

Left Behind: The Evangelical Left and the Limits of Evangelical Politics, 1965-1988**David R. Swartz****Publication Date**

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LEFT BEHIND: THE EVANGELICAL LEFT AND THE LIMITS OF EVANGELICAL
POLITICS, 1965-1988
VOLUME II

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate School
of the University of Notre Dame
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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Doctor of Philosophy

by

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CHAPTER EIGHT

THE CHICAGO DECLARATION AND THE PROMISE OF A UNITED
PROGRESSIVE EVANGELICAL FRONT

Many adherents of the third way, acknowledging that forming small communities of “loving defiance” against the technocracy held limited potential for stimulating large-scale change, tempered their strictures of idealism by the mid-1970s. Provoked anew by animus against Richard Nixon, continuing war in Vietnam, persistent racial strife, and stirring “signs of a new order,” radical and progressive evangelicals joined together in a small, but promising movement structured around the first evangelical organization to campaign for a presidential candidate—Evangelicals for McGovern—and a striking document—the Chicago Declaration—that disclaimed the long-standing alliance between the Republican Party and evangelicalism. Urban, educated, and committed to progressive political reform, this coalition harbored hopes of capturing much of evangelicalism. Optimism among the emerging evangelical left soared as the secular press took note of their growing numbers, proliferating literature, and political activism. “If the connection between the Bible and the nation’s alienation is made,” commented *Sojourners* associate editor

Jim Stentzel on the possibilities of a progressive coalition, “things will start popping. Fifty million ‘born-again’ Christians could be one hell of a political force.”¹

I.

While disillusioned evangelical New Leftists garnered the bulk of attention in the late 1960s, a significant faction of reformist evangelicals also entered the intensifying evangelical conversation over American politics. Assuming a liberal Republican or moderate Democratic posture, these reformists increasingly spoke out against the war and American militarism and for school busing, the Equal Rights Amendment, and environmental protection. Seeking technical solutions to structural problems, the new reformist approach highlighted a persistent evangelical political ambivalence.

Reformist evangelicalism flourished most obviously on college campuses. The most outspoken political progressives—Richard Pierard, a professor of history at Indiana State University; Robert Linder, an associate professor of history at Kansas State University; and Robert Clouse, also a professor of history at Indiana State; and sociologist David Moberg of Marquette University—taught at state universities. Each published several books decrying the evangelical alliance with conservative politics. Faculty at evangelical colleges, while constrained by conservative administrations, also criticized right-wing excesses. Roy Swanstrom, professor of history at Seattle Pacific University, irritated by right-wing anti-communist rhetoric, wrote in 1961 that too much “anti-Communist activity has been characterized by [a] lack of knowledge,

¹ John Junkerman, “Voice of the Evangelical Left,” *Madison Press Connection* (November 5, 1979), 7, in Box IV3, Folder 2, “News Releases and Post-American, Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

by character assassination, and by calloused indifference toward those suffering from ignorance, poverty, and disease. Our first duty as Christians is the positive task of carrying out the implications of Christianity in every area of life.”² At Wheaton and Calvin, amidst the persistent new evangelical cry for social action in the 1960s, a sizeable minority of students and faculty campaigned for Lyndon Johnson.³ By the 1970s Calvin had become a hotbed of progressive evangelicalism from a Reformed perspective with the *Reformed Journal* as its primary scholarly organ. Dozens of talented young professors converged at Calvin, several of whom ran for political office. At a series of symposia on politics in the early 1970s, few sided with right-wing or New Left politics, nearly all instead drawn to a reformist progressivism.

This prominence of evangelical faculty points to several salient demographic characteristics of the emerging evangelical left. First, its members were educated. 85% of *Reformed Journal* readers and 86% of *Sojourners* readers held a college degree. The median educational level of *The Other Side* readers was two years of

² Donald McNichols, *Seattle Pacific University: A Growing Vision* (Seattle: Seattle Pacific University, 1989), 111.

³ 120 faculty members and students—nearly all northerners from mid-sized cities, not rural southern Democrats—signed a half-page “Johnson for President” advertisement in the student newspaper. A couple dozen protested a Barry Goldwater appearance at the college. On a campus on which Dewey beat FDR 410-71 in 1944 and Nixon beat Kennedy 924-34 in straw polls, Goldwater won over Johnson by only an 805 to 518 vote. Editors of the student newspaper, clearly cheering for Johnson, had predicted a Johnson victory over Goldwater in a straw vote on campus. See “Johnson for President,” *Wheaton Record* 87, No. 5 (October 23, 1964), 12 and “Mock Ballot Contradicts National Vote,” *Wheaton Record* 87, No. 7 (November 5, 1964), 1. The decline in votes for the Democratic candidate Kennedy was a reflection of evangelicalism’s anti-Catholicism. The presence of non-right politics also existed at Seattle Pacific in the 1960s. While a poll of 550 students showed a Republican preference over Democratic by a margin of more than three to one, there was an even larger group (50% larger than the Democratic adherents) of politically undecided students. See McNichols, *A Growing Vision*, 115. On the origins of LBJ supporters, see *1963-1964 Wheaton College Student Directory* in WCSC. At Calvin College and Seminary, several important Reformed evangelical academicians also threw support to Johnson. See Henry Stob, “Goldwater Again,” *Reformed Journal* 14, No. 8 (October 1964), 3-4. For a Canadian version of a progressive Reformed evangelicalism, see issues of *Christian Vanguard*, which supported labor and other progressive causes. See Box 5, Collection 432, Vanguard Publishing Foundation, Heritage Hall Archives, Calvin College.

graduate work.⁴ Second, despite efforts to recruit African-Americans, its members were overwhelmingly white. 96% of *Sojourners* and 96% of *The Other Side* readers were white. Third, its members worked in the social service sector. Well over two-thirds of *Sojourners* readers held jobs in education, social service, religious, or other professional vocations.⁵ Fourth, its members disproportionately lived in cities.⁶ In short, progressive evangelicals seemed to be prototypical members of the “knowledge class,” the term given in the 1980s by sociologists of postwar American religion to describe the post-industrial proliferation in the mid-twentieth century of professional vocations whose workers manipulated symbols more than produced material goods. The merits of applying New Class theory to progressive evangelicals in fact emerged as a hotly contested debate in the 1980s and 1990s.⁷ While many, particularly Boyd Reese, have criticized it as too reductionistic, the discussion over New Class theory does highlight the demographic makeup of the young evangelicals who mobilized progressive evangelical politics. In a sharp departure from new evangelicals of the

⁴ “About You ... About Us,” *Reformed Journal* 24, No. 3 (March 1974), 3-4; “The Truth about All of You,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 4 (April 1978), 6-7.

⁵ “Readership Survey, 1979,” 3-4, in Box IV3, Folder “News Releases and Post-American,” *Sojourners* Collection, WCSC.

⁶ Forty percent of *Vanguard* and 37% of *Sojourners* subscribers were urban, a much higher percentage than evangelicalism more broadly. On *Vanguard*, see “Reader Survey—A Preliminary Report,” *Vanguard* (May-June 1975), 4-5. On *Sojourners*, see Folder “Readership Survey, 1979,” Box IV3—“News Releases and Post-American,” *Sojourners* Collection, WCSC.

⁷ See James Davison Hunter, “The New Class and the Young Evangelicals,” *Review of Religious Research* 22, No. 2 (December 1980); Peter Berger, “The Class Struggle in American Religion,” *Christian Century* 98 (February 25, 1981), 194-199. Critiques followed by John Schmalzbauer, “Evangelicals in the New Class: Class versus Subcultural Predictors of Ideology,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 32, No. 4 (December 1993), 330-342; Boyd Reese, “The New Class and the Young Evangelicals: Second Thoughts,” *Review of Religious Research* 24, No. 3 (March, 1983), 261-267; Kyle Cleveland, “The Neoconservative Critique of Liberal Evangelicals: A Response to Berger and Hunter,” *Review of Religious Research* 31, No. 3 (March 1990), 280-290; and Boyd T. Reese, Jr., “Resistance and Hope: The Interplay of Theological Synthesis, Biblical Interpretation, Political Analysis, and Praxis in the Christian Radicalism Of ‘Sojourners’ Magazine” (Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1991).

1940s and 1950s, members of the emerging evangelical left pursued new vocational opportunities in universities, public school systems, and in government bureaucracies. Living in the city as social service workers often stripped young evangelicals of New Left idealism, turning them to a reformist stance more willing to compromise and to engage existing political systems.⁸

These educated, urban young evangelicals nurtured standard liberal concerns about structural inequalities such as racial civil rights and poverty. Robert Clouse, for example, noted that a reduced military budget would free up needed funds for education, environmental protection, a “peace dividend” to finance social justice, and the war on poverty.⁹ Clouse’s list speaks to the broadening agenda of the emerging evangelical left in the early 1970s. In addition to antiwar and poverty themes already discussed in chapters four and five, the broad agenda of progressive evangelicalism in the early 1970s also included two other significant issues that merit further discussion: sexism and environmental degradation.¹⁰

Virginia Mollenkott, Sharon Gallagher, and Letha Scanzoni, each from conservative evangelical backgrounds, sounded the first evangelical calls for gender equality. All three began—tentatively in the late 1960s, more confidently in the early 1970s—to publish articles in evangelical periodicals affirming the leadership

⁸ For one of earlier reformist calls for urban work, see Rufus Jones, “What Program and Activities Should Evangelicals Be Promoting and Implementing,” Speech at a 1965 conference, ESA Collection, BGCA.

⁹ Robert G. Clouse, “America’s National Priorities: Welfare or Warfare?” *The Other Side* 8, No. 5 (September-October 1972), 38.

¹⁰ Chapter three of this dissertation described how advocacy of racial civil rights expanded into a concern for poverty. Chapter four described how progressive evangelicals sought a withdrawal from the Vietnam War, blaming the high cost of war on a deteriorating domestic agenda.

potential of women.¹¹ Many in the evangelical left supported the Equal Rights Amendment, and gender equality warranted several sentences in the Chicago Declaration: “We acknowledge that we have encouraged men to prideful domination and women to irresponsible passivity. So we call both men and women to mutual submission and active discipleship.”¹² Evangelical feminists went on to build a rather substantial movement during the 1970s that decried the gender inequalities within evangelicalism and culture more generally.

Evangelical environmentalism, like evangelical feminism, echoed a preceding secular movement.¹³ Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*, as much a social treatise as a scientific study, and other important environmental writings couched their environmentalism in a trenchant critique of corporate power.¹⁴ Carson’s exposé of DDT charged chemical companies with hoarding exorbitant profits, universities with hiding the harmful effects of pesticides (since corporations funded graduate studies in

¹¹ For the earliest evangelical feminist writings, see Letha Scanzoni, “Women’s Place: Silence or Service,” *Eternity* 17, No. 2 (February 1966), 14-16; Letha Scanzoni, “Elevate Marriage to Partnership,” *Eternity* 19, No. 7 (July 1968), 11-16; Letha Scanzoni, “The Feminists and the Bible,” *Christianity Today* 17, No. 9 (February 2, 1973), 10-15; Ruth A. Schmidt, “Second-Class Citizenship in the Kingdom of God,” *Christianity Today* 15, No. 7 (January 1, 1971), 13-14; Nancy Hardesty, “Women: Second-Class Citizens,” *Eternity* 22, No. 1 (January 1971), 14-16; Nancy Hardesty, “Women and Evangelical Christianity,” in Robert Linder and Richard Pierard, eds., *The Cross and the Flag* (Wheaton: Creation House, 1972), 65-79.

¹² “The Chicago Declaration,” November 25, 1973. See text in Ronald Sider, ed. *The Chicago Declaration* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Creation House, 1974).

¹³ The environmental movement was catalyzed by a short volume about chlorinated hydrocarbons and organic phosphorus insecticides that altered the cellular processes of plants, animals, and humans. The aerial crop spraying of DDT, Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* contended, would result in the silencing of nature. “A strange blight crept over the area and everything began to change,” began Carson. “Everywhere was a shadow of death. . . . It was a spring without voices. On the mornings that had once throbbed with the dawn chorus of robins, catbirds, doves, jays, wrens, and scores of other bird voices there was now no sound.” Even more striking to the public, who read a serialized version in the *New Yorker* in June 1962, was Carson’s contention that Americans were subjecting even themselves to a slow poisoning by chemical pesticides. *Silent Spring* in the 1960s galvanized the American environmental movement, which young evangelicals embraced half a decade later. See Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Boston: Houghton, 1962).

¹⁴ For similar environmental critiques by New Leftists in Austin, Texas, see Rossinow, *Politics of Authenticity*, 273-280.

scientific disciplines), and government officials with negligence in protecting animals and people. In an age when many Americans viewed science and technology as a panacea for third-world starvation and a post-Sputnik Cold War, the emerging evangelical left joined Carson, Charles Reich, and Theodore Roszak in its growing sense that environmental degradation was rooted in unlimited economic growth and the technocracy.¹⁵ Wes Michaelson, a top aide to Senator Mark Hatfield, wrote that “unlimited growth and our ceaseless worship of materialism will lead to a global environmental disaster. ... Society is structured to serve the wealthy and the powerful, giving advantage and opportunity only to those who can afford it.”¹⁶ Wheaton student Bill Kallio, who later ran Evangelicals for Social Action, wrote, “The American myth, that consumption brings happiness, has produced a society that has enslaved itself to the demands of a technological system. ... This American consumer hedonism feeds into a technological state that demands such things as bigger and better airplanes. ... A rampant technology has slowly eaten away at man’s natural environment, and threatens to turn his life into structured, sterile, concrete existence.”¹⁷ Bonnie Greene of *Vanguard* regularly railed against overconsumption, and other contributors to the journal mourned the “chemical feasts prepared by the corporate food technologists.”¹⁸ The same corporate bureaucracy that sprayed DDT

¹⁵ See Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969) and Charles A. Reich, *The Greening of America: How the Youth Revolution Is Trying to Make America Livable* (New York: Random House, 1970).

