that morning, Clinton's eyes scanned the sidewalks, looking for people to wave to. As a politician, he would take his cues from the crowd. □

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JOURNEY



... and now, from the Oval Office ...

By JOE SICCARDI

Sometimes, nuggets of gold come from the strangest places. Take some comments from our president, made when he recently visited with reporters from the religious press.

Bill Clinton certainly has come under criticism for some of his comments and actions ... especially from the religious press. And those of us from the Catholic press find it hard to reconcile some of Clinton's actions with his exposure to Catholic tradition and thought. The president's stint at Georgetown University is well-documented, but he also attended Catholic elementary school in Hot Springs, AR, at least for the formative second and third grades.

Among his list of acquaintances is a sampling of the best and brightest in contemporary Catholic thought. Several of his closest friends are Jesuits, friendships developed during and after his days at Georgetown.

Just before making it into the Oval Office, Clinton, in an interview with the Catholic News Service, pointed out that his time at Georgetown shaped his entire philosophy of public service.

CLINTON WAS RAISED and is a Southern Baptist. That religious background, coupled with his exposure to Catholic thought, has shaped his thinking.

The president has said that he has a strong belief that Christians have an obligation to make the world better. And he sees himself as a "minister to the nation" in the sense that he can direct

the people of the United States toward actions that benefit the entire country.

To be sure, on a few important fronts, Clinton has deviated from traditional Catholic thinking. Some of his policy decisions — especially when it comes to abortion — bring the question of the president's words vs. his actions to the fore. Others — like his embrace of equal access to universal health care — have had remarkable similarities to Catholic proposals.

On the whole, he seemed sincere when he said to the religious press, "I was always very moved by the whole Catholic concept of the social mission of the Church — that part of the obligation of being Christian was to be involved with people who are less fortunate ... and that was a part of doing your job as a person of faith."

I BELIEVE THE president may be on to something.

Part of the obligation of being a Christian is being involved with people who are less fortunate ... the unborn ... the sick and displaced ... the homeless and the jobless ... the new immigrant ... the elderly ... et al.

We, as Catholic Christians, may have to re-emphasize our belief that life begins at conception and that the unborn child is perhaps the ultimate "less fortunate" person with rights being abridged. We may have to re-emphasize our belief of the value of life at all its stages.

But we, as Catholic Christians, also must read-just our lives to be witnesses for our faith through our actions. We should be more involved with others who are less fortunate. We should share our

blessings.

PERHAPS THE MOST valuable nugget our president gave us during his meeting with the religious press, though, was his reference to the sacrament of reconciliation as practiced in the Catholic Church. Although theologically short — he saw a similarity to the practice in many Baptist churches of concluding services with altar calls, an invitation to the congregation to come forward to join the church or make a declaration about their dedication to God — it was his recognition of the value of the sacrament that came forth.

"The way of giving people a consistent way of being both sinners and Christians and being able to come back ... the idea of a continuous coming back and striving to be better had a profound impact on me," he said. "I always liked that. A lot of life success depends on whether you can keep coming back, not whether you never make a mistake or commit a sin."

From a man who has made mistakes and committed sins — just like the rest of us — that was quite a statement.

*** **

THOUGHT TO REMEMBER: A church garden consists of three rows of squash — squash indifference; squash criticism; squash gossip — four rows of turnips — turn up for services; turn up with a smile; turn up with a visitor; turn up ready to pray — and five rows of lettuce — let us love one another; let us welcome strangers; let us be faithful to duty; let us truly worship God; let us give lib-

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No soup in Hartford; meeting with Clinton in the White House

As we begin this new year, let us keep each other in our prayers and direct some with Hartford Archbishop Daniel Cronin in mind. He is struggling to find proper footing as he tries to lead his archdiocese. Appointed archbishop in December 1990, it was not long before he became embroiled in controversy after it became public he planned to move into a \$430,000 mansion — six bedrooms and swimming pool. His predecessor, Archbishop John Whealon, had lived in two rented rooms in a local retirement home. The plan was later scuttled.

Inside NCR

Last year, Cronin was again in the news after the editors and editorial writers for the archdiocesan newspaper, the *Catholic Transcript*, resigned, saying Cronin's policies had compromised their journalistic integrity.

Recently word came from Hartford that the Franciscan friars, who operate Connecticut's oldest parish, St. Patrick-St. Anthony Church in Hartford, were told by Cronin they may not open a soup kitchen on their premises (see page 3). But the kicker was that Cronin's reason for scotching the pro-

posed House of Bread soup kitchen was that it would *harm the church's image!*

Although the archdiocese sponsors other soup kitchens, it was explained that one in downtown Hartford would not work because of "the image it projects to people who come there." We all make mistakes. Let's remember to pray for each other and petition the heavens that Archbishop Cronin learns from his doozies.

Editor-at-large Arthur Jones recently was one of nine journalists with religious publications invited to the White House for an informal meeting with President Bill Clinton. The group met in the Cabinet Room.

The general themes were crime and violence — and churches as the last bastion in many places in holding the community together. But the conversation, billed as a "roundtable," was wide-ranging.

Christian Century's Jim Wall, Catholic News Service's Pat Zapor and Religious News Service's Dave Anderson were among the journalists.

Since the meeting, Jones reports, he's been asked a number of times: "What's (Clinton) like?" Jones describes him as "cordial, relaxed and soft-spoken."

Jones, who has been in journalism for some four decades, has interviewed more than a dozen heads of state. I asked him last week to compare Clinton with some of these national executives.

