

## The New Right and American Theocracy

Time magazine has dubbed the rise of the New Right as a potential danger to democracy. The movement led by Rev. Jerry Falwell is accused of intolerance and zealotry. Isaac Asimov, professor of biochemistry at Boston University School of Medicine and author of 225 books, has written a vitriolic and bigoted article against the Moral Majority.

In his opinion, the North American moral majority should neither be recognized nor be given a fair hearing. These reactions to the turn to the right are hypocritical. Liberals have imposed their doctrines and political theories upon the public. For years they have attempted to legislate their version of civic virtue. Why should they cry foul when the Right wants to do the same?

The Right is sick of a society in which so many standards have collapsed. They preach against the Equal Rights Amendment, homosexual rights, moral permissiveness and communism. Salt II is considered nothing more than a program for the Russians to expand their weapons. The Christian spokesmen for the Right imply that only they have the correct answers. They don't seem to realize that Christians often reach different conclusions on the same issue.

The Moral Majority movement is divided into the Old and the New Right. The big difference between them is one of style. The contemporary conservatives are more optimistic and more activist. The striking change is their willingness to cooperate with non-fundamentalists and even non-Christians to achieve mutual objectives.

The champion of the Old Right is still Dr. Carl McIntire, president of the International Council of Christian Churches, preacher on the 20th Century Reformation Hour, editor-in-chief of the Christian Beacon and pastor of the Bible Presbyterian Church, Collingswood, N.J. McIntire believes that the task of his movement is to restore Biblical capitalism. He views Reagan's election as America's last chance before the Lord comes, and thanks God for Reagan's unmistakable "emphasis on liberty, individualism, decent morality, deflated government, and the determination to stand up to the enemies of the nation."

The Founding Fathers of the American republic, teaches McIntire, established a republic based on God's eternal laws. The principles of Republican self-government and laissez-faire free enterprise are clearly endorsed by Scripture. God has given man an absolute right to hold property. No man and no government can deny that right. "It is his to do with as he pleases."

How Biblically oriented are the Christian Old and the New Right? These conservative Christians confuse political and theological conservatism. Therefore, Dr. Ronald J. Sider, the author of *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* and president of Evangelicals for Social Action, is under attack by McIntire's Christian Beacon. Sider's stand for social justice is equated with Liberation Theology. There is also the assumption that anyone

who is conservative theologically must of course believe that the U.S.A. is "God's country" and must join the crusade to "bring America back to the Christian political philosophy of the Founding Fathers."

But the Christianity of the Founding Fathers of the U.S.A. must be relegated to the realm of myth. Most of them were not Christians in any Biblical sense of the term. They were either outright deists or mediating liberals. The U.S.A. is not a theocracy. It is no more God's country than any other nation in this sinful world.

The Old and New Right constantly talk about the infringement of rights. But what about our Christian duties. Private citizens as well as the government have a holy responsibility to prevent evil and promote the good.

In 1891, Dr. Abraham Kuyper gave an address on "The Christian Religion and the Social Question." What he said then still holds true for today. "Every creature, says our confession so beautifully, must serve man, so that man may serve his God. But from this it follows that this rule applies as inexorably to your own human life, both in its personal and its social aspects." And again: "It is shameful for fathers and mothers to let their children grow up naturally and not to improve on nature through the art of education. And so too, it is naught but primitive barbarism whenever human society, without higher control, is left to the course of nature."

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