

William Billings

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CAPPS: -- February, and we have three visitors that evening. We will, by that time, be in the portion of the course where we'll be working together to interpret the material. What we've had so far are a series of presentations by representatives of the various groups, so that we could get a first-hand look at what the various political interest groups stand for and how they work. But beginning after tonight, we will be working harder on the interpretive side, and I will be putting more books on reserve in the library to help you with that phase of our work. In two weeks, our speakers will be Robert Bellah, who is a sociologist at the University of California at Berkeley, and is the person most closely associated with the concept of civil religion in America. And the other speaker will be a husband and wife team from Germany, well known Protest theologian, Jurgen Moltmann, who is the author of the book, The Theology of Hope, and has now become one of the leading pacifists in Europe. His wife is one of the leading feminists. And they will be talking about how American religion and politics look as perceived from within Europe. That will be on the twenty-second. I think I will have a chance to lecture on the twenty-ninth, no, not on the twenty-ninth, on the first of March, and on the eighth of March, George McGovern will be back for the final session. Bob O'Brian and I have prepared some sample test questions, which we do not have ready to hand out tonight, because it takes a long time to have all that duplicated, but they should be ready about mid-week, and you can pick those up in either of the departmental offices or during office hours in my office. My office is in South

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Hall, 4724, and I am usually there both before and after my Tuesday and Thursday afternoon class, that's before two-thirty and after four. We have taken advantage of the good will of the visitors who have been here on successive Monday nights to do some television work. If you watch for it, there will be two programs of, on KEYT, hosted by Carol Howard, in the next couple of Sunday nights, I believe. One is an interview with George McGovern, and with Bruce Sievers, who is the head of the California Humanities Council, and the discussion there is on secular humanism. I can't give you the exact day, but the time will be six o'clock on a Sunday evening, the next Sunday or the following Sunday. And the week immediately after that, will be a program, Carol Howard's "Issues" show, will focus on the National Christian Action Coalition. We just taped that one this afternoon, and the featured speaker there is William Billings, who is our guest tonight. We have also done quite a bit of television video taping in the Kerr Learning Resources Center, and we are going to set up some time during the week when you can view those tapes if you want to. That will mean setting up a schedule. We will do that next week in lieu of the class. Since we are not having the class on Monday night, there will be various times during the week when you can go into a classroom and watch either Cal Thomas or George McGovern or William Billings on video tape. Let's see, what else will I announce?

I think the timing of topics in this class has been impeccable. I don't know, can't attribute that to anything

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except very careful planning. But throughout the week last week I was reading in a newspaper about William Billings. William Billings was through all the newspapers, the Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the Santa Barbara News-Press, and it had to do with a case that is now pending, perhaps, before Congress, concerning the racial discriminatory practices or alleged racial discriminatory practices of Bob Jones University. William Billings has been one of the key advocates of the Bob Jones position, as head of the National Christian Action Coalition, and he is our speaker tonight, and will explain some of the background of that case, and why the National Christian Action Coalition has taken the stand that it has.

I'd like to say something else about William Billings. I tend to work, as a scholar, looking at texts but also looking for people who can tell me the story of whatever it is that I would like to find out. I don't think that we can read about all these things in texts that are already published, because in this case the books are not yet out. But there are people, very knowledgeable people, who were there when certain decisions were made, who can tell us something about why the new religious Right was formed, what the intentions of the Moral Majority are, et cetera. I have always thought that there was one person, perhaps, who stood behind the entire development. My feeling was that it was not Jerry Falwell, but somebody closely associated with Jerry Falwell, and I think I have found the person. It's not William Billings, but it's his father. It's Robert

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Billings, who was the first head of the Moral Majority, and during the nineteen-eighties, the Presidential campaign, was the religious liaison staff person for Ronald Reagan. Robert Billings is now an undersecretary in the Department of Education, and he was with the National Christian Action Coalition for a while, but now the leadership of that organization has been taken over by his son, William Billings, who is our speaker tonight.

We have a number of things we would like to do tonight. First of all, we will hear from Mr. Billings, who will talk to us about the goals for the National Christian Action Coalition, how it works, how it perceives what is happening in our country today, what it thinks of its opponents, how it judges the Bob Jones situation at the moment. Then there will be time for a question and answer period. We also have the Advent screen in front of us. We have the videotape of the Bill Moyers Journal, the particular segment of that program which deals with the religious round table, that meeting in Dallas in August, 1980, which was addressed by Ronald Reagan. And it's a very perceptive analysis of that particular event. I think William Billings had something to do with the event, and I know that his father had something to do with organizing it. Then I have asked Mr. Billings if he would comment on Bill <sup>U</sup>Moyers' interpretation of the religious round table. And he said that he will, and that's what we have to look forward to tonight. I don't want to take, even though I enjoy lecturing, I get a little tired of just making announcements, but I will be able to lecture soon, I hope. I am

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writing a book while I am not lecturing, and if it turns out that way I'll put the book on library reserve so in lieu of, in lieu of the lectures.