"The first national leader I ever interviewed was Fidel Castro," recalled Jones. "The most surprising — that was Ratu Sir Kamasese Mara of Fiji. In between were leaders such as Monaco's Prince Rainier, Denmark's Premier Otto Krag, the later-assassinated Iranian Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveyda and Italy's now-shamed Giulio Andreotti."

Clinton, said Jones, was like none of these, except in that he, too, is a political figure who had agreed to talk to journalists for political purposes.

"At another level, though, Clinton reminded me of the late prime minister of Sweden, the murdered Olof Palme. Like Palme, Clinton was candid. There was no flicker of hesitation, of 'how will this play?' before he dealt with the questions."

Added Jones: "Clinton was worrying about specific people, talking about the poor as if he knew them. Clinton answered questions about poverty easily from his *experience* of growing up among people who were, if not poor as now defined, 'hard up' by any measure. ... One sensed Clinton genuinely felt their pain."

And what about religion? "Clinton was most fun when he talked about the impact his two years of Catholic grade school and his Georgetown education had on him," Jones said. "Was it wryness that had him say that the Catholic institution of confession really impressed him — this teaching that acknowledges people's sinfulness and their willingness to seek forgiveness and start again?" Clinton told the

group he liked the Catholic confessional idea of "a continuous coming back and striving to be better."

He also liked Catholicism's "social gospel" emphasis and, in his Protestant life, his increasing openness to the scriptures. Jones reported the president acknowledged using the presidency as a "bully pulpit" (a portrait of President Teddy Roosevelt was on the wall). And yet, Clinton added, "As president, you become aware how impotent you are as just one person in the vast sea of humanity."

Clinton told the journalists that as an individual "you have two responsibilities. To live as long and as well as you can, and to make the most of your life and the lives of those in your direct charge." And he spoke, too, as president, of treading carefully in trying to at once talk about God but not preach or deal in personal salvation.

Concluded Jones: "That was definitely new, for me anyway. Sitting with a national leader, talking easily about God."

And finally, this note: Frank E. Brennan, 71, charter director and board chairman emeritus of the National Catholic Reporter Publishing Co., died Dec. 26. Brennan worked in the Kansas City area as a life insurance agent and was a former member of the Kansas City, Mo., City Council.

Tom Fox

*file Catholic
News
Service*

CLINTON-MEDIA Dec. 17, 1993 (710 words) xxxn

SPIRITUAL CHANGE NEEDED IN CRIME FIGHT, CLINTON SAYS

By Patricia Zapor

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Churches, often the only thing holding life together in troubled communities, must take advantage of their role by addressing the problems that lead to crime, President Clinton told reporters from the religious press.

In a round-table discussion Dec. 17 with reporters from Catholic News Service and eight other religious publishers, Clinton said getting a handle on crime will mean not just changes in government policy or what corporations give back to their communities, but "an almost spiritual change" by entire communities.

"I don't believe we can solve a lot of these problems without drawing on the immense reservoir of our spiritual heritage," Clinton said.

In fact, no solution lies strictly with government intervention or by spending money. "I don't think there is a purely mechanical or monetary answer," he said.

Churches often are the only remaining institutions in inner-city or poor, rural areas once economic conditions deteriorate, Clinton said. Consequently, the religious organizations are the only visible alternative to the culture of drugs, gangs and guns.

Although some churches already are trying to use that advantage in keeping their communities together, Clinton said he'd like to see them take a greater role.

Churches should "weigh in heavily" on behalf of efforts to make streets and schools safer, for one thing, he said. Others could reach out to children who face trouble ahead and help them learn better values, develop a greater sense of self-worth and feel commitment to their community.

"Many of them are in a position to do more outreach, to try, with the children in the church, to identify troubled kids, kids in difficult circumstances in the neighborhood and the schools and invite them to the churches, get them involved in the youth programs...." he said.

"It seems to me that to turn it around is going to require a massive, highly concentrated effort by all Americans, starting with the president but going down to every community," Clinton said.

The president acknowledged that he treads a fine line when drawing connections between the activities or teachings of religious institutions and public concerns, even on such universal problems as crime.

"It's a delicate thing for the people and the press, and, I guess, for the president, to draw appropriate distinctions between what is morally good for a society and still not get into, in effect, the business of preaching," Clinton said. "That's someone else's business."

But he sees himself as obliged to "minister to the nation" in a slightly different sense, directing the people of the United States toward actions that benefit the entire country.

His own religious background -- particularly his years at a Jesuit university -- have given him a strong belief that Christians

have an obligation to work at making the world better, Clinton said.

O A Southern Baptist, Clinton attended a Catholic elementary school in Hot Springs, Ark., in second and third grade and graduated from Georgetown University in Washington in 1968. He has several close friends who are Jesuits and told Catholic News Service just before his election that his time at Georgetown shaped his entire philosophy of public service.

O He told the reporters' group that among the effects of his exposure to the Catholic Church, was "I was always very moved by the whole Catholic concept of the social mission of the church -- that part of the obligation of being a Christian was to be involved with people who are less fortunate ... and that was a part of doing your job as a person of faith."

O Clinton also said he was strongly affected by Catholic beliefs about the sacrament of confession.

O "The way of giving people a consistent way of being both sinners and Christians and being able to come back ... the idea of a continuous coming back and striving to be better had a profound impact on me," he said. He saw a similarity to the practice in many Baptist churches of concluding services with an invitation to the congregation to come forward and join the church or make a declaration about their dedication to God.

O "I always liked that," he said. "A lot of life success depends on whether you can keep coming back, not whether you never make a mistake or commit a sin."

□END

WASHINGTON LETTER Dec. 30, 1993 (830 words) Backgrounder and analysis. xxxn

PRESIDENTIAL CHAT: SMALL INTERVIEWS PROVE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL

By Patricia Zapor

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Few of the nine reporters assembling outside the press room previously had even been on the White House grounds.