¹⁶ Wes Michaelson, “Politics and Spirituality,” *The Post-American* 3, No. 3 (April 1974), 28.

¹⁷ Bill Kallio, “Price of Progress Too High; No Need for SST,” *Wheaton Record* 93, No. 14 (January 29, 1971), 4. For a similar critique by CWLF, see “Heal the Earth,” *Right On* 1, No. 14 (May 1, 1970), 3.

¹⁸ Dave Campbell, “Breaking the Food Chains of the Technological Society,” *Vanguard* (March, 1973), 8.

and spewed the most pollution into the air was the same technocracy that built weapons, engineered napalm and Agent Orange, that insisted in colorful television advertisements that Americans needed more stuff.¹⁹ Departing from a strictly individualistic social ethic, the evangelical left charged a corrupt state-corporation relationship with sparking the environmental crisis.²⁰

Fear of “chemical feasts” touched the white, middle-class movement in ways that other structural problems could not. Most in the evangelical left easily avoided poverty, Vietnam, and race discrimination. They might pretend to be poor, but they could take refuge in their parents’ suburban homes if they truly ran into hard times. But DDT could give them cancer; the destruction of forests could impinge on their leisure. They worried about “the depletion of oxygen, food, water, the impending population explosion and possible catastrophic weather changes.”²¹ An InterVarsity student at the University of Wisconsin’s InterVarsity chapter complained, “Like a rapacious idiot, man continues to pollute water, poison air, and adulterate our precious top soil so that the natural resources we have are becoming less and less

¹⁹ Joyce K. Ribbens, an ICS student and former employee of the Environmental Defense Fund, wrote, “The EPA, charged with implementing air and water protection legislation passed by Congress, has been, to put it mildly, hampered in enforcing any regulation which would mean higher costs or loss of jobs, such as automobile emission standards or industrial effluent regulations. And there’s never a lack of company representatives in Washington to recite cost-benefit figures or threaten lay-offs.” See Joyce K. Ribbens, “To Each His Own Death,” *Vanguard* (January-February 1976), 21-22.

²⁰ Conservative evangelicals spoke clearly against environmental degradation, though without the links to New Leftist thought. Political scientist Jared Farley points out that before the mid-1970s magazines such as *Moody Monthly*, *Christian Life*, and *Christianity Today* “were generally supportive of progressive measures to protect ‘God’s creation.’” See Farley, “The Politicalization of the American Evangelical Press, 1960-1981: A Test of the Ideological Theory of Social Movement Mobilization” (Ph.D. dissertation, Miami University, 2006), 119.

²¹ For an example of fear and angst over environmental degradation, particularly over the effects of DDT and overpopulation, see “Death of the Earth,” *Right On* 1, No. 14 (May 1, 1970), 2 and “Last Days Boogie,” *Right On* 2, No. 25 (June 3, 1971), 3.

usable.”²² The apocalyptic poignancy of environmental fears added urgency to the evangelical left’s critique of environmental degradation.

The evangelical left also added a spiritual component to the environmental crisis. While progressive evangelicals disputed the spiritual claims of Charles Reich, whose invention of Consciousness III rooted in Zen mysticism maintained that creation was divine itself, they increasingly asserted that the earth is God’s creation and that humans should protect and celebrate it.²³ Along with cultural critics Francis Schaeffer and Os Guinness, two of the earliest evangelicals to address matters of ecology, they condemned middle-class “plastic culture,” its fakery and lack of realness. Ecological irresponsibility, along with the arms race, the population explosion, the war in Vietnam, and Western racism and materialism, placed humanity above creation—what Schaeffer called the “striptease of humanism.”²⁴ “Earthkeeping,” as the emerging evangelical left often called their version of environmentalism, was a divine mandate.

²² “Programmed for Murder,” *Manna* 1, no. 2 (October 5, 1970). In Folder 344:4 in Collection 300, BGC Archives.

²³ A clear theoretical treatment of this is found in Alan Nichols, “Lausanne Occasional Paper 20: An Evangelical Commitment to Simple Life-Style” in *International Consultation on Simple Life-Style* (Hoddesdon, England: Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 1980). Also see Loren Wilkinson, ed, *Earthkeeping: Christian Stewardship of Natural Resources* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980). On Reich, who positioned his alternative to the technocracy squarely in transcendental individualism, see Reich, *Greening of America*, 242, 377. “The individual self is the only true reality,” he argued. To truly “gain transcendence” from alienation with modern society, an individual must “resist the State, when you must; avoid it, when you can; but listen to music, dance, seek out nature, laugh, be happy, be beautiful, help others when you can . . . love and cherish each other, love and cherish yourselves, stay together.”

²⁴ Os Guinness, *The Dust of Death* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1973) and Francis A. Schaeffer, *Pollution and the Death of Man: The Christian View of Ecology* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1970). See, for example, Lewis B. Smedes, “Energy and Morality,” *Reformed Journal* 24, No. 1 (January 1974), 5. Smedes writes that humanity has “sinned against God’s earth.” Also see Jack B. Rogers, “Philosophy, Theology, and Ecology,” *Reformed Journal* 24, No. 1 (January 1974), 15-17. Also see *Earthkeepers*.

In the mid-1970s the moralistic tone of evangelical environmentalism matured into a more activist and technical approach that relied increasingly on political mandates. Stephen Monsma of the Michigan Senate, for example, chaired a natural resources subcommittee and led passage of the “bottle bill.”²⁵ Evangelical professors began to instruct students on the esoterica of global warming, pesticides, and industrial pollution. Students teamed up with the Sierra Club to launch work projects to clean up litter, to oppose development in the Chicago suburbs, to conserve the use of water on campus, and to encourage the administration to install solar panels on new building.²⁶ A couple dozen students in 1970 started their own Zero Population Growth chapter, a club that advocated two-child families, the adoption of additional children, all methods of birth control including legalized abortion, tax laws to discourage large families, and a program that incentivized welfare recipients not to have more children.²⁷ In *InterVarsity’s* magazine, Robert Linder encouraged chapters to engage in political activism alongside reading Schaeffer’s *Pollution and the Death of Man*, which was named the Environmental Protection Agency’s book of the year in

²⁵ “Profile/Senators,” *Grand Rapids Accent* (January-February 1980), 38, copy in Box 1, Folder 1, “Bibliographic Data, 1976-1980,” Paul Henry Collection, Calvin College Archives.

²⁶ For a sample of ecological efforts at Wheaton College, see “‘Touch’ Begins Career with Ecological Effort,” *Wheaton Record* 93, No. 7 (November 6, 1970), 1; “Wheaton Students Help Clear Junk,” *Wheaton Record* 93, No. 9 (November 20, 1970), 3; “Wheaties Campaign in Respect for Resources,” *Wheaton Record* 96, No. 9 (January 11, 1974), 3. An organization called Wheaton Students for Environmental Responsibility flourished through the 1970s, cooperating with organizations such as the EPA, Sierra Club, Illinois State Pollution Control Board, and Citizens for Better Environment.

²⁷ See “Citizen Can Take Polluters to Court,” *Wheaton Record* 92, No. 5 (October 23, 1970), 4. “ZPG Chapter Grows, Acts to End Population,” *Wheaton Record* 92, No. 6 (October 30, 1970), 2. For other examples of concern about population control, see Earl Reeves, “Evangelical Christianity and the Ecological Crisis,” 181-202 in *The Cross and the Flag*, eds. Robert G. Clouse, Robert D. Linder, and Richard P. Pierard (Carol Stream, Ill.: Creation House, 1972). Also see chapter 3, “The Human Tide,” 34-48 in *Earthkeeping*.

1970.²⁸ In turn, InterVarsity lauded the EPA.²⁹ Several InterVarsity books, including Ron Elsdon's *A Bent World*, outlined practical steps that Christians could take to protect the environment.³⁰ A proposal from Evangelicals for Social Action called for more public transportation and for Christians to refuse to purchase or rent automobiles with engines larger than 275 cubic inches.³¹ *Sojourners* and *The Other Side* printed regular articles urging environmental protection and renewable resources.³² The Association for Public Justice, formed in the mid-1970s, pursued an ambitious program of environmental legislative action.³³ A coalition of evangelical colleges founded Au Sable Institute, an educational and environmental research

²⁸ Robert Linder, "Building Justice in the 70's," *HIS* 32, No. 1 (October, 1972), 3. Linder suggested writing politicians and visiting the offices of local steel mills to discuss ways in which companies might voluntarily decrease emissions. On Schaeffer's environmental activism at Westmont College in the late 1960s, see Frank Schaeffer, *Crazy for God* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2007), 210.

²⁹ John Scheaffer, "The Effluent Society," *HIS* 29, No. 8 (May 1970), 6.

³⁰ Ron Elsdon, *Bent World: A Christian Response to the Environmental Crisis* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1981). Also see monthly columns by Bonnie Greene and Etta Worthington on simplicity which ran in *Vanguard* and the *Post-American*. A trove of lifestyle manuals like *Living More Simply* offered hundreds of sensible suggestions for evangelicals with ecological concerns. See Ronald J. Sider, *Living More Simply: Biblical Principles and Practical Models* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1980). Also see Reeves, "Evangelical Christianity and the Ecological Crisis," 196-201.

³¹ James Robert Ross, "Transportation, Technology and Environment," in Folder 8: "Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals and Social Concern (1973): Action Proposals," Box 1, ESA Collection, BGCA.

³² Wes Michaelson, "A Change of Heart in Energy: Turning to Renewable Resources Out of Love for All God's People," *Sojourners* 7, No. 6 (June 1978), 13-18; Phil Amerson, "If People Knew the Truth, They'd Panic: A Visit with the Spencer County Coroner," *Sojourners* 8, No. 1 (Jan 1979), 11-13; Dave Willis, "Priests of Creation," *The Other Side* 19, No. 7 (July 1983), 24-25; Dennis Marker, "Dangerous Neglect," *Sojourners* 14, No. 7 (July 1985), 5-6.

³³ On opposition to oil pipelines, see Christian Political Action in North America—Toronto, "Public Justice Newsletter (May 1978), 4-5. On Gordon College's Theodore Malloch's testimony in support of the "Omnibus Solar Energy Commercialization Act of 1979," before the U.S. Senate, see "Public Justice Testifies in Support of Solar Energy," *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 10 (August-September 1979), 3-4. Also see Theodore Malloch, "Energy Future in Review," *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 3 (December 1979), 4-6; "Stewardship of Natural and Human Resources," *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 4 (January 1980), 3-4; E. R. Squiers, ed., *The Environmental Crisis: The Ethical Dilemma* (Mancelona, Mich.: AuSable Trails Institute of Environmental Studies, 1982).

center in northern Michigan.³⁴ Evangelical scientists meanwhile concentrated on scientific solutions to environmental degradation, and Senator Mark Hatfield aggressively promoted the American Forestry Acts of 1971 and 1973.³⁵

The evangelical left response to environmental degradation—characterized by calls for scientific research, congressional action, and stringent oversight of corporations—signaled a new approach to social problems. It rejected Carl F. H. Henry and Billy Graham’s view that cumulative individual spiritual regenerations could solve social problems. A writer in the *Reformed Journal*, supportive of the War on Poverty and critical of Henry and Graham, wrote, “All of these men, it appears, are against sin. And they believe that the Church should be against it too. But not against social sin: not against bad laws, poor housing, racial discrimination, and a thermonuclear holocaust!”³⁶ By contrast, the emerging evangelical left liberally employed rhetoric such as “institutional structures,” “unjust American society,” “economic system,” “maldistribution of the nation’s wealth and resources,” and “national pathology of war”—all phrases that would be used in the 470-word Chicago Declaration. The new approach relied on politically reformist fixes for structural social problems.

³⁴ Bruce Buursma, “Evangelicals Seeking Help for Environment,” *Chicago Tribune*, July 29, 1981, p. 1.

³⁵ On evangelical scientists, see Richard H. Bube, “Tomorrow’s Energy Sources,” *Reformed Journal* 24, No. 6 (July-August 1974), 21-25. Also see Section I, “The State of the Planet,” 11-98 in *Earthkeeping*. On Hatfield, see Robert Eells and Bartell Nyberg, *Lonely Walk: The Life of Mark Hatfield* (Portland, Oregon: Multnomah Press, 1979), 110s; Mark Hatfield, “Finding the Energy to Continue: The Mandates of Stewardship,” *Christianity Today* 24, No. 3 (February 8, 1980), 20-24.

³⁶ James Daane, “The War on Poverty,” *Reformed Journal* 15, No. 7 (September 1965), 4.

Since most felt that spiritual conversion in itself could not rescue the urban poor from poverty and discrimination, they began to rely on technical expertise.³⁷ The progressive academicians associated with the *Reformed Journal* were the earliest purveyors of this technical approach. Comfortable in the halls of the academy, they held out hope that researchers could solve global hunger, poverty, even militarism. James Daane of Calvin College wrote, “Because of the advance of science and technology, and particularly with the coming of automation, the potential wealth of the world is for all practical purposes infinite. For the first time in history it is technically possible to eliminate poverty on a world scale.”³⁸ In the 1970s in the midst of global famine, the *Reformed Journal* urged the development of new technologies to discover and channel new energy sources and to stabilize grain prices and availability.³⁹ Even those in the evangelical left influenced by New Left thought, which averred that science and technology acted as instruments of an authoritarian government-university-corporate trinity, began to welcome technical solutions. The Post-Americans, for example, avidly devoured technical reports on social problems, notably the Kerner Commission’s report on riots.⁴⁰ “The best means are found by hard-headed analysis and experimentation, not by appeal to revelation,” wrote John Alexander. “If a person is a Christian he will know he should be concerned about

³⁷ On the importance of specialization in solving social problems, in reaching target audiences, and addressing theoretical concerns, see Roger L. Dewey, “Editorial,” *Inside* (November 1973).