We are very grateful to William Billings for making a special effort to be with us here this evening. As I said, he's executive director of the National Christian Action Coalition. You could read about him last week in any well-known American paper. He has come a long way to be with us, and has gone out of his way to be with us here this evening. It's a great pleasure to welcome him now. William Billings. BILLINGS: Thank you. I hope I receive a warm applause when I am finished.

I would like to tell you this evening who we are, as far as our organization and who I am, as well as that I will go into what we do in Washington, D. C., and around the country. And then thirdly I will lay out my views on what the future of the religious Right may be, and particularly zeroing in in the 1982 election.

Our organization was founded in 1977, and for two years we operated out of the basement of my dad's home in suburban Maryland. The reason we were still in the basement of the home is because for those two years there was very little interest, nationwide, on the part of Christians in giving any money or giving any of their time to involve themselves in Christian political action.

You have to understand where a Fundamentalist or an Evangelical Christian is coming from in terms of his own philosophy to understand why it was so difficult to get them

involved in politics. The Christian sitting in the church today, in the Evangelical Church or the Fundamentalist Church, has two basic views that are important to know. One of them is, we believe in a doctrine known as the "rapture of the saints." And that is that there will come a time when the Lord will return, and all of those who are, as we might define them today, born-again Christians, will be raptured out of the world, or in other words, snatched out of the world. And we would escape a seven-year tribulation period here on earth. Now, whether you agree or not with that doctrine, that's the doctrine that most Fundamentalists and Evangelicals hold to.

And so to tell them that they need to get involved in politics, in a sense goes against that philosophy or that doctrine. Because their response will be, well, if the world is going to get worse and worse, if I don't get involved in politics, and if world conditions and moral conditions keep declining, won't that just hasten the return of the Lord so this rapture can come sooner rather than later?

There's a second doctrinal belief that Fundamentalists and Evangelicals hold, and that is a belief in the sovereignty of God, and that all events that transpire on this earth happen because either God directs them to happen, or allows them to happen. And so the Fundamentalist or Evangelical Christian will look at political affairs and say, if God wants Ronald Reagan in the White House, or George McGovern in the Senate, he'll put them there. And if God doesn't want them there, somehow he'll send down angels to the voting

booth to pull the lever a sufficient number of times to keep them out of the White House or the Senate.

Now, to overcome those two basic doctrines is a very difficult thing. And yet Jimmy Carter helped us do that. In 1978, in August of that year, President Carter's IRS commissioner, Jerome Kurtz, proposed some revised revenue procedures that would give the IRS the authority to go into church schools and private schools, but basically church schools, were singled out, and to examine their records and their policies, internal policies as well as admissions policies, and decide whether or not that school was eligible to have its tax exempt status. And if you understand law, they were using what's known as the effect test, not the intent test. And what they said was, if that school began or expanded since 1964, when the Civil Rights Act was initiated, then that school would be presumed to have started for racial segregation purposes. The burden of proof was then upon the Christian school to prove that it was not discriminatory in its policies.

Now, there's a saying they have at my wife's state of Tennessee that the maddest dog in the world is the dog under his own front porch. And President Carter succeeded in making that dog mad, so that all these Christians who believed in the rapture of the saints, and in the sovereignty of God, suddenly saw that their Christian school and church was in danger of losing its tax exempt status. And of course they were understandably upset. So that Christians who prior to this time had not many of them even darkened the

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curtains of the voting booth, were suddenly mad at someone and it happened to be Jimmy Carter.

We found that during the next few months, our organization grew by leaps and bounds, as people discovered that we were one of the groups leading the fight on this issue. One of those who discovered us, who was concerned about this issue, was Jerry Falwell. And he started in late 1978, supporting our organization, and allowing us, giving us the financial resources to move out of the basement of a home and move into offices a few blocks from the capitol in Washington, D. C.

A few months later, about six months later, Dr. Falwell decided that he wanted to do things in a slightly different way, or in a vastly larger way, and so started the Moral Majority. A few months after that, a fellow by the name of Eddie Macatir(?), along with an evangelist in Texas, James Robison, started an organization known as the Religious Round Table. And then here on the West Coast, an organization was starting up known as the Christian Voice. So that today there are really four so-called Christian Right organizations, whereas in 1977, there were none, and then there was one, ours.