Only one covers the White House often enough to be a familiar face to its regular press corps. A couple of the journalists had flown in from out of town for the day.

And all nine were a little puzzled about just why they'd been invited to sit down with the president for an hour to talk about crime.

The session Dec. 17 in the Cabinet Room was one in a series of round-table meetings between the president and small groups of reporters from specialized segments of the media.

In this case, he met with writers from Catholic News Service, Religious News Service, two Baptist wire services, the Jewish Telegraphic News Agency and the publications National Catholic Reporter, Christianity Today, Christian Century and First Things.

This particular group represented a White House effort to reach reporters with an interest in Clinton's religious motivations and their influence on his policy decisions. Getting a grip on the nation's burgeoning crime problem will take more than programs or policy, the president said. It needs what he called a "spiritual change" in American attitudes.

He clearly expected that the religious press was more likely than reporters who cover White House politics on a daily basis to differentiate -- as he does -- between acting out of firmly held religious beliefs and using one's political position to preach to society.

"It's a delicate thing for people and the press, and, I guess, for the president, to draw appropriate distinctions between what is morally good for a society and still not get into, in effect, the business of preaching," Clinton said.

In contrast to presidential predecessors who took a more private approach to their religious beliefs, Clinton is comfortable talking about religion and faith, and does so often. He frankly acknowledges that he believes he has a role in ministering to the nation -- setting a tone of reliance on religious strength and principles in trying to solve worldly problems.

A story in U.S. News & World Report in mid-December revealed that in his first year in office, Clinton has quietly made a habit of phoning the Rev. Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock, Ark., and his longtime spiritual adviser, every Saturday night. Clinton and Mr. Horne told U.S. News that their conversations range from family updates to domestic policy and serve as a sort of spiritual grounding point.

Closely following the U.S. News interview, the round-table meeting with the religious press fit with an emerging theme for Clinton -- the need for spiritual guidance in light of the disintegration of social institutions.

"Why do you think you have 5 million members in this

country?" he asked a Church of God congregation in Memphis, Tenn., in November. "Because people know you are filled with the spirit of God to do the right thing in this life by them.

○ "Scripture says, you are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. That if your light shines before men they will give glory to the Father in heaven. That is what we must do.

○ "We will somehow, by God's grace, we will turn this around," he concluded in Memphis. "We will give these children a future... We will do it together by the grace of God."

○ A month later, he was repeating those themes for the journalists from the religious press, again finding an audience that was likely to appreciate his spiritual motivations in context.

○ "The president has a real interest in the role the religious community has played and will continue to play in bettering our society," said Melanne Verveer, deputy chief of staff to the first lady and one of Clinton's principal advisers on religious issues.

○ One goal of the small groups is simply to focus in on a narrow subject -- in this case how the religious community can work to fight crime. While no subject was declared off-limits, by bringing in journalists with certain interests in common, the range of questions can be effectively narrowed to suit both the White House and the reporters.

○ At the Dec. 17 session, the discussion strayed from the subject several times, as some of the reporters took advantage of their first chance to meet the president. They asked about his years at Georgetown University, where the Southern Baptist developed close ties to its Jesuit faculty and gained an appreciation for Catholic teachings, and about his philosophy of the separation of church and state, a precept held strongly in Baptist teachings.

○ "So much of what comes from the White House gets sifted by the general White House press corps," Ms. Verveer said. "The members of the specialty press generally don't get an opportunity to ask questions that pertain to their readership. This is mutually beneficial."

□END



THOMAS N. LORSUNG
Director and editor in chief

Dec. 30, 1993

Ms. Melanne Verveer
Office of the First Lady
The White House

Dear Melanne,

Here are full-size copies of both stories I wrote from the round-table session.

I checked what options the White House might have for subscribing to some of our publications. In addition to Origins, you could subscribe to the daily mailer, which is what you probably were used to seeing distributed around the building. That runs 100-something a month. Tom Lorsung would be the one with whom to discuss that, 541-3279.

But we're also available on electronic database in NewsNet, which interested parties can read for the cost of the linkup, surely much less than a subscription. It'll give your resident computer hackers something to scan every day for you.

And, of course, I'm happy to help any time I can get you what you need.

Thanks again for including me in the session.

I hope you're off to a terrific start of the new year.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pat". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "P" and a simple "at".

Pat Zapor

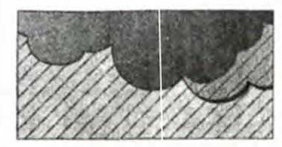
file relay

Freedom

Custom homes provide keys to barrier-free lives
Homestyle, 1D

Klingons

Trekkers take to a new world of weekend fantasy
Accent, 1C



A chance of rain.
High 60. Low 44.

Amen

Augusta's infamous corner tests swings — and souls
Charlie Vincent, 1B

None

Mercker no-hits Dodgers; Tigers can't get first win
Sports, 1B

The Detroit News AND Free Press

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Saturday, April 9, 1994

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Clinton and guests share faith

President Bill Clinton says he's "an honest struggling believer ... a person who has sinned as a child of God."

BY MARY OTTO
Free Press Washington Staff

WASHINGTON — On one recent evening, James Dunn counted himself among three dozen "ordinary mortals" invited to the White House for dinner and a movie.

In this case, the guests were "people who take their faith seriously," said Dunn, who is executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. The film was a preview of the made-for-TV Bible story "Abraham."

Dunn recognized Jews, Muslims and a number of other Christians around small

tables set up in the state dining room, noshing and chatting. "People without political power," he said. "Not face cards."