³⁸ James Daane, “The War on Poverty Can be Won,” *Reformed Journal* 14, No. 4 (April 1964), 3.

³⁹ On energy and hunger, see Bube, “Tomorrow’s Energy Sources,” 21-25; George DeVries, Jr., “Systems and Hunger,” *Reformed Journal* 25, No. 4 (April 1975), 4-6; and Orval Friedrich, “What Can We Do for a Hungry World,” *The Other Side* 6, No. 1 (January-February 1970), 26-29. Friedrich wrote, “Perhaps the best way of combating world hunger is to export our scientific know-how. This is essential for any lasting solution.”

⁴⁰ “The main texts [of the movement] were the Bible and the Kerner Commission’s report on riots,” wrote John Alexander about a *Freedom Now*-sponsored conference in Cleveland. See “Communications Conference,” 4, No. 3 *The Other Side* (May-June 1968), 11.

high unemployment, but he won't automatically know whether unemployment can best be decreased by tax cuts, government construction projects, or unbridled competition in an open market. This is a very complicated, technical question of economics which the Christian as such has no special competence to judge. That is a question which, like it or not, has to be left to experts."⁴¹ The progressive coalition, whose attempts to solve issues of domestic and global poverty looked something like the Progressive movement of the early twentieth century, could in good faith intone, the lyrics of a hymn entitled "From Thee All Skill and Science Flow."⁴²

In addition to a new emphasis on technical solutions to complex structural problems, the emerging evangelical left turned to politics to implement those solutions. In fashioning a new evangelical politics for the 1970s, progressives repudiated the traditional evangelical affirmation of the conservative status quo. In an age of growing injustice, young evangelicals argued, reform was necessary. David Moberg in *Inasmuch: Christian Social Responsibility in the Twentieth Century* lamented the legacy of Henry's *Uneasy Conscience*. The growing social awareness of evangelicals, which Moberg liked, was surfacing in a conservative form, which he did not like. The "suburban captivity of the church," criticized Moberg, meant that "evangelical spokesmen tend to condemn labor leaders and praise businessmen, to oppose social legislation in favor of 'voluntary charity,' and to support conservative political and economic perspectives." The rising status of evangelicals in the social

⁴¹ John Alexander, "A Politics of Love," *The Other Side* 8, No. 4 (July-August 1972), 3. (2-3, 42-4) For other examples, see Wilkinson, *Earthkeepers* and Ron Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1977); Moberg, *Great Reversal*, 209. Moberg wrote, "Clergy need to be trained in the social and behavioral sciences, especially in those dimensions which pertain to social issues and the strategies and tactics for being effective agents of change."

⁴² See worship program entitled "A Celebration of Hope," in Folder "1974 Thanksgiving Workshop," ESA Archives.

class structure, he noted, had the potential to spark a progressive social awareness. Instead, growing wealth was resulting in “a growing conformity to worldly standards. ... They have gradually accommodated their religious beliefs to materialistic patterns of personal and family life and have come to identify themselves with the interests of wealth and power in society.”⁴³

Reformist evangelicals criticized New Leftist politics less than they condemned conservative politics; nonetheless, they moved decisively away from revolutionary rhetoric.⁴⁴ “The Christian ought to be aware that the demand for an earthly ideal,” wrote Walfred Peterson, “while necessary as a prod, is utopian and cannot be achieved. For the here and now, the Christian must accept and work within a framework of the relatively good. Those who cannot do so should retreat into a monastery or an agrarian sect, when and if they can find one that is perfect.”⁴⁵ Peterson’s words signaled a key shift in the political thought of the emerging evangelical left. To make a real difference, evangelicals needed to work within the system, to practice a “progressive realism,” in the words of Stephen Monsma, a political scientist at Calvin College and a Democratic member of the Michigan House

⁴³ Moberg, *Inasmuch*, 21. In a similar critique of the suburban evangelical church (that echoed with his father’s critique of fundamentalists in *Uneasy Conscience*), Paul Henry, an incessant smoker, wrote, “I am proud of my evangelical Christian faith. But I am embarrassed by its sectarian temper, its cultural isolation, and its ‘bourgeois captivity.’” See Paul B. Henry, “Christian Perspectives on Power Politics,” (1979) reprinted in Koopman, ed., *Serving the Claims of Justice*, 107; “Profiles/Representatives,” *Grand Rapids Accent* (January-February 1980), 14, copy in Box 1, Folder 1, “Bibliographic Data, 1976-1980,” Paul Henry Collection, Calvin College Archives.

⁴⁴ On the moderate position between conservative and radical politics, see the CADA chapter that sprouted in the late 1960s at Wheaton. The groups could fill the “vacuum in the political life of students who feel alienated from the New Left and SDS, and yet can’t relate to groups of a more conservative nature.” See “CADA to Penetrate Campus Groups to Promote Reforms,” *Wheaton Record* 91, No. 16 (February 14, 1969), 2.

⁴⁵ Walfred Peterson, “The Responsibility of the Christian Voter,” 31, in Robert G. Clouse, Robert D. Linder, and Richard V. Pierard, eds., *Politics and Protest: Christianity and Contemporary Affairs* (Greenwood, S.C.: Attic Press, 1968).

of Representatives from 1974 to 1978.⁴⁶ Progressives suggested that politics offered an ideal realm to change unjust structures. Good politicians, argued Evangelical Free layperson and 1980 presidential candidate John B. Anderson, “are attempting to create public policies and political decisions which are faithful to their own viewpoints insofar as political reality allows. They realize that to abandon the field of politics to those who hold principles other than their own is to abdicate their own moral responsibility.”⁴⁷ Edward Loucks, a California government researcher, wrote, “The Christian has certain political responsibilities which he cannot justifiably shirk. ... He *must* participate meaningfully in the political process because he is scripturally obligated to *care* for his neighbor.”⁴⁸ Michael Haynes, a three-time Democratic state legislator in Massachusetts, member of the state parole board, and founder of the Evangelical Committee for Urban Ministries in Boston, spoke of his little “patience ... with his white brothers who pay no attention to social justice.”⁴⁹ By 1973 a book aptly named *Political Evangelism* by Calvin professor Richard Mouw had come to

⁴⁶ See Stephen Monsma, *The Unraveling of America* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1974). David Moberg similarly contended, “To be effective, it necessitates establishing coalitions, most of which can be short-term partnerships to deal with single issues. Working with persons of many kinds for the common good, living with the ambiguities of moral principles arrayed against other moral principles, experiencing the compromises of ideals which are often necessary, and being tempted to allow selfish, sectarian motivations to dominate, the Christian lobbyist is often caught in complexities as difficult as those of the politician. But the alternative to exercising citizenship responsibilities is to be a ‘political eunuch.’ ... In modern democratic societies it is absolutely essential to build coalitions in order to bring about structural change.” See Moberg, *Great Reversal*, 210.

⁴⁷ Anderson, *Vision and Betrayal in America* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1975), 121.

⁴⁸ Edward A. Loucks, “Deciding How to Vote,” *The Other Side* 8, No. 5 (September-October 1972), 25.

⁴⁹ “Back to That Old Time Religion: Gaudy and Vital U.S. Evangelicalism Is Booming,” *Time* (December 26, 1977), 52.

typify the approach of a new guard that began to see politics as a legitimate, even divinely appointed office.⁵⁰

Even Jim Wallis, fired by anger toward Nixon, participated in electoral politics as a regional manager for McGovern's campaign. While the liberal candidate "does not yet deal adequately with ... the need for basic and fundamental change in our economic and political institutions, our consumer patterns, or most importantly, the basic spiritual crisis of values we face as a nation," he did represent "a definite change in direction and can be a first ray of hope in the midst of widespread despair." Voting out of desperation to end the war, Wallis embraced, temporarily at least, the compromising politics of reformist evangelicalism.⁵¹ The Post-Americans, as they developed an evangelical theory of nonviolent direct action, increasingly explained that exhibitions of dissent were appropriate only after attempts to work within existing power structures. In other words, they urged negotiation before the use of contentious tactics. Before protesting at a supermarket chain, meet with the managers to see if they might agree to carry United Farmworkers' grapes and lettuce. "Meet with the key policymakers," urged the Post-Americans, "and see if they can be persuaded to change."⁵² The Post-Americans' location on Vermont Avenue in

⁵⁰ Richard Mouw, *Political Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973); James M. Dunn, "Lobbying Isn't a Dirty Word," *Eternity* 26, No. 7 (July 1975), 12-14, 29-30. Wes Michaelson, similarly wrote, "Essentially, there is no difference between what is a political task and a spiritual one. The two are really the same. To pretend they are separate and different things results in amoral politics and irrelevant religiosity." See Michaelson, "Politics and Spirituality," *Post-American* 3, No. 3 (April 1974).

⁵¹ Jim Wallis, "The Issue of 1972," *Post-American* 1, No. 5 (Fall 1972), 2-3. McGovern's loss, however, would temper Wallis's tentative participation in electoral politics. The results of the election, Wallis wrote, "showed the moral bankruptcy of the American nation."

⁵² Taylor, "Manual for Nonviolent Direct Action," 25.

Washington, D.C.—several blocks from the White House and the *Washington Post*—suggested a similar willingness to engage the existing political arena.

The emerging reformists, newly tolerant of the ambiguities and compromises of politics, sought to avoid overly pessimistic attitudes toward the nation or American politics.⁵³ The *Reformed Journal* chastised Iowan Harold Hughes for dropping out of the Senate to work for a religious foundation. “Why can’t he fully commit himself to God in politics?” asked George DeVries.⁵⁴ Too many evangelicals, wrote Paul Henry, “have shunned politics as a dirty, worldly, and humanistic endeavor alien to the concerns of the gospel.” Ron Michaelson advised evangelical voters to be satisfied with less-than-perfect candidates.⁵⁵ Another urged attentiveness to “political viability” when selecting candidates.⁵⁶ Relying solely on church aid to tackle poverty, reformist young evangelicals advised, might be ideal, but religious organizations

⁵³ Many progressive evangelicals went out of their way to express allegiance to the nation, to speak of American ideals and the virtues of American democracy. During the particularly contentious year of 1970 Fuller student Gary Tuttle gave a speech that turned the tables on law-and-order evangelicals: “... everything is not rotten in America. ... For example, it is a strength of our democratic system that public dissent is a possibility.” He continued, “We must keep in our consciousness those things in America which guarantee and facilitate raising a dissenting voice. If we do, then our dissent will be healthy, constructive, and geared toward life and building up, rather than merely tearing down and destroying.” See Gary Tuttle, “On Dissent,” *The Opinion* 9, No. 5 (May 26, 1970), 4. Also see Al Krass, “The Church as Loyal Opposition,” *Right On* 10, No. 4 (February 1979), 6-7. Krass, urging a “chastened hope,” criticized the radical evangelical habit in the 1970s of spelling America with a “k.”

⁵⁴ George DeVries, “Mr. Hughes Leaves Washington” *Reformed Journal* 23, No. 9 (November 1973), 6-7. Hughes recounted discussions with Billy Graham as well as evangelical Washington insiders Mark Hatfield, Doug Coe, Graham Purcell, and Al Quie on whether to leave the Senate and politics altogether. “To a man they felt that I should stay in the Senate,” wrote Hughes. See Hughes, *Man from Ida Grove*, 317-319.

⁵⁵ Ronald Michaelson, “Positive Politics,” *HIS* 32, No. 8 (May 1972), 13. Also see David S. Sullivan on voting for flexibility instead of correct policies. He instructs voters to “avoid extremes,” to “appeal to observable facts,” to tolerate ambiguity, to avoid emotional terms such as “right and wrong.” See Sullivan, “Lean to the Left, Lean to the Right,” *The Other Side* 8, No. 5 (September-October 1972), 30-34.

⁵⁶ Emilio Castro, “Strategies for Confronting Unjust Social Structures,” 1, speech delivered at the 1974 Thanksgiving Workshop, Chicago, Ill. Copy in Folder “1974 Thanksgiving Workshop,” ESA Archives.

lacked expertise and a central organization to address structural injustices. “While private initiative in charity and improvement of conditions is essential,” wrote Jack Buckley in *HIS* magazine, “the only way to achieve intensive and long-lasting change is to bring about change in government policy.”⁵⁷ In a nation of rugged individualism and a harsh capitalism, argued James E. Johnson, the federal government “can and should be used to meet the economic needs of people today.”⁵⁸ David Moberg, a sociologist at Marquette University who embodied many of the characteristics of evangelical progressivism, pointed out that evangelicals should support federal welfare programs.⁵⁹ What evangelical conservatives “have failed to see,” wrote Paul Henry, a political scientist at Calvin who launched the annual Calvin Conference on Christianity and Politics and his own political career in the early 1970s, “is that the gospel itself is, among other things, a gospel of political redemption.”⁶⁰ That the

⁵⁷ Jack Buckley, review of *Bread for the World*, by Arthur Simon, *HIS* 36, No. 9 (June 1976).

⁵⁸ Moreover, Johnson pointed out, Billy Graham had supported Lyndon Johnson’s anti-poverty initiatives. Johnson, “The Christian and the Emergence of the Welfare State,” in Robert G. Clouse, Robert D. Linder, and Richard V. Pierard, ed., *Protest and Politics: Christians in Contemporary Affairs* (Greenwood, S.C.: Attic Press, 1968), 95, 116.