That's a little background of the entire movement. We started out as I mentioned, directly interested in and involved in the IRS Christian school issue, which is specifically the issue being addressed today, that Professor Capps made mention of. We discovered, though, that as Christian people were brought into the political arena through a single issue, and that of losing, or the chance of losing their tax exempt



status, that we were able to share with them a whole range of issues that we felt like they should be concerned about.

For years, the pro-life battle had been fought by the Catholics. And the major pro-life organizations that you could name in Washington, D. C., were basically staffed or run or supported by members of the Catholic Church. The Stop ERA movement was led by Phyllis Schlafly. And her supporters came out of, many of them, the Catholic Church, many of them that were simply identified through community meetings and community rallies, but not necessarily or if at all from the Fundamentalist churches, or Evangelical churches.

And so our people got involved very late in the anti-abortion or anti-ERA movement. But when they came in on an issue that affected them directly, it was easy to communicate to them a position on some of these other issues that they were in agreement with and had just not been articulated to them before, that they could have an impact in that area. They were concerned about that issue ahead of time. We didn't have to convince them that abortion was wrong, or that the Equal Rights Amendment was contrary to what their view of the family perhaps ought to be. They understood that basically, but yet we were able to articulate to them a political solution to those problems.

Now, that's a little bit of who we are. What we do, I run three organizations. The name of our tax exempt foundation is the Christian Education and Research Foundation. It is a non-profit, tax exempt, 501 C3 organization, that conducts

research in the field of Christian schools and Christian education. We also have the National Christian Action Coalition, which is a lobby, a grass-roots lobby, I guess you'd call it, for lack of a better word. And then we have a political action committee known as the Christian Voters' Victory Fund.

In Washington, D. C., they say that you have to be able to do three things in order to achieve an objective. Number one is, to be able to give people the facts. If you go in to your congressman or your senator, and you want to persuade them on a particular issue, they are most interested in knowing the facts. What are the facts in this case? What are the various legislative alternatives? What problem exists that this legislation is hoping to solve?

If they don't respond to the simple facts, then you have to give them the business. Now, the facts can be given with a tax exempt foundation that can do research at a particular level and present the polling data or whatever. If that doesn't work, you give them the business, which can only be done through a lobby organization. Senator Everett Dirksen used to say, when I feel the heat, I see the light. And a lot of the success that we have had as a political organization in Washington, is helping members of the House and Senate to see the light, by making them feel the heat. I'll talk a little later about the specific IRS question that is in the news right now. But I'll say that we have succeeded in the last week in derailing that legislation that the Administration had hoped to push through the Congress

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in a period of a week, and it now looks as though the Congress may not even ever vote on it. One of the reasons is, Senator Bob Dole, who chaired the Senate Finance Committee, received over nineteen hundred pieces of mail in one day alone, in his office, that flooded the desk of the offices, every bit of it opposed to the President's bill. And that was just in about the second day of mail that came in on that issue, and that's before we even had an opportunity to really effectively communicate with our supporters at the grass roots. He felt the heat, and consequently he saw a little bit of light.

The third thing you have to be able to do, if you can't persuade them with the facts, or with the business, your final alternative is to give them the ax. And that is to vote them out on election day. Back during the 1978 and 80 campaigns when the Panama Canal Treaty was an issue, we had a statement that was, if we can't get the senator to vote against the Canal Treaty, we've got to get the people to vote against the senator. And that's how it works on every issue. If you can't persuade them to come your way a majority of the time, your alternative, democratically, is simply to replace that member of the House and Senate. And that's giving them the ax.

Now, that's done through a political action committee, so you can easily go into a campaign, go into an election, make financial contributions, do a voting rating, rating that person on key issues that are of concern to your group, supplying some campaign staff for the campaign, organizing

the Christian people in that particular community to support a particular candidate. So our organization is able to do that through our political action committee.

We were very successful in 1980, as you undoubtedly were aware as you sat home watching your television sets, and saw Jimmy Carter concede before the polls had even closed in California. It was very clear that there was some kind of a movement at work across the country, not only in the Presidential election, but in the Senate election. Now, I attribute the success that we had, and the we here being the conservative movement, the success that we had was because we were able to put together a coalition that had three elements to it. One was the hard core GOP vote. Those are those Republicans who always vote Republican. And there are a number of those out there. My mother used to say, when in doubt, vote Republican or buy Ethan Allen furniture. There are some of those who are out there, that that's their philosophy. When in doubt, vote Republican. There was that hard-core Republican vote that was there. Then there were those who were interested in a strong national defense. These are your American Legion types, you VFW types, and of course they have Legion Halls and VFW Halls, all around the country. They were going for Reagan because they perceived Jimmy Carter as being weak on defense and foreign policy. But those two elements alone could not win an election. Because those elements were present in 1964, when Goldwater ran for President, and he suffered a disastrous loss.