"I have never been in the White House since Johnson's time when the groups have been so mixed," he said, speaking of President Lyndon Johnson. "There's an affinity of faith, not of political position."

President Bill Clinton is methodically seeking out the country's religious thinkers and leaders for agreement, argument and discourse in much the same way he has sought the cooperation of business leaders, inviting them to the White House in small

groups for a meal and a talk.

Clinton initiated his efforts with a large interfaith breakfast at the White House last summer, said Flo McAfee, the White House's liaison to religious groups.

Now, she said, every four to six weeks he's having smaller, more intimate gatherings.

Though Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush won the support of leaders from the religious right, Clinton is earning a reputation as the most openly religious president

See CLINTON, Page 6A



File photo

Kurt Cobain cofounded Nirvana in 1987

A D A Z Z L I N G R E S T O R A T I O N

Diverse guests share faith with president

CLINTON, from Page 1A

since Jimmy Carter.

He's a Southern Baptist who regularly attends church on Sunday. In speech after speech, he has called for a return to spirituality in everyday life and government.

During a recent segment of ABC's "World News Tonight," Clinton described himself as "an honest struggling believer . . . a person who has sinned as a child of God," and he spoke about his personal beliefs, saying, "I know God through Jesus."

The president's meetings, though interfaith, in some ways reflect a Baptist sensibility, said Rex Horne Jr., pastor of the president's home church in Little Rock, Ark. Every believer has direct access to God, so everyone's opinion is important.

Horne has served as a bridge in the outreach effort, organizing a meeting that tried to heal a rift between the president and the more conservative leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention. He sees the work continuing in "keeping groups coming — different people from different parts of the country."

But so far, some of the best-known conservatives such as Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson have been noticeable in their absence.

Guests are chosen by recommendation from religious organizations

and efforts are made to reach the nation's various regions, cultures and creeds, McAfee explained.

Some gatherings have focused on particular groups or topics, such as AIDS. Future meetings could deal with urban problems or crime legislation, Horne said.

The president, Horne insisted, is "not looking for support, just an exchange of ideas."

A few months ago, Robert Seiple,

the president of the Christian relief organization World Vision, joined 11 other evangelical leaders for a breakfast with Clinton.

They didn't talk about abortion or other issues on which many evangelicals disagree with the president. Instead, they sought common ground and talked about surviving "the rough and tumble" of Washington as people of faith, said Thomas Getman, World Vision's director of government relations.

"It's a matter of personal Christian friendship," Getman said. "The president is a person, too. He needs people's best insight into how to grow as a Christian person."

To Getman, a seasoned mediator between the sacred and the secular, there will always be some separation of church and state.

But that does not sit comfortably with Richard Cizik of the National Association of Evangelicals.

"You can't divorce your spiritual life from the policy implications," said Cizik, who has attended a White House meeting.

"My advice to evangelical leaders," he said, is to "go with your policy concerns to your meeting with the president."

He used his time with Clinton to stress his belief in the need for expanded AIDS testing. He has been disappointed with the administration's response.

"I have no illusions about the value of going to the White House."

James Smith, a Washington representative of the Southern Baptist Convention, added, "My view of Bill Clinton is that he doesn't do anything that isn't political."

Others are convinced that Clinton really cares about what is said at the meetings.

His speeches sometimes contain small acknowledgments that refer to the spiritual gatherings, "a phrase or word or expression peculiarly tuned to that kind of group," said Dunn of the Baptist Joint Committee, which represents Baptist denominations in Washington.

"It shows he was listening."



Bill Clinton

RELIGIOUS ACTION CENTER OF REFORM JUDAISM

file

September 10, 1993

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Clinton:

*The Religious Action Center
purposes social justice and
religious liberty by
mobilizing the American
Jewish community and
serving as its advocate
in the nation's capital*

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Fax (202) 687-9070

Rabbi David Saperstein
Director and Counsel

Rabbi Lyone Landsberg
Associate Director

Evelyn Lauer Shindler,
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Commission on Social Action
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North American Federation
of Temple Youth*

As national religious leaders profoundly troubled by the swelling tide of violence sweeping America, we thank and commend you for using the moral power of the Presidency to call for action on this important issue. The eloquence of your speech in Memphis at Mason Temple Church of God in Christ and your call to the religious community to play a central role in ameliorating this crisis deeply moved and challenged us all. We are particularly encouraged by your conviction, that we have long shared, that while we must address this crisis through changes from the "outside" -- including policies implemented by the President and Congress -- there are changes we also must make from the inside, or the others won't work. Accordingly, we welcome your emphasis on "the values and the stirrings and the voices that speak to us from within." We want to convey to you our own commitment to continue to mobilize our respective religious communities to combat the violence and moral decline you spoke of in your address.

Indeed, Mr. President, throughout America, the religious community has been struggling with this most pressing of problems. At its national meeting last week, the Congress of National Black Churches devoted its primary agenda to formulating effective responses to the violence in our communities. The National Council of Churches recently issued a strong statement condemning graphic media violence. The Catholic Bishops' Campaign for Children and Families focuses on the values and policies which can help the nation protect the lives and dignity of all of God's children. A number of national Jewish groups have set up programs to address the urban crisis. Locally, churches, synagogues, and mosques are engaged in working to combat the violence increasingly permeating our nation.

Religious community anti-violence initiatives revolve around several consistent themes:

1. Continuing to proclaim, teach, and call our people to practice the ethical values and virtues which provide the basis for real community and a morally fulfilling life. The battle against violence begins in each of our hearts and lives.



Religious faith offers vital moral resources for replacing fear and violence with hope and reconciliation in our homes, communities, and nation.