⁵⁹ A second source for non-right views, though it was largely hidden in the Dutch enclave of southwestern Michigan until the mid-1970s, was the Christian Reformed Church community. Reacting to growing right-wing sentiment among the Christian Reformed Church in the 1950s, a coterie of professors at Calvin founded the *Reformed Journal*. The journal, which was outspoken in support of civil rights and labor unions, became a fairly significant source of non-right political and social commentary by the 1970s and helped turn the Dutch Reformed communities toward the evangelical community. See George Stob, “The Years of the Journal,” *Reformed Journal* 26, No. 3 (March 1976), 11.

⁶⁰ Paul Henry, *Politics for Evangelicals*, 22. Henry worked for Representative John B. Anderson from Illinois in the U.S. Congress in the late 1960s while finishing a Ph.D. in political science from Duke University. He acted as staff director for the House Republican Conference in 1968 and 1969 in his capacity as an Anderson staffer. After moving to Grand Rapids, Mich., to teach at Calvin College, Henry became chair of the Kent County Republican Party in 1974. He was then elected as a member of the Michigan State Board of Education from 1975 to 1978, then served in the Michigan State House of Representatives from 1979 to 1982. He served in the Michigan State Senate from 1983 to 1984. In 1984, Henry then represented Michigan’s fifth congressional district in the United States House of Representatives until 1990, when he began to represent the third congressional district after redistricting. He served in this capacity until his death from a brain tumor in 1993. Don Bonker, another outspoken evangelical in the U.S. House of Representatives, represented the state of

gospel could bring about political redemption—the evangelical story of the seventies—was a message articulated most clearly, insistently, and first by evangelicals not on the right.

The technical, pragmatic, reformist sensibilities of young evangelical politics often emerged out of the crucible of urban living.⁶¹ “The frontline of the battle for the gospel,” said Jimmy Allen, pastor of an urban congregation in San Antonio, “is in the cities.”⁶² Living in the city exposed many in the evangelical left to the structural constraints of poverty. Paul Henry, who lived in Grand Rapids, wrote that “white evangelicalism has cut itself off from the black evangelical, the rural white fundamentalist, and even the inner-city ministries of the Salvation Army.”⁶³ It’s hard for suburbanites to understand what a ghetto is like if they’ve never been to one,” wrote Newark, N.J., resident Charles Furness, who argued in favor of generous welfare benefits.⁶⁴ *The Other Side’s* Rip Hodson, a Wheaton graduate, took a teaching post at a Harlem high school and criticized residents in his home suburb for being “shielded from a lot of the tragedies of life.”⁶⁵ David Moberg, who lived in

Washington. Elected in 1975, Bonker was known for his expertise on equitable foreign trade, environmental issues, and human rights.

⁶¹ For early evangelical literature on the city, see David McKenna, ed., *The Urban Crisis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969); George Torney, ed., *Toward Creative Urban Strategy* (Waco: Word, 1970); Craig Ellison, ed., *The Urban Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974); and Ronald Vander Kooi, “Can the Church Help Save Cities?” *Reformed Journal* 27, No. 3 (March 1977), 24-26. Vander Kooi taught sociology at Calvin College and specialized in urban concerns.

⁶² Allen, “Dr. Jimmy Allen, Evangelical Conference, Chicago,” 1. Copy in “1974 Thanksgiving Workshop,” ESA Archives. At the same workshop participants sang the song “The City, Lord, Where They Dear Live.” See worship program entitled “A Celebration of Hope,” in 1974 Thanksgiving Workshop,” ESA Archives.

⁶³ Paul B. Henry, Reprint of “Christian Perspectives on Power Politics” (1979) in Douglas L. Koopman, ed. *Serving the Claims of Justice* (Grand Rapids: Calvin College, 2001), 106.

⁶⁴ Furness, *Christian and Social Action*, 50.

⁶⁵ Rip Hodson, “God Is No Respecter of Persons,” *The Other Side* 9, No. 1 (January-February 1973), 16-17.

Milwaukee, wrote, “The world of daily work, of urban politics, or racial tensions, or stark poverty is miles away at the other end of the commuter route. ... Not a very likely set of social forces in which to generate social change.”⁶⁶

Living in the city often led to dramatic changes in social perspectives. Bill Leslie, bred in his rural Ohio fundamentalist home and at Bob Jones University to be a political conservative, underwent a political transformation as pastor of the Elm-LaSalle Bible Church, a daughter church of Moody Bible Church in Chicago. Elm-LaSalle moved quickly out of the fundamentalist orbit into new evangelical circles in the early 1960s under its young pastor.⁶⁷ With close ties to InterVarsity, Leslie and the Elm-LaSalle church began to declaim the fundamentalist antipathy toward social programs and political involvement. The church instead called its members to become “corporately involved in human services.” By 1964 Leslie had become a political independent “distressed over the agonies of the poor and dispossessed.” By 1968, he strenuously opposed the Republican ticket, concerned that Nixon would cut off federally funded programs for the poor.⁶⁸ Elm-LaSalle members, most of whom were

⁶⁶ David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism versus Social Concern* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972), 92.

⁶⁷ LaSalle clashed with the conservative Moody Church over the daughter church’s new trajectory in general and a tutoring program in particular. The congregations parted ways in 1973 as the church, just blocks away from Cabrini-Green and the Carl Sandburg housing projects, started a coffee house, a tutoring ministry, a legal aid clinic, and began to politically advocate for the poor on the near-north side of Chicago. Moody Church leaders objected to the tutoring program because “The church building is not the place for secular education. If we are going to teach kids to read, we should use the Bible. If we can’t use the Bible, let’s stay out of social things.” See James Hefley and Marti Hefley, *The Church That Takes on Trouble* (Elgin: David C. Cook Publishing Company), 43-47.

⁶⁸ Hefley, *Church That Takes on Trouble*, 60, 166. The case of Bill and his wife Adrienne Leslie casts the factor of living in the city in sharp relief. During the early years of his pastorate at LaSalle-Elm, the family lived in the far west suburbs of Wheaton. Bill commuted into the city each day. As Bill turned more progressive politically, Adrienne “fretted over welfare cheats with Wheaton neighbors.” LaSalle member Chuck Hogren agreed with Bill, explaining that conservatives, who were sounding the cry for law and order and a crackdown on crime, did not “fully understand the problems of impoverished minorities.”

political conservatives before joining the church, described themselves in the early 1970s as “more politically liberal.”⁶⁹ Leslie soon found himself deeply involved in local politics, heading up the Chicago-Orleans Housing Corporation and the Near North Area council.⁷⁰

Located in the Austin neighborhood of midtown Chicago just a few miles south of LaSalle, Circle Church experienced a similar transformation. David Mains, who like Bill Leslie was a former assistant pastor at Moody Bible Church, started the church in a Teamsters union hall in the late 1960s intending to form a multi-ethnic congregation with a commitment to poverty and justice issues. Mains, only 33 years old, soon attracted a variety of people: poor people from the neighborhood, some hippies, foreign students from a nearby University of Illinois branch campus, and evangelical students from the suburbs.⁷¹ Within several years the congregation enjoyed an attendance of 500 people. It also operated a legal clinic, a youth program, a counseling clinic, and social workers. A sizable black minority membership

⁶⁹ More members classified themselves in one of these categories—independent liberal, moderate Republican, independent conservative, or liberal Republican—than as “conservative Republican.” Hefley, *Church That Takes on Trouble*, 137.

⁷⁰ Hefley, *Church That Takes on Trouble*, 85-86, 159. LaSalle worked with mainline churches in its efforts to provide affordable housing on the North Side of Chicago. All were willing to work with government bureaucracies on issues of human welfare. The church’s involvement in social and political affairs—“why can’t we work with other churches, even Catholic, on nontheological issues?” asked Leslie—was criticized by many at LaSalle’s parent church, Moody, who felt that Leslie and LaSalle were “unequally yoked.” Similarly, Washington, D.C.’s Church of the Savior’s constitution pledged cooperation with the National and World Council of Churches. See O’Connor, *Call to Commitment*, 18. For another example of increased evangelical involvement in local politics, note the case Robert Linder who served as the mayor and on the city commission of Manhattan, Kansas. Many other young evangelicals—for example, Jim Wallis in Detroit and Ron Sider in New Haven—were politicized in urban settings.

⁷¹ See “The New Ministry: Bringing God Back To Life,” *Time* 94, No. 26 (December 26, 1969). This cover story in *Time* magazine, which featured Circle Church, charted the rise of faith in American life three years after running the noted “Is God Dead?” cover.

attended the church, which hired associate pastor Clarence Hilliard, head of Operation PUSH's clergy division.⁷²

Church of the Savior in Washington, D.C., perhaps the most prominent non-fundamentalist urban evangelical church in the United States, also listed politically to the center and left. Founded by Gordon Cosby, Church of the Savior nurtured a strong sense of social justice, insisting that inner piety and prayer ought to spark an "outer journey." Evangelicals, member Elizabeth O'Connor contended, ought to apply structural solutions to social problems such as "alcoholism, dope addiction, the aged, the blind, the sick, the broken in mind and spirit; there are slums, with all the problems of housing and education; there are nuclear warfare and the problems of automation and leisure."⁷³ Church of the Savior worked with the Welfare Department to restore crumbling homes in the District, befriended youth in the Lily Ponds Housing Development, established a coffee shop and arts center called The Potter's House, and aided alcoholics and mentally handicapped persons in The Renewal Center. Many members practiced intentional poverty. Sculptor Harvey Moore, who felt antipathy toward "middle-class America," joined an intentional community located in a dilapidated neighborhood in the District.⁷⁴ In the 1960s and 1970s Church of the Savior became a haven for evangelical government bureaucrats, social service workers, and those otherwise disillusioned with the politically conservative tendencies of their tradition. The church mentored several important young

⁷² See Manuel Ortiz, "Circle Church: A Case Study in Contextualization," *Urban Mission* 8, No. 3 (January 1991), 6-18.

⁷³ Elizabeth O'Connor, *Journey Inward, Journey Outward* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 31.

⁷⁴ O'Connor, *Journey Inward, Journey Outward*, 34-35, 41-42, 142-147, 159; Elizabeth O'Connor, *Call to Commitment* (Washington: Servant Leadership Press, 1994), 21

evangelicals—Bob McCan, a former Baptist minister who sought to establish “a polycultural college, which will be a miniature world community”⁷⁵; Jim Wallis, founder of the Post-Americans; Wes Michaelson, an aide to Mark Hatfield; and Richard Barnet, a leftist historian and State Department bureaucrat in the Kennedy Administration. The evangelical left in turn often cited Church of the Savior as a model of spiritual and social engagement.

In addition to LaSalle, Circle, and Church of the Savior, many other evangelical congregations across the nation engaged in the pragmatic politics of holistic urban ministry, bucking the 1950s and 1960s trend of fleeing to the suburbs.⁷⁶ The First Baptist Church of Pensacola, Florida, for example won a \$50,000-grant from the city to refurbish 100 homes in poverty areas. The congregation, its pastor boasted, was so socially active that “when the city government is starting anything, they contact the church to see how we can get involved.”⁷⁷ Other prominent urban centers of progressive evangelicalism included the Nazarene Community of Hope in Washington, D.C.⁷⁸; 12th Baptist Church in Roxbury, Mass.; Church of the Nazarene in midtown Manhattan; St. Paul Community Baptist Church and St. John the

⁷⁵ O'Connor, *Call to Commitment*, 167. McCan went on to found Dag Hammarskjöld College, serve as a director in the Smithsonian Institution, and direct finance for the Southeastern United States chapter of the Carter Campaign for President for the Democratic National Committee.

⁷⁶ Many proto-young evangelicals cited Gibson Winter, *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches* (New York, MacMillan Co., 1962). Between 1946 and 1960, the cost of building new churches in the United States rose from \$76 million to \$1 billion, 16 million. The dramatic rise was due largely to moves to the suburbs. See Harvie M. Conn, *The American City and the Evangelical Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 97.

⁷⁷ James C. Hefley and Edward E. Plowman, *Washington: Christians in the Corridors of Power* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1975), 194.

⁷⁸ The Nazarene Community of Hope, an intentional community in Washington, D.C., administrated the Washington Center for Urban Ministry, provided housing for poor families, and operated a thrift store and a medical clinic out of a renovated 48-unit apartment building. See “Sidelines,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 3 (March 1978), 9.

Evangelist in Brooklyn; the Goodwill Home and Rescue Mission of Newark, New Jersey; Mission Waco in Waco, Texas; First Baptist Church⁷⁹, Trinity Baptist Church, and Temple Baptist Church in San Antonio, Texas; First Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas; Friendship West Baptist Church in Dallas; South Main Baptist Church in Houston Texas; First Baptist Church in Decatur, Ga.; Wieuca Baptist Church in Atlanta; Central City Church in Los Angeles; Salem Evangelical Free Church,⁸⁰ Lawndale Community Church, and Immanuel Lutheran Church in Chicago; Cross Lutheran in Milwaukee; Calvary Presbyterian Church in Cleveland⁸¹; Church of the Redeemer in St. Paul, Minn.; University Church in Athens, Georgia; Voice of Calvary Ministries in Jackson, Mississippi⁸²; and Strathmoor Judson Baptist Church and Central Alliance Church in Detroit.⁸³

⁷⁹ Pastor Jimmy Allen described his 9,000-member church as a “little United Nations with blacks and browns and Orientals and Caucasians.” Every year in the 1970s he baptized between 300 and 600 new converts of a dozen nationalities each year. The church ran 31 “helping ministries.” See James and Marti Hefley, *The Church that Produced a President* (New York: Wyden Books, 1977), 185.

⁸⁰ Richard Cizik, *The High Cost of Indifference* (Ventura, Cal.: Regal Books, 1984), 32.