But in 1980 there was a third element that was brought into this coalition, which that element was the social issue

conservatives. And this would involve the various Christian Right groups as well as the anti-abortion groups, as well as Phyllis Schlafly's horde of Stop ERA women, bringing all of that together, we succeeded in electing a conservative Senate, or at least more conservative than the Ninety-fifth, or Ninety-sixth Congress, and a President, a Republican conservative President, in the White House.

Now, the prospect for 1982 is not very good. I see, and this is just a considered judgment, I see a net loss in the U.S. Senate, and that is we may lose a few, and we may gain a few, but over all the Senate, the structure of the Senate will stay about the same. In the House of Representatives, we as Republicans or conservatives, will probably lose about fifteen votes. We'll lose more than that if the election is argued on economic issues.

One of two things, two conditions, will prevail in 1982. One of those conditions may be that everything is fine. The economy may be fine, the position of America's defense or foreign policy in the world may be fine. If that's the case, however, our coalition, and I am talking about the Christian Coalition, and a lot of the New Right coalitions, will stay home and not work. Because it is impossible to organize contented people. If you ever want to organize anybody, you've got to organize discontent. You can't get a rally together on a campus and say, let's all go down and rally in favor of homogenized milk or something. You are all contented with that. Milk is fine today. But if, you know, you've got an issue that people were discontented about, and you communicate it and articulate

their discontent, you can have a massive rally on campus around a discontent issue.

Now, if everything is fine in 82, the Christian voter and many of the social issues voters are going to stay home and not work. Or they'll vote, but they'll not work.

Now, a second condition may prevail. And that is that the social issue conservatives will see that they have been betrayed by Ronald Reagan. And in that case, they will not vote at all. They will drop out of the electoral process. And that's what I see happening, and that is my greatest fear. There are a number of betrayals, and I will name just three or four, that I feel the Administration has accomplished or brought about.

It started with the selection of personnel for the White House. You could list just about the top ten people in the White House, and find that eight of the ten were George Bush supporters, prior to the election, including Jim Baker, who of course was George Bush's campaign manager, Mike Dever<sup>DP?</sup>, Ed Meise<sup>SP?</sup> is about the only Republican, or rather Reagan Republican that would be on the list of the leadership of the White House. We had problems with personnel.

Secondly, we had the nomination of Judge Sandra Day O'Connor to the United States Supreme Court. And we opposed that nomination, we opposed that nomination, not because Mrs. O'Connor was a woman, because we supported a woman for the Supreme Court, and as a matter of fact, we gave a list to the White House that had ten names on it, three of whom were women, who we would consider acceptable judges. But because Mrs. O'Connor had introduced the Equal Rights Amendment in the Arizona legislature, and had on four occasions

voted for abortion on demand bills. Now, we felt that her selection to the highest judicial appointment in the country was a betrayal, not only of the conservatives who had supported Mr. Reagan, but a betrayal of the Republican Party platform, which clearly stated that we would work for the appointment and selection of judges at all judicial levels who believe in the sanctity of human life and traditional family values. That was the second betrayal.

A third betrayal was a failure of Mr. Reagan to take control of the bureaucracy. I'll just give you one instance. Under the Carter Administration, the National Organization for Women received a grant of \$165,000. NOW's legal defense fund. Fine, if that's what Mr. Carter wanted. Under the Reagan Administration, just several months ago, the National Organization for women's legal defense fund received a grant of \$465,000, which is astounding that the Reagan Administration is now paying the salaries of those who have fought his proposals and his values and ideas for a number of years. It was simply a failure to take control of the federal bureaucracy.

A fourth betrayal was the turnabout on the sale of FX fighter planes to Taiwan. That was not an issue that my organization became involved in, but one that many of the New Right organizations were concerned about.

We have seen no support for the social issues that brought our voters to the polls, such as voluntary school prayer, an end or a curbing of forced busing for the purpose of racial integration, tuition tax credits for parents who sent their children to non-public schools.

Then, finally, we had the betrayal of January 19, when President Reagan proposed to, a bill to the Congress, that ratified what the IRS had been doing over the last twelve years in terms of harassing Christian schools and churches that maintain those Christian schools.

So that's why I say that my prospects for 1982 are so dim, in terms of the conservative movement, which may cause great rejoicing among many of you, but maybe chagrin among others of you, because if, this is not, that was my ring scraping across the microphone, for those of you who just woke up. If the issues are not brought around to a more favorable light, our folks will be staying home on election day.