2. Halting gun proliferation in our streets, schools and homes.
3. Countering the "culture of violence" that pervades our national culture and our media, that legitimizes -- even celebrates -- violence as a means of dispute resolution.
4. Building, in neighborhoods and communities across America, strong anti-violence coalitions, in which churches, synagogues, and mosques play a key role, that denounce violence and provide means of addressing these communities' problems.
5. Protecting America's children from the epidemic of violence by effective, responsive, equitable law enforcement, and by providing our young people with options for healthy development through private action and public policies that promote ample education, strong social programs, and real job opportunities.

If you would find it helpful, we would be delighted to meet with you to discuss ways to implement these goals together. In any case, we will do all we can to engage with you in this urgent task, using the moral suasion at our command and encouraging America's 350,000 churches, synagogues, and mosques to apply their organizational resources to this vital national challenge.

Sincerely,

Bishop John H. Ricard, S.S.J.
Chair, Domestic Policy Committee*
U.S. Catholic Bishops' Conference

Reverend Joan Brown Campbell
General Secretary
National Council of Churches

Reverend James Dunn
Executive Director
Baptist Joint Committee

Reverend H. Michael Lemmons
Executive Director
Congress of National Black Churches

Rabbi Haskel Lookstein
President
Synagogue Council of America

Reverend Charles Lee
Research Director
United Church of Christ
Commission for Racial Justice

Rabbi David Saperstein
Director
Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

*Titles for identification purposes only

RELIGIOUS MEDIA ROUNDTABLE
Friday, December 18, 1993

NAME	AFFILIATION	PHONE #	SSN	DOB
Pat Zapor	Catholic News Service ✱	(202) 541-3269		
David Neff	Christianity Today ✓	(708) 260-6200		
Kim Lawton	News Network International	(202) 347-0858		
Larry Chesser	Associated Baptist Press	(202) 544-4226	White House Press	
Dave Anderson	Religious News Service	(202) 232-6529		
Pam Perry	Baptist News Service ✓	(202) 544-4226		
James Wall	Christian Century ✓	(312) 427-5380		
Tom Fox <i>AKA Jones</i>	National Catholic Reporter			
	Christian Radio in NJ ✓			
James Nuechterlein	First Thing ✓	(212) 627-1985		
Debbie Kald	Jewish Telegraphic Agency ✓			

*These are the reporters
being invited to the
religious media roundtable
for Friday. Topic: Crime & Violence*

Flo X2930 for background info.

[National Catholic Reporter, April 15, 1994]

EDITORIALS

Ties with religious right politics put Catholic social agenda at risk

The statement of mutual admiration released last week by a group of evangelical Protestant and Roman Catholic leaders is about as warm and fuzzy as it gets between these two traditional antagonists.

Noble as the title may sound, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium," the document quickly reveals itself as a dressed-up, political working paper for the religious right.

On one level, it is an astounding declaration, if for nothing more than the signers: a smattering of conservative academics; a former Lutheran minister turned Catholic priest; several forceful Catholic neoconservatives who have been blocked from some halls of power since the Reagan-Bush era ended; an ambitious fundamentalist TV preacher; a former Watergate scalawag who has risen to head a model prison program; and the powerful cardinal archbishop of New York. A wonderful sign of unity in this Easter season.

In terms of sweet understanding, the signers, carefully acknowledging that they "cannot speak officially for our communities," recount the ongoing differences between the two groups, yet yearn — with grave resolve — to live the prayer, "May they all be one."

Any step in understanding, of course, deserves applause. But don't go overboard here. These groups disagree theologically as profoundly as any two groups who manage to squeeze under the same banner of faith. Don't expect any amicable conversations soon between Cardinal John O'Connor and the former Rev. Pat Robertson on sacramental theology or the Southern Baptist understanding of scriptural inerrancy.

Despite the protests of the drafters of the statement, the real common ground is found in the paper's political program and worldview.

At the top of the agenda, understandably, is the fight against abortion, the issue that initially drew Catholics and evangelicals together. The list moves on to choice in education and opposition to pornography.

Slowly, however, the thin edge of groups like Robertson's Christian

Coalition and the unfettered free-market, every-man-for-himself theories of Michael Novak and George Weigel begin to cut through the religious window-dressing.

Watch out, entitlements. African-Americans, Native Americans, forget hundreds of years of repression. On one line, the paper urges a "renewed spirit of acceptance, understanding and cooperation across lines of religion, race, ethnicity, sex and class." On the next, it calls for a readjustment of public attitudes and policy to end "bitter conflicts of group grievances and claims to entitlement." All rights will be "joined to duties" and rewards will be meted out to people "according to their character and competence."

And it seems, lo, character and competence will be judged by one's performance in "a vibrant market economy," another major point on the agenda. While admitting that a free society "requires a careful balancing between economics, politics and culture," the writers neatly get off the hook with the observation that "Christianity is not an ideology and, therefore, does not prescribe precisely how that balance is to be achieved in every circumstance."

The group is bullish on Western culture and thinks it has gotten a bad rap. Some of the signers get particularly grumpy on this score when events like the 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyages unearths stinging questions from Native Americans and the indigenous throughout Latin America. The group proclaims in the statement that "alone among world cultures ... the West has cultivated an attitude of self-criticism and of eagerness to learn from other cultures."

Some might reasonably argue that the West also has demonstrated a singular ambition to dominate other cultures and that its interest in learning from other cultures is directly related to perceived benefits for its free markets.

The section ends, predictably, with a call for less government and "renewed respect for the irreplaceable role of mediating structures in society — notably the family, churches and myriad voluntary associations."