⁸¹ William E. Thomson, Jr., “Experiment in Biblical Christianity,” *The Other Side* 5, No. 6 (Nov-Dec 1971), 12-13

⁸² John Perkins’ Voice of Calvary, the most prominent young evangelical social service organization, launched schools, medical clinics, strikes on local businesses in Jackson, Mississippi. It was, Perkins said, “a comprehensive biblical approach to community development ... that fleshes out the Lordship of Christ, reaches spiritual needs through felt needs, and results in developing an indigenous economic base and political encounter.” See John Perkins, “A Strategy for Change: Evangelism, Community Development, and Political Encounter,” *Post-American* 4, No. 6 (June-July 1975), 6-11; Perkins, *A Quiet Revolution: The Christian Response to Human Need* (Pasadena: Urban Family Publications, 1976); Axel R. Schaefer, “Evangelicalism, Social Reform and the U.S. Welfare State, 1970-1996,” in *Religious and Secular Reform in America: Ideas, Beliefs, and Social Change*, ed. David K. Adams and Cornelius A. van Minnen (New York: NYU Press, 1999), 256-260.

⁸³ For more on Goodwill Home and Rescue Mission, see Charles Y. Furness, *The Christian and Social Action* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1972), 15. For more on the 9,000-member First Baptist Church in San Antonio and the social programs including counseling, hunger programs, medical clinic, and Spanish-language programs, see the pastor’s conference brochure in folder 1979, ESA Archives. For more examples of socially active urban congregations, see Beth Spring, “Creative Caring in Hard Times: How Churches Are Helping America’s Poor,” *HIS* 44, No. 6 (March 1984), 24-25.

Networks of progressive evangelicals soon emerged in many major American cities. Initially coalescing around civil rights action in the 1960s, they began to assist federal government programs related to the War on Poverty.⁸⁴ When the Nixon administration cut federal funding, they began to work more closely with local and state initiatives as well as initiate their own holistic programs.⁸⁵ Democratic governor of Iowa Harold Hughes, an adult convert to evangelical faith, mobilized religious and civic leaders to build medical clinics and start summer jobs programs for youth after looking over decayed buildings and outhouses in the Southeast Bottoms slums from the Statehouse. The Des Moines program proved so successful that it expanded to six other Iowa cities.⁸⁶ In Grand Rapids, Michigan, the Inner City Christian Foundation sought to “bring biblical justice to bear on ... the inner city” by purchasing, renovating, and selling homes to urban residents.⁸⁷ In Denver, a network of congregations called Evangelical Concern of Denver launched programs to promote

⁸⁴ Lewis Smedes of Calvin, then Fuller, stressed the importance of practical politics. He urged evangelicals to promote Social Security, Medicare, Jobs Corps, and other planks of the War on Poverty. He criticized Carl F. H. Henry’s emphasis on conversion as a catalyst for social change. “One wishes he would land on some specific points and call his shots,” wrote Smedes. “Is he against the War on Poverty? Is he against social security and medicare? Is he for government legislation on civil rights? ... Dr. Henry is not specific”; “The net impression of Dr. Henry’s essay is that evangelicals do not yet have a social ethic.” See Smedes, “The Evangelicals and the Social Question,” *Reformed Journal* (February 1966), 9-13; Smedes, “Where Do We Differ?” *Reformed Journal* 16 (May-June 1966), 10.

⁸⁵ Voice of Calvary, for instance, scored very highly on a Department of Health, Education, and Welfare survey of health delivery services. The department offered VOC a grant to investigate expansion of the health center in neighboring counties. See “Sidelines,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 4 (April 1978), 11. On the close cooperation between Sojourners and the Department of Human Resources in Washington, D.C., to set up homeless shelters, see Perry Perkins, “Community Efforts Change Government Policy,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 5 (May 1978), 28-29.

⁸⁶ Harold Hughes, *The Man from Ida Grove: A Senator’s Personal Story* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1979), 230-233.

⁸⁷ “The Other Other People,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 1 (January 1978), 51.

low-income housing and concern for mentally handicapped persons.⁸⁸ In St. Louis, the Cornerstone Corporation, spearheaded by Grace and Peace Fellowship, purchased and restored deteriorating buildings, renting apartments to poor tenants.⁸⁹ In Chicago, the Circle and LaSalle congregations were key participants in “Conversations on the City,” one of several organizations, including the Wesleyan Urban Coalition and the Englewood Economic Development, intended to promote social justice.⁹⁰ Progressive evangelicals in Texas launched the Texas Baptist Urban Strategy Council.⁹¹ Other initiatives included the Central City Conference of Evangelicals (CCCE) in Detroit, Christians United Serving Everyone (CURE) in Cincinnati⁹²; and the Evangelical Committee for Urban Ministries and Boston Urban Ministries in Massachusetts.⁹³ Working cooperatively in local politics, soup kitchens, and medical clinics, reformist evangelicals created urban counterparts to the suburban Orange County coffee

⁸⁸ David Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism and Social Concern*, 2nd edition (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1977), 111-112; “Evangelical Concern of Denver,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 3 (December 1979), 9-10.

⁸⁹ “Sidelines,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 7 (July 1978), 10.

⁹⁰ Moberg, *Great Reversal*, 179; “Leaders Search for Identity of Church in the City,” *Chicago Tribune*, May 3, 1975, p. A25.

⁹¹ See Robert D. Linder, “Resurgence of Evangelical Social Concern (1925-1975),” 203. In *The Evangelicals*, edited by David Wells and John Woodbridge (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975).

⁹² For more on CURE, see Pat Mastin, Letter to the Editor, *The Other Side* 8, No. 6 (November-December 1972), 6. For more on CCCE, see Craig W. Ellison, “Third World in America,” *The Other Side* 8, No. 3 (May-June 1972), 42-43.

⁹³ ECUMB was led by Harvard graduate student Roger Dewey and Michael Haynes, a young black minister in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, got its start in the mid-1960s as a tutoring program and a fundraising agency to send black youth to college. It soon flourished and started a journal called *Inside*. See Ted Moran, “ECUMB,” *The Other Side* 7, No. 2 (March-April 1971), 12-15. Ralph Kee, a contributor to *The Other Side*, directed Boston Urban Ministries, an organization affiliated with Conservative Baptist Home Mission Society. On Christians for Urban Justice, an evangelical ministry that offered summer internships and placements around Boston, see “Seeds,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 1 (Jan 1984), 32.

klatches that historian Lisa McGirr posits were so critical to launching the New Right.⁹⁴

Urban study programs launched by evangelical colleges became key components of these networks. In 1968 Messiah College in cooperation with Temple University built an urban campus in North Philadelphia.⁹⁵ In the late 1960s, Seattle Pacific University educated students in inner-city programs.⁹⁶ In 1970, a consortium of evangelical schools founded the Urban Life Center in the Hyde Park area of Chicago.⁹⁷ In the early 1970s hundreds of Biola students participated in the Watts-Mead Program in Los Angeles.⁹⁸ Craig Ellison, director of CCCE in Detroit, went on to teach sociology and lead urban practicums in San Francisco for Westmont College in Santa Barbara in the early 1970s and then for Simpson College's Summer Institute for Urban Missions.⁹⁹ At the Washington Center for Urban Ministry students earned college credit by living in a residential community house and completing a work-

⁹⁴ Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). In St. Louis, a group of *Sojourners* and *The Other Side* readers began meeting and working together as volunteer associates of the Institute for Education in Peace and Justice. They did presentations in church using slides, filmstrips, and movies to promote social justice. See Arnold and Mildred Bringewatt, "Connections," *Sojourners* 8, No. 3 (March 1979), 37; "Personal Identification—Thom Hopler," in Folder "1977," ESA Archives. Like McGirr's suburban warriors, the emerging evangelical left also produced proto-voter guides. See Wesley Pippert, "Deciding How to Vote," *The Other Side* 8, No. 5 (September-October 1972), 17-20.

⁹⁵ See Ronald Sider, "The Messiah Urban Satellite Campus," 92-99. In *The Urban Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974). Participants held internships in areas of community centers, inner city recreation, medical services, and drug rehabilitation. They took two classes: "Models of Christian Ministry in the City" and Evangelicals in the Metropolis." See advertisement for "'73 Summer Seminar in the City," *The Other Side* 9, No. 2 (March-April 1973), 45.

⁹⁶ On Christians United Reaching Everyone, see Nancy Hardesty, "CURE," *The Other Side* 5, No. 6 (November-December 1969), 24-27. On Seattle, see Jerome Kenagy, "A Man Involved," *The Other Side* 5, No. 6 (November-December 1969), 32-35.

⁹⁷ See Eunice and Donald Schatz, "The Urban Life Center," 100-107. In *The Urban Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974).

⁹⁸ "Personal Identification—A. Randy Nabons," In Folder "1977," ESA Archives.

⁹⁹ See Ronald Enroth, "The Westmont Urban Semester." In *The Urban Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974).

study internship while working on poverty issues.¹⁰⁰ James Gilbert, a pastor turned sociology professor at Asbury Theological Seminary, spearheaded the Urban Ministries Program for Seminarians in Chicago, an alliance of seven conservative Midwestern seminaries.¹⁰¹ Each of these urban programs tried to immerse students in the life of the city. UMPS, for example, required students to fight red tape, use mass transit, and live on \$1.50 a day for lodging, food, and transportation.¹⁰² One student reported finding “what I thought sociology books over-exaggerate to be greatly under-exaggerated. When seen in real life, it hurts.”¹⁰³ After a semester in San Francisco, a Westmont student wrote, “I am certain that no one could continue to think in the same narrow groove after seeing people and situations that have been taboo in my sheltered, conservative evangelical world. The students who experienced San Francisco now have a responsibility to those persons we encountered and to those in our own peer groups, families, and friends to communicate the problems, to break down the stereotypes, to help in small ways to bring the two ‘worlds’ together.”¹⁰⁴ Between 1962 and 1976, 27 such educational programs, most evangelical, were launched in cities across the nation.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, authors of dozens of books and thousands of articles and participants in hundreds of conferences, many of them citing

¹⁰⁰ “Discipleship Workshops” folder, ESA Archives.

¹⁰¹ Hefley, *Church That Takes on Trouble*, 142.

¹⁰² They were required to read “How to Read a City,” “The History of Chicago,” “A Black Perspective on Chicago,” “Politics in Chicago,” *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, James Cone’s *A Black Theology*, and Jacques Ellul’s *The Meaning of the City*. See Donald W. Dayton and F. Burton Nelson, “The Theological Seminary and the City,” 120. In *The Urban Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974).

¹⁰³ Enroth, “The Westmont Urban Semester,” 112.

¹⁰⁴ Enroth, “The Westmont Urban Semester,” 110.

¹⁰⁵ Conn, *American City and the Evangelical Church*, 101.

alarming government studies on deteriorating cities, called for the formation of even more evangelical urban alliances.¹⁰⁶

Urban concern, a key demographic variable of the evangelical left, combined with civil rights and antiwar activism to spark a movement of progressive evangelicals in the 1970s. A series of conferences—Congress on the Church’s Worldwide Mission (which produced the Wheaton Declaration) in 1966; the U.S. Congress on Evangelism in Minneapolis in 1969; the Calvin College Conference on Christianity and Politics in 1973—provided forums at which non-right pastors and scholars could meet.¹⁰⁷ A raft of books fleshed out their grievances and made a case

¹⁰⁶ In March 1973, for example, Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Tennessee, held a Conference on the Inner City. In May 1977, Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis offered an Urban Ministries Institute. InterVarsity hired a regional specialist in Urban and Cross-Cultural Ministries. All these efforts culminated in April 1980 with a Congress on Urban Ministry held in Chicago. The Congress, sponsored by the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education, offered over 60 seminars and workshops. See back cover of *The Other Side* 9, No. 1 (January-February 1973), 52. Randy Nabons, director of Inner-City Missions Inc. and pastor of New City Fellowship in Chattanooga, Ten., organized the conference. See “Personal Identification—A. Randy Nabons,” Folder “1977,” ESA Archives. Following the lead of ECUMB, CCCE, and other urban grassroots efforts, the National Association of Evangelicals held its first conference on the inner city in 1969. See Craig Ellison, “Toward Evangelical Urban Alliances,” 210-214, in *The Urban Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974); Roger L. Dewey, “A Comprehensive Model for Evangelical Urban Involvement,” 215-228, in *The Urban Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974); George A. Torney, *Toward Creative Urban Strategy* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1970). Also see “The Church in the City: A Dialogue with Seven Chicago Christians,” *Post-American* 4, No. 4 (April 1975), 6-13; Michael R. Gordon, “Third World, American Style: Introducing an Urban Tragedy,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 7 (July 1978), 35-37; Perk Perkins, “Concrete Theology: A Response to the Urban Crisis,” 11-14, and Stan Hallett, “To Build a City,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 9 (September 1980), 15-18. On the Urban Training Institute offered by the Trinity Christian Community in inner city New Orleans, see “Seeds,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 1 (January 1980), 30. Speakers included John Perkins, Bill Pannell, and Dave Frechak. On the Urban Institute for Christian Leadership launched by Manuel Ortiz, pastor of an evangelical free congregation in Chicago, see “Personal Identification—Manuel Ortiz,” Folder “1977,” ESA Archives. The Urban Ministries Institute offered seminars on “The Worship, Theology, and Leadership of the Urban Church” and “Case Studies of Churches in Urban Settings,” led in part by Manuel Ortiz of an evangelical free church in Chicago. See advertisement in *Sojourners* 6, No. 5 (May 1977), 36.