As well as, meanwhile with all of our problems, the other side has an enemy. Mr. Reagan has been unable to articulate who the enemy is in his Administration. If you remember your history and recall Franklin Roosevelt, he was able to blame the Depression on the robber barons. And everybody was against them, nobody was in favor of the robber barons. And there was a perceived enemy. In 1954, as opposed to 1934, when Roosevelt was able to keep his coalition together, in 1954, Eisenhower was unable to point to an enemy. And therefore, the, his party in the White House lost a number of seats in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. That will happen too, if Mr. Reagan does not identify who the enemy is.

Now, some thoughts on the New Right in general. The difference between the Old Right and the New Right could best be described by an illustration. The Old Right is



personified by Barry Goldwater. The last thing you heard Barry Goldwater say, besides every good Christian should give Jerry Falwell a kick in the ass, at which, did George McGovern give his reply to that? I heard him say in Washington, he said, well, knowing what a good Christian Jerry is, he'd just turn the other cheek.

But the Old Right, the last thing you heard Goldwater say was probably speaking out against the treaties that Carter had abrogated with Taiwan. I mean, really, that's the last time anything, anybody heard anything from Barry, as far as a big issue. And that typifies Barry Goldwater and the Old Right. They are simply so many old men who are sitting in a walled fortress, and they have a window about this big that they can see out of. And when somebody walks in front of their window, they take their gun and shoot them, and then they pull their gun back, and that's it.

The New Right, on the other hand, is a group of young conservatives, most of them young, who see a whole range of issues, and who share a common concern across a broad spectrum of issues, and were willing to work together even though your issue may not be my issue, and mine may not be yours, I'll help you on yours, hoping you'll help me on mine later on. And we put into force what's known as the law of synergism. Which is that the product of your combined activities greatly exceeds the sum of your individual activities. And putting that law into effect, we have been able to realize some real victories.

I have a number of connections with the New Right, and I don't mind mentioning them. I don't like the term "ultra-right,"

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unless that means that I am always right, in which case I will accept it. But my first job in Washington, D. C., was for the National Conservative Political Action Committee, who I know is a best friend of George McGovern, and I am sure he has fond memories of NCPAC. My second job was with Phyllis Schlafly's political action committee, Stop ERA PAC. And I managed twenty-three state senate races in the State of Florida in 1978, in which we won enough seats to again defeat the Equal Rights Amendment for the seventh time in that state. I then took a job with the American Legislative Exchange Council, which is an organization of conservative state representatives and state senators, many of our members come from the State of California, including George Dukmejian. I then took a job, you love him, don't you? I then took a job with the Leadership Institute, which sponsored campaign training schools on college campuses around the country, usually we co-sponsored them with the Young Republicans, College Republicans, or Young Americans for Freedom. I am currently the first vice-chairman of the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress, headed by one of your friends, Paul <sup>SP?</sup> Wirick, and I am a monthly feature writer for, in Richard <sup>SP?</sup> Vigary's publication, The Conservative Digest. The New Right has three discussion groups, which allow us to put synergism into effect. Every Friday, leaders for various conservative organizations meet together in what we call the Kingston Group, named after the hotel room in which we first met, and the meeting includes Administration officials who share our views, Capitol Hill staffers, and outside groups. For

two hours, we discuss the world as we see it and plan a strategy for molding it more into our likeness. On alternate Thursdays we have a group known as Stanton Group, which discusses defense issues, and foreign policy issues, and the Library Court Group, which discusses family policy and social policy issues. These are action groups, not just meet and retreat meetings, but we actually plan a strategy to bring about certain legislative results.

I'll now just say word before we open it to question and answers about the Bob Jones University-IRS case. In 1970, the Nixon Administration proposed some regulations that ultimately resulted in the revoking of the tax exempt status of Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina. Bob Jones appealed that decision, and won in the federal courts. The IRS, or rather, Bob Jones sued the IRS and won. The IRS appealed that first decision, and they won in the district court in Richmond, Virginia. It was a two to one decision, a split decision. So Bob Jones University appealed that decision to the United States Supreme Court, and the United States Supreme Court agreed to hear the case. Here's what was at stake:

Bob Jones University is a Fundamentalist religious school in South Carolina. It has an open admissions policy. They admit students of all races, but they have a rule that's a campus rule that forbids interracial dating. For Bob Jones University, that rule is a sincerely held religious belief. I will say it is not shared by very many people, including myself. There are few denominations that teach

anything against interracial dating and marriage. As a matter of fact, it's a very difficult doctrine to defend scripturally. But the point is on the Bob Jones University case, does the federal government have the authority to look at a school's handbook rules and say, we don't like your rules, therefore we are revoking your tax exempt status? Keep in mind, Bob Jones University does not accept one dime of taxpayer money. They don't even have students on campus under the GI loan program, because they are afraid that that will come with federal strings attached. So that's the issue at stake. Does the federal government have the right to dictate what is orthodoxy, or heresy?