Would former Watergate figure

Charles Colson resist government efforts to reform prisons and expand in-prison programs?

Even before any questions were asked, the writers knew enough to protest "the notion that this constitutes a partisan 'religious agenda' in American politics. Rather, this is a set of directions oriented to the common good and discussable on the basis of public reason."

Fr. Richard John Neuhaus, the former Lutheran minister, and one of the chief movers behind the statement, intimated at a news conference that the document was checked out by "appropriate parties at the Holy See, and they have given their strongest encouragement." He wouldn't reveal any names. Are we to believe that Neuhaus has become a kind of hierarchical entity all to himself with direct lines to Rome? Impressive.

It is tempting, on the other end, to dismiss the statement as the work of disgruntled political programmers trying to keep the cause alive in a hostile Washington environment, but there is more at stake, especially for Catholic leaders.

O'Connor and Bishops Carlos Sevilla of San Francisco, Francis George of Yakima, Wash., and Archbishop Francis Stafford of Denver, among the signers, might protest that this is not an official church statement.

But O'Connor, especially, should know the weight his name lends to any document.

During the 1980s, Catholic leaders expended untold moral and political capital siding up to the Reagan administration for a promise of that administration's opposition to abortion. The rest of the Catholic social agenda languished. Virtually no other public position taken by the bishops received an official welcome during the Reagan-Bush years.

By joining with forces that include Pat Robertson and some of the more extreme Catholic exponents of the discredited Reagan agenda, Catholic leaders again are in danger of selling off the church's moral authority at bargain prices.

Join with evangelicals, if you must, in the common cause of opposing abortion. But there is no need to buy into a narrow political agenda that has already shown itself divisive, selfish and elitist. ■



Andrei Rublev's icon, "The Trinity"

Orthodox church tells Moscow gallery, 'Give treasured icons back'

Among the treasures at the Tretiakov Gallery in Moscow is the famous icon "The Trinity," the only unquestionably "genuine" work by Andrei Rublev, the 15th century monk regarded as the founding father of Russian art, who was canonized by the Orthodox church.

That church is now asking that the icon be "returned," along with another masterpiece, the Vladimir "Mother of God" by an anonymous 12th century Byzantine artist. The two works were removed from the Cathedral of the Assumption, in the heart of the Kremlin, just after the 1917 revolution. They have been hanging in the Tretiakov since 1930.

The paintings are regarded as relics by all Eastern Orthodox churches. Returning them to their pre-1917 places of honor and prayer is seen by many in Russia as an important righting of a wrong — and a return to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the sacred in life.

Museum pieces or sacred objects? Where the paintings end up may not only say something about the exercise of authority in the new Russia but about emerging values in the post-communist era.

The struggle pitting church against state so far appears to favor church. According to a recent report in England's *Guardian Weekly*, President Boris Yeltsin signed a decree last November stipulating that although the two icons were the property of the Russian Federation there was no reason they should not be hung in a place of worship.

The deputy culture minister disagrees, claiming the church cannot provide adequate protection for the art pieces, which are said to be fragile. State officials are considering a compromise, asking if copies of the museum pieces might do in the cathedral.

The dispute has wider implications as well. Its resolution will have a bearing on the destiny of many art objects taken by the Red Army in Eastern Europe and placed in Russian museums after World War II. Ar "ownership" can be a confusing and complicated matter. How it gets worked out may send signals worth watching. ■

Chilean Jesuit's beatification may lead to more

Next October Pope John Paul II will beatify Chilean Jesuit Fr. Alberto Hurtado, who died in 1952 at age 51. On the 40th anniversary of his death, all the political parties of Chile joined to decree a "Day of National Solidarity."

In 1952, media throughout the nation followed his long illness. Shortly afterward, the Chilean bishops requested his beatification. Born in Viña del Mar in 1901, he joined the Jesuits at 21 after a doctorate in law from the Catholic University of Chile.

He studied philosophy and theology in Spain, Ireland and Belgium, where he had John Baptist Janssens, superior general before Don Pedro Arrupe, as his rector. He was ordained at Louvain, Belgium, in 1933. Back home in Chile, he wrote books on education and the Catholic social order, built a

retreat house in a village that today bears his name, and was national chaplain of Catholic Action for Youth.

He started Hogar di Cristo — Christ's Home — for the multitude of street kids in Santiago. In 1947 he founded the Christian Union Association "to promote a labor union movement inspired by the social teaching of the church." In 1951 he founded the review *Mensaje*, The Month, to promote all these causes. It survives to this day and is his most abiding monument. He will be the first Jesuit editor to be beatified.

The beatification date, Oct. 16, will happen halfway through the synod on religious life. The date also happens to be the 16th anniversary of John Paul's election in 1978.

One wonders what John Paul will

find to say about this Jesuit whose magazine, 30 years after his death, led the opposition to Gen. Augustin Pinochet and was in the vanguard of liberation theology in Chile.

The 34th Jesuit General Congregation is being planned. Among the requests coming in from the provinces — the famous *postulata* — are several that ask for the beatification of Pedro Arrupe, 28th general of the Jesuits, who died in 1991.

In the past no one could be considered for beatification until dead for 50 years. It was changed to beatify Blessed Josémaría Escrivá de Balaguer, founder of Opus Dei, who died in 1975.

It would be ironic yet fitting if Escrivá's beatification opened the door to Arrupe's. ■

Startin Kit file
for lawsuit church/
myself *state*

A Brief Lexicon of Church/State
Words and Phrases

The following phrases have been widely used by the religious right to advance their goals. Unfortunately, they are not true.