¹⁰⁷ The *Wheaton Declaration* confessed the failure to “to apply Scriptural principles to such problems as racism, war, population explosion, poverty, family disintegration, social revolution, and communism.” At the 1969 U.S. Congress on Evangelism, Mark Hatfield, Tom Skinner, and Ralph Abernathy spoke energetically about the need for social responsibility. One reporter wrote, “At Minneapolis they watched the tide of God’s Spirit float the church off its reef of social isolation and head it for the open sea of humanity.” See C. René Padilla, “Evangelism and Social Responsibility from Wheaton ’66 to Wheaton ’83,” 4-17, in C. René Padilla and Chris Sugden, eds., *How Evangelicals Endorsed Social Responsibility: Texts on Evangelical Social Ethics, 1974-83—A*

for reuniting evangelism and social action.¹⁰⁸ A set of periodicals—*The Post-American*, *The Other Side*, *Eternity*, *Vanguard*, *HIS*, *Inside*, *The Epworth Pulpit*, *Agora*, and others—kept up a running commentary on current political developments.¹⁰⁹ And a flood of new organizations—listed by *The Post-American* in

Commentary (Nottingham: Grove Books Limited, 1985). For a printed program of the Calvin conference on politics, see Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration Planning,” ESA Archives.

¹⁰⁸ William Stringfellow, *A Private and Public Faith* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962); David O. Moberg, *Inasmuch: Christian Social Responsibility in Twentieth-Century America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965); Foy Valentine, *The Cross in the Marketplace* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1966); Robert G. Clouse, Robert D. Linder, and Richard V. Pierard, *Protest and Politics: Christianity and Contemporary Affairs* (Greenwood, S.C.: Attic Press, 1968); Sherwood Wirt, *The Social Conscience of the Evangelical* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968); Vernon Grounds, *Evangelicalism and Social Responsibility* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1969); Leighton Ford, *One Way to Change the World* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970); Carl F. H. Henry, *A Plea for Evangelical Demonstration* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971); David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism versus Social Concern* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1972); Bob Goudzwaard, *A Christian Political Option* (Toronto: Wedge Publishing, 1972); Charles Y. Furness, *The Christian and Social Action* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1972); Robert G. Clouse, Robert D. Linder, and Richard V. Pierard, eds. *The Cross and the Flag* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Creation House, 1972); Wesley G. Pippert, *Faith at the Top* (Elgin, Ill.: David C. Cook, 1973); Robert D. Linder and Richard V. Pierard, *Politics: A Case for Christian Action* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1973); Paul B. Henry, *Politics for Evangelicals* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1974); Stephen V. Monsma, *The Unraveling of America* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1974); Wesley G. Pippert, *Memo for 1976: Some Political Options* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1974); William R. Coats, *God in Public: Political Theology beyond Niebuhr* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974); Richard J. Mouw, *Political Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974); Ronald J. Sider, ed. *The Chicago Declaration* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Creation House, 1974); Johannes Verkuyl and H.G. Schulte Nordholt, *Responsible Revolution: Means and Ends for Transforming Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974); James Skillen, ed., *Christian Politics: False Hope or Biblical Demand?* (Beaver Falls, Pa.: Radix Books, 1974); John B. Anderson, *Vision and Betrayal in America*, Jim Wallis, *Agenda for Biblical People: Gospel for a New Order* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976); Richard Pierard, “Social Concern in Christian Missions,” *Christianity Today* 20, No. 19 (June 18, 1976), 7-10; Arthur Simon, *Christian Faith and Public Policy: No Grounds for Divorce* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976); Robert E. Webber, *The Secular Saint: A Case for Evangelical Social Responsibility* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979); Richard J. Mouw, *Called to Holy Worldliness* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980); John Perkins, *With Justice for All* (Ventura, Cal.: Regal Books, 1982); and Stephen Charles Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

¹⁰⁹ *The Epworth Pulpit*, with Nazarene holiness ties, sought “to recall our people to the active social concern that was once practiced.” First issue highlights the political and social dimensions of Christ’s life and John Wesley’s concern for the poor. See “Seeds,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 1 (January 1978), 28. *Agora*, a journal published from 1977 to 1981 out of the Assemblies of God, sought to promote “an intellectual tradition,” build bridges with charismatics, and articulate a prophetic word on social issues. Other holiness-pentecostal journals that explored social concerns included *The Listening Post* from the Free Methodists and *Colloquium* from the Church of God (Anderson, Ind.). See Donald W. Dayton, “The Holiness and Pentecostal Churches: Emerging from Cultural Isolation,” *Christian Century* (August 15, 1979), 786.

a monthly feature called “Signs of a New Order”—gave the new movement momentum.

Until the re-election effort of Richard Nixon, these progressive enterprises developed in disparate networks. In 1972, however, the awakening of social concern sparked a brief alliance between the flashy protests of radical evangelicals; third-way evangelicals; older evangelical titans such as Frank Gabelein, Paul Rees, Carl F. H. Henry, Vernon Grounds, and Bernard Ramm eager for evangelical relevance; and the technical, politically conventional approach of an older generation of reformist evangelicals. Separately, these networks entered the 1970s convinced that civil rights and the Vietnam War should have been “proper *evangelical* agonies.” Together, leaders of the networks hoped, they might atone for their lack of action in the 1960s.¹¹⁰ The launch of Evangelicals for McGovern in 1972 followed by the Chicago Declaration in 1973 offered not only sweet vindication for dissenters of evangelical quietism and conservatism, but also hope for a united progressive front.

II.

When Ron Sider, a Messiah College professor, returned from Germany in August 1972 after working on the publication of his doctoral dissertation, he opened a letter asking for donations toward Senator Mark Hatfield’s re-election campaign. After sending in a modest donation, Sider asked himself, “Why can’t we do the same thing for the Democratic Presidential candidate, George McGovern?” The emergence of Evangelicals for McGovern in September 1972—with a small circle of evangelical

¹¹⁰ Richard Mouw, “Weaving a Coherent Pattern of Discipleship,” *Christian Century* (August 20, 1975), 728-731.

social activists in the Sider home in Philadelphia, followed by a fundraising campaign by mail—stunned many in both the press and the evangelical communities.¹¹¹ Not only was this the first explicitly evangelical organization in twentieth-century American politics launched to elect a president, it was endorsing a liberal Democratic candidate.

Progressive evangelicals found McGovern's political ideology congenial to their own reformist impulses. "We like the way McGovern is getting his feet dirty. He's concerned about hunger, war, poverty and ecology," explained Wheaton professor Robert Webber to a *Newsweek* reporter.¹¹² Official EFM documents praised McGovern's evangelical background, his religious rhetoric, and his stances on school busing, poverty, and the war. "A rising tide of younger evangelicals," asserted an early news release, "feels that the time has come to dispel the old stereotype that evangelical theology entails unconcern toward the poor, blacks and other minorities, and the needs of the Third World."¹¹³

More than resonance with McGovern, however, an animus against Nixon and conservative politics drove the organization. While some students and professors at Calvin College rallied with considerable enthusiasm for the McGovern candidacy in a student election, it became clear when students heckled and booed Nixon's running mate Spiro Agnew over the war at a nationally televised campaign event that this

¹¹¹ Ronald J. Sider, "A Short Unscientific Sketch of ESA's History," manuscript of a speech given at the 30th Anniversary Celebration of Evangelicals for Social Action, (August 24, 2003), 1, copy in ESA Archives.

¹¹² "The Evangelical Vote," *Newsweek* 80, No. 18 (October 30, 1972), 93.

¹¹³ Ron Sider, News release from Evangelicals for McGovern, October 6, 1972, ESA Archives. On Bill Pannell's objections to Nixon's opposition to busing, see Bill Pannell, "Busing: Pros and Cons," *The Other Side* 7, No. 6 (November-December 1971), 39-41.

support was in large part a protest vote against Nixon.¹¹⁴ EFM devoted little effort to parsing the particulars of McGovern's planks. In an article entitled "Seven Reasons Why to Elect George McGovern," most of the reasons centered on how McGovern's policies were not Nixon's. More than supporting McGovern—they could only muster weak superlatives such as "candid and decent"—EFM mostly scorned Nixon.¹¹⁵

Nixon troubled organizers of EFM due to his failure to maintain civil rights progress and for his southern-strategy campaign saturated with "law and order" rhetoric.¹¹⁶ In a fundraising letter Sider decried "policies, however camouflaged, which are designed to slow down or reverse racial progress" and condemned Nixon for profiting from "a white backlash." In addition to criticizing Nixon for race-baiting, EFM charged him with perpetuating tax loopholes for the rich and for failing to end the Vietnam conflict.¹¹⁷ Nixon, they charged, was responsible for the deaths of thousands of American soldiers and even more deaths of Vietnamese innocents. "Operation Linebacker," the massive American aerial attack in the summer of 1972 that pushed back the NLF's Easter Offensive, "has bombed just as many Asian men, women and children into eternity." Disregard for non-American casualties smacked

¹¹⁴ Carl Strickwerda, "Politics: Fall 1972," *Prism* 1973, copy in Calvin College Archives.

¹¹⁵ For more anti-Nixon statements, see Rosemary, "Last Monday the President Went Mad," *The Other Side* 7, No. 3 (July-August 1971), 16-17; Bill Pannell, "Lawlessness Administration Style," *The Other Side* 7, No. 5 (September-October 1971), 32-35; Gerald Vandezande, "Blazing the Trail Toward the New Prosperity," *Vanguard* (December 1971), 6; Jim and Glenda VandenBosch, "Nixon, McGovern and the only choice in '72," *Vanguard* (October 1972), 12-17; Dwight P. Baker, "Elect George McGovern: Seven Reasons Why," *The Other Side* (September-October 1972): 26-29; James Daane, "Richard Nixon, Church Member," *Reformed Journal* 24, No. 3 (March 1974), 5-6; George N. Monsma, Jr., "The Need for Tax Reform: The Lessons of Nixon's 1040," *Reformed Journal* 24, No. 3 (March 1974), 12-15; Ben Patterson, "Mere Forgiveness," *Wittenburg Door*, No. 24 (October-November 1974), 4-5; Pippert, *Memo for 1976*, 15.

¹¹⁶ Clark Pinnock, "Election Reflections," *Post-American* 2, No. 1 (January-February 1973), 2-3

¹¹⁷ Ron Sider to "Friend," September 20, 1972, ESA Archives.

of “Western racism.”¹¹⁸ Such policies, they argued, “grieve the one who had his eternal Son become incarnate in the Middle East.” For failure to end war in Vietnam, poverty, and racism, many in the emerging evangelical left sounded vitriolic diatribes against Nixon.¹¹⁹ McGovern, while not perfect, was clearly a better option than Nixon in the 1972 election.¹²⁰

As the presidential contest entered its final months, EFM embarked on an offensive intended to sway as many evangelical voters as possible to McGovern’s side. After sending over 8,000 letters to evangelical leaders, support for EFM quickly spread among recently established progressive networks. Mennonite Central Committee, the American Scientific Affiliation, the Post-Americans, and the National Association of Christians in Social Work, for example, offered lists of addresses.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ On EFM’s views of Vietnam, see Ron Sider, News release from Evangelicals for McGovern, October 6, 1972, ESA Archives. For some in EFM, even McGovern was “too hawkish” on the Middle East. See Bob Stoner to Sider, September 27, 1972, ESA Archives. On “Western racism” and imperialism, see Ron Sider, News release from Evangelicals for McGovern, October 6, 1972, ESA Archives. On Nixon’s imperialism, see “Despair Eats at Students,” *Manna* Vol. 1, No. 1 (September 14, 1970). Copy in Folder 344:2: Manna, InterVarsity Collection, BGCA.

¹¹⁹ See, for example, Wallis, “The Issue of 1972,” 2. Wallis wrote, “A vote for Richard Nixon is a vote for cabinet corruption and I.T.T. payoffs, for government secrecy and deception. A vote for Richard Nixon is a vote for southern strategies, for the manipulations of racial prejudice and patriotic fervor, for the erosion of basic civil rights. A vote for Richard Nixon is a vote for a foreign policy of military interventions, political subversion, and economic blackmail. A vote for Richard Nixon is a vote for a campaign characterized by the politics of fear—fear of blacks, fear of communists, fear of crime, fear of change, fear of not being number one. A vote for Richard Nixon is an endorsement of the continual slaughter of the Indochinese people. A vote for Richard Nixon is a vote for the spread of Americanism as a missionary religion.” Also see articles by Clark Pinnock, Jim Wallis, and Art Gish against Nixon in the January-February 1973 issue of the *Post-American*. On the heckling and booing of Vice-Presidential candidate Spiro Agnew by Calvin students on national television, see Carl Strickwerda, “Politics: Fall 1972,” *Prism*.

¹²⁰ “If George McGovern becomes President, is that going to fundamentally alter our human situation?” asked McGovern-supporter David Gill of CWLF. “Not by a long shot. If he can accomplish a few selected goals he will be unusual. ... We look for substantial, concrete healing in as many areas of life as possible. We do not look for utopia in the world-system.” See Gill, “The Messiah of Miami Beach,” *Right On* 4, No. 1 (July 1972), 3.