Hold on. The precedent that would be set by such a bill and this is testified to by Senator Mathias of Maryland, if you'll read the newest issue of US News and World Report, in which they have a pro-con debate with attorney William Bentley Ball and Senator Charles Mathias, and he admits, or concedes, that if the federal government can dictate what a school may believe on this policy, they may also dictate on what a school may believe on sexual discrimination. And if sexual discrimination runs contrary to national public policy, that school would have its tax exempt status revoked.

Now, although I am not here tonight to defend Bob Jones University, I will defend a principle that is a school which is a private school that does not receive taxpayer funds, may set its own internal policies in these areas, even in terms of racial discrimination, which you will find that probably most of the Catholic leadership would agree with me.

Because the Catholic seminaries discriminate on the basis of sex, and don't allow women into their pastoral studies program, because they don't allow women into the ministry in their church.

There are a number of areas that, and by the way, that is just as doubtful a scriptural position as Bob Jones University's position on interracial dating. You would be hard-pressed to find scriptural, doctrinal dictates that tell you you can't have women in the ministry, because many churches have women preachers. And for those churches that's a sincerely held religious belief that they can have women in the pulpit. For other churches, it's a sincerely held religious belief that they shouldn't have women in the pulpit.

And so why we are defending Bob Jones in this case is not because we are defending Bob Jones, but because we are defending a principle, which is that we have guaranteed, under the First Amendment to the Constitution, a right of the free exercise of religion. Now, Ed Meese does not agree with me. We asked for a meeting, and we were given a meeting in the White House about four days after the President made public his decision, and sent his bill to Congress. During the course of that meeting, Ed Meese told me this: You can believe anything you want to believe. But if your belief is contrary to national public policy, you can't act upon it. It shows a complete ignorance of the Constitution by the chief Presidential adviser. It is no better than what Hitler attempted to do in the Third Reich. And it just so happens now that it is Fundamentalist Christians who have

been singled out in this case. And at that a very small percentage of Fundamentalist Christians.

Q: I have concluded my prepared remarks and will take some questions. Since I don't know all your names, I'll point, OK? Over there.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE PORTION  
BILLINGS: --interested in national defense and those interested in social issues. I should have named a fourth. It was an oversight on my part, but you are absolutely right, and that was a very big coalition, a cross-over of a number of blue-collar workers who were rejecting the Carter policies. Yes, sir?

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE  
BILLINGS: OK. The question was regarding abortion, and are we trying to force our views on other people. And then a comment on my picturing the Old Right as having a little window, and do we in the New Right have a huge window through which we shoot everybody who walks by. The answers are no and yes. No, we are not trying to force our views in anyone, although we are interested in protecting the right of the unborn child. And we feel that that child should have a choice as well, and a choice to live. And yes, we do shoot almost anything that walks by. And you'll find that in the New Right, we are concerned about more issues than most people think we are. We have been branded as being single-interest groups. As a matter of fact, somebody in the campaign coined the term "priority interest group," which spells PIG when you put it together. But we are not a single-issue group.

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We are a very multi-issue group and groups concerned about a number of things. Yes, sir.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: OK, the question is, how can we support someone who is a non-Christian, who shares our views politically, and not support someone like Senator Mark Hatfield, who is a very identified Evangelical Christian, but who does not share our political views? It gets back to what we are interested in which is public policy. And we have a priority list of policies that we would either like to see thrown out or enacted, and we are going to work for the election of those people whose priority list is close to our priority list, whose views on the issues are close to ours. And if you think there's been an outrage over us evaluating candidates on how they voted on the issue, you ain't seen outrages like you'd see if we rated candidates on their Christian testimony. And if we drew up a list, and said these are the good Christians in the Senate, and these are the bad Christians, and had Mark Hatfield listed over here, and someone else over here, people would absolutely dump their full wrath upon us.

(unintelligible portion)

BILLINGS RESUMES: --performed in the Congress or look at the statements they made, saying how they intend to perform in the Congress, and vote for them in that belief, and we totally ignore their testimony.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: If he says this, I am not even going to listen

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to him, because he is trying to persuade me on a level that I don't care about. I care about how is he going to vote on a particular set of issues that I am concerned about as the leader of a political action committee. In the red shirt?