- "America is a Christian Nation"
Yes, Christians and Christian values played a part in our nation's founding. But, the Constitution is decidedly secular. It never mentions God. It outlaws a religious test for public office. The First Amendment prohibits government from making laws even "respecting" the establishment of religion.
- "The Separation of Church and State is not in the Constitution"
True, the words are not (neither is separation of powers, or the right to a fair trial), but the sentiment surely is. First used by Baptist Roger Williams, the phrase "wall of separation" was coined by Thomas Jefferson in an 1802 letter to the Danbury, CT Baptist Association. It was adopted later by the Supreme Court as a convenient metaphor for expressing the constitutional truth that government should not establish religion.
- "Freedom of religion does not mean freedom from religion"
No, without freedom from religion there is no freedom of religion. We can properly insist that government not take sides in matters of religion.
- "Prayer has been kicked out of public schools"
Prayer is rightly excluded in school-sponsored events, like graduation ceremonies, even if delivered by students. But, students can pray privately in the lunchroom, classroom, or playing field or even collectively and audibly in student-initiated club meetings.
- "We have prayer in Congress and the state legislatures, why not in school?"
There are several differences:
 - Adults vs. impressionable children
 - Voluntary attendance vs. compulsory education (captive audience)
 - Practice extends back to colonial times vs. a relatively recent phenomenon.

The following are phrases that express the proper relationship between church and state.

- Those who want the public schools to sponsor "non-sectarian, non-proselytizing, non-offensive, non-mandatory" prayer speak non-sense. "Non-sectarian" prayer is an oxymoron. Like "grapenuts", it's neither one. True prayer always comes out of someone's sectarian tradition.
- Neither the church nor the state may control or dominate the other. The gears of church must never engage the gears of state to force the God of the majority on the consciences of the minority.
- The separation of church and state does not mean a divorcement of religion from politics or God from government; but any foray into the political arena with a decidedly sectarian agenda should be tempered with a healthy dose of humility and self-criticism. As someone once said, "there is no direct line from the Bible to the ballot box".
- The two religion clauses, working together, require that government be neutral toward religion -- turning it loose to flourish on its own.
- Government should accommodate religion without advocating it; protect religion without privileging it; lift burdens on it without extending it a benefit. The First Amendment requires no less and allows no more.
- The separation of church and state is a political corollary to religious liberty. Full religious liberty is the goal; church-state separation is the means of accomplishing it.
- History teaches us that government and religion are both better off when neither tries to do the job of the other. When the state and church are tied together, the church uses civil power to enforce its brand of religion and the state palms off the name of God to support its stripe of politics.
- Constitutional rights are not up for vote; they are, by definition, counter-majoritarian. We can no more suspend the establishment clause by voting to have prayer in schools than that we could suspend the free speech, free press or equal protection clauses.

J. Brent Walker
Baptist Joint Committee
May 11, 1994



BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE

200 MARYLAND AVENUE, N.E., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20002-5797 • 202/544-4226

J. Brent Walker
General Counsel

COMMENTS ON PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PRAYER IN PUBLIC SCHOOL November 17, 1994

The Baptist Joint Committee categorically opposes any proposed constitutional amendment concerning prayer in public school. At best, an amendment is unnecessary; at worst, it would threaten everyone's religious freedom.

- Students already have the right to pray in the public schools. Students can pray privately any time they choose -- in the classroom, the lunchroom, or the playground. They can often pray orally in a group, as long as it is not disruptive. Religious clubs under the Equal Access Act abound and provide a constitutionally permissible opportunity for devotional Bible reading as well as prayer. Neutral moments of silence, properly administered, provide another occasion for prayer.
- It's always dangerous to fiddle with the Constitution. This is particularly true about the First Amendment which has stood as a bulwark for freedom for 203 years. The proposed amendment would be disastrous. There is little doubt that the amendment's proponents want to return state-sponsored prayer to the classroom. To send children whose conscience would be violated out of the classroom does not solve the problem. It only highlights the prayer's coercive effect and says that those who do not worship the "God of the classroom" are outsiders and second-class citizens. Our schools must not be allowed to take sides in matters of religion.
- We are not opposed to prayer. It is precisely because we believe so fervently in prayer that we do not want government to meddle in it. Prayer should be left to churches and synagogues, to families, and to the students themselves.

THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

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The church/state wall

In a critically important decision, the U.S. Supreme Court this week reaffirmed the principle of freedom of religion. Its ruling should be celebrated from every church, synagogue, mosque and other holy place in the nation.

In its 6-3 opinion Monday, the court found that the New York Legislature breached the constitutional wall between church and state when it created a special public school district exclusively to serve the children of Kiryas Joel Village, a community of Satmarer Hasidic Jews.

The Legislature's intent was laudable. Special-needs students in Kiryas Joel Village could not be educated in the Hasidic sect's private school system, and their parents, distrustful of the outside world, would not allow their children to be taught in the regular public system. So the Legislature set up a special system, eligible for state and federal aid, to serve the sect.

But, the court asked, would the New York Legislature allow the Baptists, the Catholics and the Branch Davidians to set up their own public school districts, also eligible for state and federal aid? And would it also offer that

same right to non-religious groups? In the absence of such guarantees, the court ruled that New York had to disband the Kiryas Joel Village School District.

Justice Antonin Scalia, in an almost hysterical dissent to the majority opinion, argued that New York had attempted to accommodate not the religion of the Satmarer Hasidim but the sect's "cultural peculiarities." His argument is crippled by inconsistencies.

Suppose that Scalia is right that the district was created to accommodate "cultural pecu-

conclude that the court's decision dismantling the district represents an attack on "our nation's tradition of religious tolerance." It's either about religion or it isn't. Scalia's failure to pick one battleground and fight on it betrays the weakness of his position.