¹²¹ Nearly the entire editorial staff of the *Post-American*, for example, worked for the McGovern campaign in 1972; Wallis headed up the Evanston, Illinois, McGovern campaign. See Boyd T. Reese, Jr., “Resistance and Hope: The Interplay of Theological Synthesis, Biblical Interpretation, Political Analysis, and Praxis in the Christian Radicalism of ‘Sojourners’ Magazine” (Ph.D. dissertation,

EFM also enjoyed support from evangelicals who felt marooned in politically conservative congregations. One reported to Sider that a number of McGovern supporters existed in her area, but that they felt isolated. Around here, she reported, “It’s an underground thing.”¹²² EFM received hundreds of responses expressing approval and relief that other evangelicals felt similarly. A woman from North Carolina wrote, “You don’t know how thrilled I am to get your letter.”¹²³ A graduate student from Ohio University wrote of his disgust with Nixon’s “sordid and totally hypocritical tugs at the sentimentality of Americans—especially Christians with his entourage of Billy Grahams, Norman Vincent Peales, and other Pharisees and anti-commies.” He declared his intent to “proselytize for McGovern.”¹²⁴ Mennonite voluntary service centers in rural eastern Kentucky prominently displayed EFM letters on their bulletin boards.¹²⁵ A Pentecostal man from Chicago declared his support for McGovern and EFM.¹²⁶ A 1956 graduate of Wheaton College praised EFM, complaining that a recent commencement address at his alma mater was “concerned entirely with how social justice was bad and contrary to true justice,

Temple University, 1991), 193. On evangelical support for McGovern in Berkeley, see interview with Walter and Ginny Hearn, July 9, 2006. On *The Other Side* support for McGovern, see letter from Ed Drury, *The Other Side* 9, No. 1 (January-February 1973), 5. On support by some Jesus People groups for McGovern, see Joe V. Peterson, “Jesus People: Christ, Communes and the Counterculture of the Late Twentieth Century in the Pacific Northwest,” (Master’s thesis, Northwest Christian College, 1980), 110-113. Among Shiloh members, McGovern outpolled Nixon by a two-to-one margin, though 59% said they “didn’t care” or didn’t respond to the question. Among members of the House of Elijah in Yakima, Wash., 60% voted for McGovern.

¹²² Barbara Spauth to EFM, n.d., ESA Archives.

¹²³ Daphne Earl to EFM, October 12, 1972, ESA Archives.

¹²⁴ Reinder H. Van Til to EFM, October 20, 1972, ESA Archives.

¹²⁵ Paul Leatherman, to Ron Sider, October 23, 1972, ESA Archives.

¹²⁶ Mary Lyons to EFM, October 30, 1972, ESA Archives.

which was not defined.”¹²⁷ Supporters of EFM at Gordon-Conwell Seminary, where a mock election resulted in a 127-127 tie between Nixon and McGovern, rallied with supporters twenty miles south at Harvard.¹²⁸

Of the hundreds who sent EFM \$10 and \$20 checks, most fit the profile of the emerging evangelical left. Nearly all came from new evangelical roots. In fact many still held key leadership positions in flagship evangelical churches, denominations, and colleges such as Wheaton College, Gordon-Conwell Seminary, Fuller Seminary, and World Vision.¹²⁹ Additional support came from other quarters of evangelicalism. Ethnic and confessional denominations and schools such as Wesleyan schools such as Olivet Nazarene, Asbury, and Taylor, just entering mainstream evangelicalism, sent support and offered board members to EFM. Reformed representatives included Stephen Monsma and Richard Mouw of Calvin College and Deane Kemper of Gordon-Conwell Seminary. Anabaptist institutions such as Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Messiah College, and Mennonite Central Committee offered help. The core group also included prominent black evangelical activists Tom Skinner and Columbus Salley. The composite EFM member, however, was white, male, middle-class, and educated, having grown up at Billy Graham crusades, having attended Wheaton College, Graham’s alma mater, and still respecting Graham’s outspoken evangelical faith—but growing increasingly embarrassed about Graham’s close ties

¹²⁷ Karl Hess to Sider, November 11, 1972, ESA Archives.

¹²⁸ Jeri Drum to Walden Howard, October 22, 1972, ESA Archives; “Religion in Transit,” *Christianity Today* 17, No. 4 (November 24, 1972), 48.

¹²⁹ Fuller Theological Seminary in particular was known as a hotspot for McGovern support. Fuller professor Ed Reitz reported to Ron Sider that “sentiment for McGovern runs pretty strong here.” Many Fuller faculty were active in EFM, and Lewis Smedes, a theologian and ethicist from Fuller, served on the EFM board. See Ed Reitz to Sider, September 30, 1972, in Folder “Evangelicals for McGovern,” ESA Archives.

with Nixon.¹³⁰ EFM's response to Graham's barely veiled support for Nixon was that "our organization is the message that Billy Graham does not speak for all of the nation's evangelicals."¹³¹

As the campaign wore on, however, it became clear that Graham did speak for most evangelicals. After a month of fund-raising, EFM received only \$3,500 from about 220 contributors. While the novelty of an evangelical organization stumping for a Democratic president garnered publicity for EFM beyond its actual numbers and made for good copy in publications such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Christian Century*, EFM earned less than adulatory praise from its own religious tradition. A faculty member at Washington Bible College told EFM board members, "I am amazed, and indeed dismayed that I should be asked by evangelicals to support this movement in the light of the type of campaign which has been conducted by the men whom you are endorsing." Her primary complaint was that McGovern had used an obscenity on the campaign trail in Michigan.¹³² In a charged reply that reflected the new evangelical-

¹³⁰ Historian John Turner, however, has documented how "Graham, out of a mixture of personal friendship and political support, went to some length to arrange appearances for Nixon before evangelical audiences and encouraged Nixon to forge ties with other conservative religious figures such as Oral Roberts. Nixon aides Bob Haldeman and Colson hoped that Graham could persuade Campus Crusade's Bill Bright to take an active role in mobilizing evangelical youth to vote Republican in the fall election." See John Turner, "Selling Jesus to Modern America: Campus Crusade for Christ, Evangelical Culture, and Conservative Politics," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 2005), 276-278.

¹³¹ Walden Howard, quoted in "The Evangelical Vote," *Newsweek* 80, No. 18 (October 30, 1972), 93.

¹³² She had read in her newspaper about this exchange between a heckler and McGovern: 'Senator,' the burly youth shouted, 'he's (Nixon) going to beat you so bad you'll be sorry you ever left South Dakota.' McGovern approached the youth and grasped him around both shoulders. 'I've got a secret for you' McGovern said, drawing the man's ear close. 'Kiss my ass,' McGovern said, in a tone audible to reporters and staff members nearby." See W.T. Miller to "Dear Friend," November 8, 1972, in Box 1, Folder 4, "Evangelicals for McGovern: Correspondence, Evangelicals for Social Action Collection," BGCA. An article in *Christian Crusade Weekly*, the magazine founded by right-wing preacher Billy James Hargis, also denounced EFM: "The evangelical authors of the work have gone off to institutions of higher learning only to have had their minds washed with a heady solution of liberalism or worse. Instead of converting their humanistic, left-wing professors to Christianity, the

young evangelical dichotomy between structural sin and personal piety, Richard Pierard wrote, “It appears that you and I fundamentally differ as to what comprises moral leadership. I gather that you regard the use of profanity (an action which I do not condone) as the greatest evil. For me, however, the napalming of Vietnamese children, the bugging of Democratic Party headquarters, and the widely publicized corrupt milk and grain deals are far more serious sins.”¹³³ While not as explicitly critical, the mainstream evangelical standard *Christianity Today*, at its most politically reactionary in the early 1970s under the leadership of Harold Lindsell and J. Howard Pew, signaled its preference for Nixon. Lindsell quoted Graham as saying that while he would not campaign for Nixon, that the incumbent “will probably go down in history as one of the country’s greatest presidents.”¹³⁴

The fawning support of Nixon by several evangelical elites—especially Harold Ockenga, who wrote EFM stating, “I for one cannot understand how any of you men of evangelical conviction can back Mr. McGovern”—infuriated progressive leaders.¹³⁵ They read an article in Harold Ockenga’s local newspaper a week before the election in which the long-time pastor in Boston and founding faculty member of

professors have converted the flower of their Christian youth into left-leaning depth charges.” See David A. Noebel, “The Emerging Evangelical ‘Left,’” *Christian Crusade Weekly* 13, No. 8 (December 24, 1972), 8.

¹³³ Richard Pierard to W.T. Miller, November 15, 1972, in Box, 1, Folder 4: Evangelicals for McGovern: Correspondence, ESA Collection, BGC Archives.

¹³⁴ Barrie Doyle, “The Religious Campaign: Backing Their Man,” *Christianity Today* 17, No. 2 (October 27, 1972), 38-39. Not everyone at *Christianity Today* supported Nixon. One associate editor, despite feeling pressure to support Nixon from the culture at *CT*, voted for McGovern and got *The Cross and the Flag* on the list of top evangelical books. See Richard Pierard to Ron Sider, June 12, 1973, Folder “Chicago Declaration Planning,” ESA Archives.

¹³⁵ On Ockenga’s McGovern letter, see Harold J. Ockenga to Walden Howard, October 13, 1972, Folder “Evangelicals for McGovern,” ESA Archives.

Fuller Seminary effused about the “high moral integrity” of his “personal friend.”¹³⁶

Two months later the *Hamilton-Wenham Chronicle* printed a gossipy report on the Ockengas’ attendance at the inaugural. Ockenga and his wife chatted with the Rockefellers, Billy Graham, and Dr. Henry Kissinger at a formal dinner to which Mrs. Ockenga wore “a striking creation” by designer Oscar de LaRenta. It was a “formal, empire-waisted gown of a gold motif,” reported the *Chronicle*, “beautiful to behold.” Relieved that “the city was extremely calm—I really didn’t see any hippies” and pleased by “the number of times God was mentioned in the various events,” Mrs. Ockenga reported that attending the inaugural was “the greatest thrill of my life.”¹³⁷ Seething EFM leaders clipped the articles, as if to mock garish airs of their own religious tradition.¹³⁸

EFM organizers, acknowledging that many evangelicals were still likely to vote Republican, nonetheless sensed a growing discontent toward Nixon in many evangelical quarters. In an effort to win the evangelical middle, they began to emphasize the evangelical credentials of McGovern, pointing out that he had attended both Houghton College and then seminary. EFM organizers also stressed their own

¹³⁶ Harold J. Ockenga, “McGovern vs. Nixon,” *Hamilton-Wenham Chronicle*, November 2, 1972, 3b.

¹³⁷ Robert Waite, “The Inaugural,” *Hamilton-Wenham Chronicle*, January 25, 1973, 1b.

¹³⁸ Pannell condemned political fundraising events as “the gatherings of the successful, the nouveau riche who have parlayed talent, good looks, and good connections into unprecedented social status. Their walk may betray a certain self-consciousness, and the ease born of true aristocracy may be mission, but the airs are there, as the old folks would say. The evangelical airs are the most fun to watch, because for the first time in modern times we are visible. We’re not yet accustomed to the good life and suspect that if it’s this much fun, it must be immoral (which maybe it is). . . . We constitute a major political force as well. No longer content to allow the liberals to hog the spotlight, the evangelical is now exerting considerable clout. He is the religious counterpart of the secular conservative, the keeper of the flame of America’s civil religion. He tolerates no nonsense at his gatherings for the same reason Mr. Nixon tolerates no nonsense in his administration. The majority rules in both camps—and it is no longer silent.” See Bill Pannell, “Moving Up,” *The Other Side* 9, No. 3 (May-June 1973), 34-41.

evangelical theology. An early appeal letter read, “We continue to assert vigorously that Jesus of Nazareth rose from the tomb, that He is Lord of the Universe and that men can find genuine fulfillment only when the risen Lord Jesus regenerates and transforms selfish hearts.”¹³⁹ These gestures culminated in an EFM-engineered McGovern appearance at Wheaton College, an impressive coup, given that twelve years before John F. Kennedy had not been permitted to rent the college gymnasium for a rally.¹⁴⁰ In front of an overflow crowd of over 2,000 during the Tuesday chapel address, McGovern explained that his father was a Wesleyan Methodist pastor who graduated from the evangelical Houghton College and that “in our family, there was no drinking, smoking, dancing or card-playing.” He would have attended Wheaton, he said, if his family could have afforded the tuition.

Speaking fluently in evangelical idiom, McGovern sprinkled his Wheaton speech with biblical passages and allusions, even addressing the mid-century evangelical suspicion of politics and preoccupation with individual conversion and change: “As President, I could not resolve all the problems of this land. No President and no political leader can. For our deepest problems are within us—not as an entire people—but as individual persons.” Yet McGovern, affirming John Winthrop’s declaration on the *Arabella* in 1690 of America as a “city on a hill,” stressed moral and spiritual leadership. “The wish of our forebears,” he concluded, “was to see the way of God prevail. We have strayed from their pilgrimage, like lost sheep. But I believe we can begin this ancient journey anew.” Citing evangelical examples such as

¹³⁹ Ron Sider, Evangelicals for McGovern news release, October 6, 1972, ESA Archives.

¹⁴⁰ Stephen Charles Mott, “An Evangelical McGovern at Wheaton,” *Ooheleth* 6 (October 25, 1972), 1, 7-8, quoted in James Alan Patterson, “Evangelicals and Presidential Elections of 1972, 1976, and 1980,” *Fides et Historia* 18, No. 2 (June 1986), 44-62.

Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, and William Wilberforce, McGovern contended that his presidency would nurture conditions in which spiritual, moral, and social revival could occur. Faith, he declared in contradistinction to President John F. Kennedy's careful delineation before a gathering of Protestant clergy in Dallas just ten years earlier, would very much shape his presidency.¹⁴¹

Opposition, however, tempered EFM's delight over McGovern's speech and the standing ovation that followed. Despite black evangelist Tom Skinner's enthusiastic introduction to McGovern, several students booed and jeered McGovern on stage. Others hung an anti-McGovern banner from the chapel balcony.¹⁴² At a breakfast meeting with McGovern and several dozen leaders of the more than 50 evangelical organizations in the city of Wheaton, journalist Wesley Pippert described, many seemed "suspicious of McGovern because of his liberal views and perhaps even more because he was once one of them, and in their opinion, he has strayed."¹⁴³ Tellingly, the National Association of Evangelicals and several other key organizations conspicuously failed to send a representative.