Q: Unintelligible

BILLINGS: We are first and foremost a political group, whose constituents and leadership, I might say, are Christians. We are not interested in getting the church involved in politics or organized Christianity, but in getting Christian people involved in politics. But we have decided to go a route that is more political than religious in the way we might use religious. We don't have big rallies, or organization, where we bring people together and sing hymns and clap our hands and that sort of thing. We have very small meetings, where we teach them how to go into the precinct and persuade voters to vote for their candidate. Yes, ma'am.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: I'd say there's very, the question was, in our group is there discussion of civil rights issues. And yes, there is, very often. I can't name you one person in the New Right movement who does not support the Civil Rights Act of 1964, who does not think that is a good act, who is not interested in any program that sincerely solves some of the problems that exist in the black work place, or where the blacks live. We all have a common interest there. On the other hand, we also have a very high, place a very high priority on religious freedom. The only time where we have been branded as racist has been this week, and President



Reagan owes us a moral obligation to reframe that issue. When he made the January 8th decision on the IRS and Bob Jones University and religious school, he made a decision based on principle, which was the IRS had no authority to dictate what are acceptable religious beliefs and what are not. And that was the first decision. He was flooded with opposition, and he sank under the storm. And because the opposition came at him in a racial context, and a columnist with the Washington Post wrote an article that he called, Ronald Crow, and tried to paint the whole picture in terms of race, Reagan did not frame the issue right, and he conceded that it was a racial issue. It was not. The principle behind getting the IRS out of the Christian schools was a religious freedom issue. It is unfortunate that it has been painted in the context of race. And what President Reagan did is put ~~that~~ the monkey on our backs. Never before have we as a Christian Right organization or movement been branded as racist. As a matter of fact, I contend that it's really Christianity that has brought about a greater understanding between the races than anything else. And if you'll go into the churches around the world today, you will really understand what good race relations are. But they put the issue, the monkey on our back, and because we are defending a religious principle, we are also having to, are being branded as being racist. Way in the back?

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: I am really sorry, I got the 1964 something, but--

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: If I understand the question, let's see. I mentioned

that the Carter proposals were going after any schools that had increased or grown since 1964, because the effects test they were using was saying the reason for their increase or expansion was because they were attempting to escape the Civil Rights Act of 1964. You've got to understand what else was involved during that time. We had the removal of prayer and Bible reading from the Christian schools a few years prior to that. We had sex education courses starting up around the country. There were a number of things that Christian parents were becoming dissatisfied with in the public schools. And you will find that most of the Christian schools that started did not start in the South, where the Civil Rights Act of 1964 really was being applied, but started in the North. And so that you had Christian schools starting up in communities where the public schools had been integrated for decades. So that could not possibly be the reason. We feel like if there is a law that would ban discrimination on the basis of race in terms of admission policies, it ought to be at the very least written where the IRS had to prove intent to discriminate, not just look at the effect of what would happen, and say that that was discriminatory. And by the way, that's how the voting rights act is written. The voting rights act demands that you prove intent to discriminate. They are trying to change that to give it the effects test, but as it is written and as it is now, it demands an intent test. We ask for no less than that in our thing. Back here?

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: They do intentionally discriminate. Why shouldn't they? If you read Section 501 C3 of the Internal Revenue

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Code, tax exempt status is given to any organization that is educational, religious, or charitable. Now, that word or is very important. The people who oppose a tax exempt status for Bob Jones University use this argument. They say they are not being very charitable. They don't have to be. The law says you can be religious, educational, or charitable. You can be educational and non-charitable and still get a tax exempt status. So unless the law is changed, there is no reason to revoke the tax status of Bob Jones University because who would deny that they are an educational facility? As a matter of fact, who would deny that they are a religious facility? Certainly nobody who's been there. Yes, sir.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: He asks why we can defend the right to protect the rights of the unborn fetus and suggests that we are not defending the right of that pregnant woman who wants to have that abortion. It's a question that will never be answered, but you must defend the least able person. If there were two people on the street, and one were crippled, and a healthy person came up and tried to mug that person, would I jump in on the side of the healthy person and defend him? No, I would defend the helpless. I'll defend the fetus. Yes, sir.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: That's not an issue that we have really gotten involved in, although Life magazine, when they ran a feature article in August of 1981, they pictured me as one of the ten most prominent leaders of the New Right, which they