Scalia's strategy is familiar, however. He is attempting to belittle the importance of religion in hopes of smuggling it past the barriers imposed by the Constitution. School-prayer advocates take a similar tack, claiming that the purpose of a school prayer is not religious, but rather a means of instilling discipline and respect in students. They even propose a model prayer so meaningless that it could be referring just as well to David Koresh as to Jesus.

Because of government involvement, what ought to be an act of heartfelt communication between worshiper and God would be reduced to a mouthful of words with all the savor of sawdust.

Such stratagems aside, religion does have meaning. It is important. To millions of Americans it is an intimately personal part of their lives, and the

*To millions of
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The best thing
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to do with it.*

best thing government can do to preserve and protect religion is to have as little as possible to do with it.

It is remarkable that those who call most loudly for government endorsement of religion are generally the same people who preach most fervently about the virtues of small government. They don't want government involved in health care, but they do want government to dictate the prayers our children recite each morning.

When government and religion mix, it is to

Take A Look At The Innocent-Sounding But Insidious Nondenominational Prayer Amendment

The proposed amendment: "Nothing in this Constitution shall abridge the right of persons lawfully assembled, in any public building which is supported in whole or in part through the expenditure of public funds, to participate in nondenominational prayer." (H. J. Res. 191)

- This amendment would not be merely an addition to the First Amendment. It would be a serious alteration of the basic constitutional provision for "no establishment" and "free exercise" of religion.
- The amendment prescribes the kind of prayer the people in public buildings have a right to pray—nondenominational prayers.
- The amendment by indirection authorizes government (a school board, principal, teacher, or some other official) to determine what is "nondenominational" prayer. This makes government a judge of theology and of prayer.
- The amendment restricts the rights of the people it is supposed to protect. It could prescribe "nondenominational prayer" for hospitals, homes for the aged, other buildings supported in whole or in part through public funds, or even the chaplaincy.
- The amendment introduces religion as a divisive factor into American life.
- The amendment authorizes a perverted form of nebulous religion—nondenominational prayer.

**HELP PRESERVE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
DEFEAT THE
NONDENOMINATIONAL PRAYER AMENDMENT**

**Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs
200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002**

Don't remember this?

DON'T BE DECEIVED

by a

"Prayer" Amendment

*Don't "booby-trap" religious freedom by an
innocent-sounding "prayer" amendment that
is in fact a "time-bomb" against religion.*

**NOW IS THE TIME TO STAND UP
AND FIGHT FOR FREEDOM**

What did the

SUPREME COURT SAY...?

... about prayer
in public schools

- *State composed and governmentally required prayers are a violation of the Constitution.*
-

- "In this country it is no part of the business of government to compose official prayers for any group of the American people to recite as a part of a religious program carried on by government."
-

- *Governmentally sponsored or required devotions, such as Bible reading and recitation of the Lord's Prayer are unconstitutional.*
-

- The Bible and religion may be taught in public schools when presented objectively as part of the regular program of education.

The Supreme Court Did Not Do This

- The Court did not prohibit school children from praying in school. It prohibited government from writing their prayers and sponsoring their devotions.
-

- The Court did not put God out of the schools or out of public life in America. God is greater than either a Supreme Court decision or a constitutional amendment. He is not moved about like a chessman.
-

- The Court did not express hostility to religion. "Nothing, of course, could be more wrong," the Court declared.
-

- The Court did not establish a religion of secularism. It specifically said, "The state may not establish a 'religion of secularism' in the sense of affirmatively opposing or showing hostility to religion."
-

- The Court did not eliminate all religious expressions from public life. It said that the Declaration of Independence, patriotic hymns, and religious expressions in patriotic or ceremonial occasions are not prohibited by the ruling.



SENIOR COORDINATOR FOR
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S ISSUES

*file religious
freedom
committee*

OFFICE OF THE UNDERSECRETARY FOR GLOBAL AFFAIRS
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DATE: 1/23

TO : Melanne / Katy

FROM : Theresa

FAX # : 456-6244

PAGES (including cover): 2

Melanne,

FYI.

Theresa

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON**

January 22, 1998

Dear Dr. Al-Marayati:

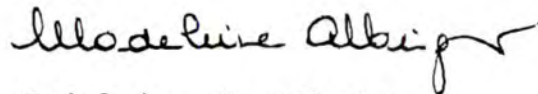
Thank you for your work on the Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad. I look forward to meeting again with the Committee and to receiving your recommendations.

In this regard, I particularly appreciate your efforts to call attention to persecution against believers anywhere. President Clinton and I strongly support the principle that human rights are universal and inherent in the dignity of every human being. In U.S. foreign policy, we insist that all individuals -- regardless of their political views, religion, belief, gender, race, ethnicity, or any other distinguishing characteristic -- receive equal protection and defense of their human rights. We must work to see that each person is able to worship as he or she chooses, and that religious differences are not allowed to serve as causes of -- or pretexts for -- discrimination and violence.

It is my deeply held conviction that every member of our government must fully accept and embrace this view. I understand that at the working group session of Advisory Committee members in October, Assistant Secretary Shattuck emphasized that the United States Government is equally concerned with abuses against individuals of all religions, including Islam, and that he underscored the Committee's responsibility to take the same approach. I look forward to the Advisory Committee's recommendations to see what more we can do to promote religious freedom and tolerance.

I look forward to working together further with the Committee on policies to formulate a policy approach that advances the cause of human rights, and particularly of tolerance and understanding for religious freedom globally.

Sincerely,



Madeleine K. Albright

Laila Al-Marayati, M.D.,
President, Muslim Women's League,
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