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called "Young Turks of the Radical Right," and in their always objective style, and mentioned in the byline under that that I support the ruling junta in El Salvador. I don't know where they got the quote. We have never been involved as an organization in foreign policy issues. President Reagan attempted to get us involved in the AWACS sales, supporting him. It's not an issue we care about. So I don't know. Yes, sir.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: My, the answer was reconciling what I said about Ed Meese and religious freedom, was that it? No, no, no, that was not my criticism of Ed Meese. I did not criticize Ed Meese because he was trying to mold public policy in his image. I criticized Ed Meese because he does not know what the Constitution states, or at least what it means. I believe in the, not only freedom of religion, but I believe in the free exercise of religion. Mr. Meese, by his statement to me, simply implied that he believed in the right to believe anything you want, but not to exercise that belief. And that is my criticism of Mr. Meese, not his policies, but his understanding of the Constitution.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: If I were in the White House, question, I'm sorry, I said Mr. Reagan has not succeeded in identifying an enemy. If I were in the White House, I would choose any enemy that my pollsters said would work for me. That's strictly a political decision that he has to make. When Roosevelt selected the robber barons, it was a determination that a certain number of voters would come to him on that. In

fact, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a very wealthy man. One of the wealthiest Presidents we've had, and intimately entwined with the robber barons. And yet he realized the voting strength of that constituency and a much larger constituency and chose to identify and break off and polarize a very small constituency into being the enemy. Now, as a Christian I wouldn't make a pure pragmatic decision, but I am just saying Reagan has that choice, and can select anyone. Maybe he is trying to make us the enemy. In which case he may or may not win. Yes, sir.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: Yeah. No, when I mentioned the betrayals, I told, when I mentioned the FX fighter plane was not that chipped off part of our constituency, but I was speaking of the three constituencies that went together for the coalition. We felt betrayed by some of the other ones, but some of his other constituencies felt betrayed by that. That was not--

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: Well, I really have two. And here I am in the role of being with the National Christian Action Coalition, and speaking of that one not having a foreign policy issue. But in terms of the New Right, I feel that I can speak for some of them to say that they felt betrayed by that decision. In the back.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: The question was, I seem to be going on record as saying the way the GOP can win in 82 is to name a scapegoat. The way that Reagan is going to win in 1984, is to identify

an enemy. You have to, to win an election, you must polarize voters. That's the simple fact of politics. If there is no difference between the candidates, if there is no right or wrong, you are going to have a hard time winning an election. People in the mushy middle generally don't win. Here.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: That's correct. The gentleman is challenging me on, does our organization, in my response to the young man on the end, I said that we do not look at a candidate's personal testimony, but instead we look at policies. And the other gentleman thinks that that's a contradiction of the appliance of our politics or whatever. We, in evaluating a candidate, do not look at that candidate's personal testimony, belief in God, et cetera. In evaluating a policy, we do look at scriptural application. That is why we took the position we took on abortion, because it's a scriptural position, we feel. So if a matter of on policy, we look to see how that coincides or reconciles itself with our understanding of the scriptures. On a candidate, we attempt to divorce his personal life with his political values. All the way in the back.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: The, and I think everyone was able to hear that, the times that the free exercise of religious freedom have been limited, have been when the state had what the courts have called a compelling state interest. For instance, the Mormons, although they believe in polygamy, are not allowed to practice it, because the states have said there's a

compelling state interest there. In the case of Satanists, they have, being able to have animal worship or anything, there is a compelling state interest. In this instance there is no proof, or even there has not even been any assumption that there is a compelling state interest in Bob Jones University allowing black students to date white students. It simply is not a compelling state interest.

QUESTION: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: I think it was more a comment than a question. And so I'll let it stand and just say that we probably disagree on this.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: The question was, if I say it's hard to justify scripturally a ban on women in the ministry, how can I justify my opposition scripturally to the Equal Rights Amendment? And it would take more time than we have, but Ephesians Chapter 5 would be a good starting point. And if you wanted to read that this evening, you would get some of my views. Back in the middle, last question, I believe.

Q: UNINTELLIGIBLE

BILLINGS: Do we have a stand on capital punishment? Yes, we do. We are in favor of capital punishment for more crimes than we could list on this page. Here's a question: Do your statements mean that the New Right will no longer support Ronald Reagan? Mr. Reagan has the ability to answer that. If he makes a turnabout in a number of areas, I would say that he has a chance of bringing some of his coalition back to him. But the Reagan Administration has spent more time trying to woo its adversaries than mobilize

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it allies. And its allies are leaving him by the score. So if he does not begin pushing for some of those issues that the New Right leaders are concerned about in the New Right constituents, I see little chance of him getting our support in 1984. And instead we will look to someone like Jack Kemp or Phil Crane or Jesse Helms who more clearly operate from a position of principle, rather than pragmatic politics.

CAPPS: We are going to take about a ten-minute break now and set up the Advent screen for the Bill Moyers Journal.

Mr. Billings is not finished here tonight. He said he will comment on the Bill Moyers piece after we watch that.

Ten minutes.

END