McGovern's cool reception by establishment evangelicals in Wheaton pointed to a much broader lack of success by EFM. The organization contributed negligible amounts—only \$5,762 from only 358 people—to a presidential campaign in

¹⁴¹ Text of McGovern speech at Wheaton, October 11, 1972, copy in Folder "Evangelicals for McGovern," ESA Archives. Michael McIntyre called the speech "a virtuoso performance," lauding McGovern's ability to use evangelical language "without manipulation and cynicism." See Michael McIntyre, "Religionists on the Campaign Trail," *Christian Century* (December 27, 1972), 1319-1322.

¹⁴² Tim Rumberger, "Reagan Accepts Offer to Appear on Campus," *Wheaton Record* 105, No. 3 (October 3, 1980), 2; Stephen Charles Mott, "An Evangelical McGovern at Wheaton," *Qoheleth* 6 (October 25, 1972), 1, 7-8.

¹⁴³ Wesley G. Pippert, UPI story, October 12, 1972, copy in Evangelicals for McGovern Collection, ESA Archives. Pippert played a key role by writing dozens of favorable articles about McGovern in evangelical publications.

desperate need of more money and votes.¹⁴⁴ The cause had been taken up too late by too many graduate students and young professors, who offered their moral support but no money.¹⁴⁵ One New Jersey woman wrote EFM lamenting that “All the Christians we know are for Nixon, except a few young people who have no money.”¹⁴⁶ A graduate student at Ohio University wrote, “I have no money for you (being a destitute graduate student with a huge obstetrics bill), but that which I have I give to you: a list of people who profess Christianity but are, regrettably, staying in the Nixon camp.”¹⁴⁷ Those evangelicals who remained in the Nixon camp helped carry the incumbent to a landslide victory—a 520-17 majority in the Electoral College and a 23% margin in the popular vote, the second largest margin in American history.

Despite the disheartening defeat, many in the emerging evangelical left remained upbeat. Many had experienced the exhilaration of finding like-minded evangelical progressives. And collectively they had both challenged the evangelical establishment and earned wide coverage of their political activism in the national press. Even their mobilization effort was, in some respects, remarkable given its late

¹⁴⁴ Sider to Stephen Charles Mott, November 14, 1972, in Box 1, Folder 4, “Evangelicals for McGovern: Correspondence,” ESA Collection, BGA Archives.

¹⁴⁵ At Calvin College, EFM students widely read the speech and editorialized about his views of politics and religion in the student newspaper. The yearbook, for example, applauded how McGovern “challenged many Calvin students’ thinking in that he was a political liberal instead of a conservative talking about religion openly and favorably. Even more, he broke with the American way of letting one’s religious beliefs follow meekly behind or ignore one’s political commitments. ... McGovern’s break with the conspiracy of silence on publicly discussing religion in American politics may have signaled a new openness to the brand of faith-in-action Christianity we so strongly wish for.” But Calvin students’ support of McGovern faded, according to the yearbook, as the election grew near, partly because his chances of victory were fading, though McGovern still drew 40% in a student vote. See Strickwerda, “Politics: Fall 1972,” *Prism*.

¹⁴⁶ Margaret Greydanus to EFM, n.d., Folder “Evangelicals for McGovern,” ESA Archives.

¹⁴⁷ Reinder H. Van Til to EFM, October 20, 1972, Folder “Evangelicals for McGovern,” ESA Archives.

starting date just two months before the election and its birth in an overwhelmingly conservative tradition. EFM had succeeded in its hope “that evangelicals as a group can be heard.”¹⁴⁸ As the dark shadow of Watergate eclipsed the Nixon presidency, the first explicitly political organization formed and run by evangelicals in American history took on new significance. This nascent evangelical network of progressives capitalized on growing disillusionment with Nixon among a larger swath of moderates. The movement culminated on Thanksgiving weekend of 1973 with the Chicago Declaration, a surprisingly strident call for a new evangelical social conscience.

III.

Ron Sider, heartened by evangelical support for McGovern among the emerging evangelical left, began in early 1973 to call for a more permanent political organization to promote more progressive social legislation. “There is a new movement of major proportions within evangelical circles,” Sider wrote to fellow EFM member David Moberg. “It is still a minority movement, but it is widespread and growing. This emerging group of evangelical social activists ... needs direction.”¹⁴⁹ Sider, Moberg and several other members of the now-defunct EFM met at the Conference on Christianity and Politics at Calvin College in early 1973 to plan the movement’s future.¹⁵⁰ The next step, the group decided, was to hold an inter-

¹⁴⁸ Walden Howard letter, circa October 1972, ESA Archives.

¹⁴⁹ Sider to David O. Moberg, March 19, 1973, in Box 1, Folder 11, “Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals and Social Concern (1973): Correspondence: March 1973-March 1974,” ESA Collection, BGA Archives.

¹⁵⁰ Speakers at the Conference on Christianity and Politics included Richard Pierard, Jim Wallis, Lewis Smedes, John Alexander, Nancy Hardesty, Stephen Monsma, as well as many Reformed

denominational conference called the Thanksgiving Workshop of Evangelical Social Concern. Hoping to launch a vast movement at the Workshop, organizers sought to infuse symbolic value into the evangelical left's coming-out party. First, instead of suburban Wheaton, the initial suggestion, they chose to meet at the YMCA in downtown Chicago. Its location, just down the street from the famed Pacific Garden Rescue Mission, pointed to evangelicalism's nineteenth-century legacy of social action and urban concern. Second, organizers, searching for consensus among a broad swath of traditions and interest groups from which a vast movement could be launched, sought evangelical diversity. They invited blacks and whites; old and young; evangelists and relief workers; and leaders from new evangelical, Anabaptist, Calvinist, and pietistic traditions. Third, they decided to release a concise, hard-hitting manifesto that would articulate their social concerns to the media and the evangelical world.

The fifty evangelical leaders, some of the most influential in the nation, felt the weight of history when they finally convened on Thanksgiving weekend in Chicago. Charged by dissatisfaction with the status quo, those gathered expressed anger with Watergate, with the Vietnam War, with Nixon, with fellow evangelicals who seemed to blindly support the president. In a major address Tom Skinner charged that evangelicals had "missed the Civil Rights movement," but that it was not too late

thinkers associated with Calvin. Conference attendees David Moberg, Rufus Jones, Ron Sider, and Paul Henry met at the Steak and Four Restaurant in Grand Rapids to discuss the future of the now-defunct EFM, most directly called for the Thanksgiving Workshop and named a planning committee of David Moberg, Richard Pierard, Ron Sider, Paul Henry, Stephen Mott, William Pannell, and Jim Wallis. See "Evangelicals on Justice Socially Speaking," *Christianity Today* 18, No. 6 (December 21, 1973), 38-39.

to “emphasize social sins and institutionalized evils as vigorously as personal sins.”¹⁵¹ Bill Pannell declared that “a new breed of evangelicals” had arrived, that the time for “significant breakthroughs was now.” Ron Sider similarly asserted, “I don’t think it is mere rhetoric to say that we have come together at a moment of historic opportunity.” In a prescient prediction, he maintained that “for better or for worse, [American evangelicals] will exercise the dominant religious influence in the next decade.”¹⁵²

If the Workshop enjoyed consensus in its criticism of conservative politics, it still ran into difficulties in drawing up its manifesto. The composition of what became the Chicago Declaration, which had begun months before, was full of fits and starts. The first draft reflected the strident character of the evangelical left’s protest, to the extent that Frank Gaebelein, one of the few political conservative participants in the Thanksgiving Workshop proclaimed it “heretical.” John Alexander, no conservative himself, agreed with Gaebelein, calling the initial draft “leftist propaganda.”¹⁵³ When it finally appeared at the Workshop on November 23, 1973, delegates criticized the revised draft at length. At four pages, everyone agreed, it was too long. A more cutting critique came from black participants, who perceived hints of “evangelical triumphalism” from Sider’s opening remarks.¹⁵⁴ How could the evangelical left, they asked, use celebratory rhetoric when its own tradition had failed to embrace the civil

¹⁵¹ Ronald J. Sider, “Evangelicals Sign Social Concerns Document,” *The Mennonite*, Vol. 89 (January 1, 1974), 10.

¹⁵² Ron Sider, “On Behalf of the Planning Committee,” Thanksgiving Workshop folder, ESA Archives.

¹⁵³ John Alexander to Ron Sider, n.d., circa summer 1972, ESA Archives. For the text of initial drafts, see Box 2, Folder 9, “Proposed Drafts of Chicago Declaration, July-Nov. 1973,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

¹⁵⁴ Speech by M. Van Elderen at Calvin Theological Seminary (12-5-74): Folder 13: Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals for Social Action (1974): Reportage; December 1974-January 1975; Box 3, ESA Collection, BGC Archives.

rights movement? After one white evangelical blamed fundamentalist doctrine for their failures—"We've been victimized by our own heresy, he said. "We're still good people"—William Bentley, president of the National Black Evangelical Association, retorted, "What does good mean? If you are part of an oppressing community, your goodness means nothing to me."¹⁵⁵ Very quickly, Sider recalled, "the lid blew off." Black participants sharply attacked the committee for including only one black on the committee. Then over a separate lunch of turnip greens and ham hocks prepared "for atmosphere," they drew up an alternative statement much more radical than the original. Palpable tension permeated the Workshop through the first evening. When delegates entered the dark streets after the day's final session in search of a snack, they traveled in two separate groups that "vented their frustration in angry separation."¹⁵⁶

The few invited female delegates also demanded that evangelicals "clean up their own houses."¹⁵⁷ When Nancy Hardesty, an alumna of Wheaton and current graduate student at the University of Chicago, and Sharon Gallagher, member of the Christian World Liberation Front in Berkeley, discovered that there was no mention of sexism in the first draft of the declaration, the five women present caucused and demanded one. As the Workshop progressed, they grew even more offended. Among high-powered evangelical executives and scholars, one woman felt as if "she had walked into an Eastern men's club. The men tended to be insensitive to women as

¹⁵⁵ James H. Bowman, "Evangelicals Face Social Issues," *Chicago Daily News* (November 24, 1973), 40.

¹⁵⁶ Sider, "An Historic Moment," 26-27.

¹⁵⁷ Nancy Hardesty to Ronald J. Sider, August 29, 1973, in Box 1, Folder 11, "Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals and Social Concern (1973): Correspondence: March 1973-March 1974," ESA Collection, BGCA.

people.” Specifically, noted Hardesty, “Dr. Ruth Bentley” was listed a participant, but as chairperson for an afternoon session she became “Mrs. William Bentley.”¹⁵⁸ And when the section in the Declaration on sexism was discussed, Gallagher reported, “the four or five women present were commanded to speak and then expected to shut up when the men felt the issue had been covered. It seemed easier for the establishment men to be gracious toward the blacks they probably rarely had to deal with, than with status changes that might affect women, their own personal house niggers.”¹⁵⁹

Pacifists also hijacked the Workshop. John Howard Yoder, president of Goshen Biblical Seminary, complained, “Blacks have a paragraph they can redo; women have a word they can redo; but there is nothing at all about war. It contains something about the military-industrial complex being bad for the budget, but nothing about it being bad for the Vietnamese.”¹⁶⁰ Yoder, supported by Sider, on faculty at the Brethren in Christ-affiliated Messiah College; Jim Wallis, editor of the *Post-American*; Dale Brown, former moderator of the Church of the Brethren; and Myron Augsburger, president of Eastern Mennonite College, persuaded the delegates to insert the following into the Declaration: “We must challenge the misplaced trust of the nation in economic and military might—a proud trust that promotes a national pathology of war and violence which victimizes our neighbors at home and abroad.”

The consensus over American militarism marked the beginning of resolution over the vigorous clashes over gender and race. After the initial shock of strident disagreement, all sides rallied and rediscovered their common enemies: racism,

¹⁵⁸ Hardesty, “Reflections,” in Sider, ed., *The Chicago Declaration*, 123.

¹⁵⁹ Sharon Gallagher, “Radical Evangelicalism: A Conference Report,” 64, in Folder “Chicago Declaration Press,” ESA Archives.

¹⁶⁰ Sider, “An Historic Moment,” 27.

Nixon, unchecked capitalism, and theological liberalism.¹⁶¹ Sider recalls that the group found “a solid foundation of agreement. In spite of continuing substantial differences on, say, the ideal economic system, all agreed that present economic structures both here and abroad are racist and unjust.”¹⁶² After a coffee break late Saturday afternoon, black delegates “decided to let up.”¹⁶³ Stephen Mott, a professor at Gordon-Conwell, interceded on behalf of Nancy Hardesty who wrote the following sentence in the Declaration which was approved, though with considerable dissent by some: “We acknowledge that we have encouraged men to prideful domination and women to irresponsible passivity. So we call both men and women to mutual submission and active discipleship.”¹⁶⁴ Participants began approving section after section of the reworked document. By Saturday evening, they had nearly completed

¹⁶¹ Despite a new progressive politics, these evangelicals remained dismissive of theologically liberal Protestants. Bill Pannell, for instance snarkily remarked during an address that “liberal conferences on social action are filled with really stylish hairshirts.” See Sider notes on Pannell address, ESA Archives. Another remarked that what distinguished the Chicago Declaration from mainline documents on social justice was that “Theologically, it doesn’t hedge from the fact that sin and man’s rebellion against God are the root causes of social injustice.” Another criticized the “mealy-mouthed pieties of liberal Protestantism,” which merely rephrases “the false values of Americanism.” See Speech by Marlin Van Elderen at Calvin Theological Seminary, December 5, 1974, in Box 3, Folder 13, “Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals for Social Action (1974): Reportage; December 1974-January 1975,” BGCA.

¹⁶² Sider, “An Historic Moment,” 28.

¹⁶³ Marlin Van Elderen speech at Calvin Theological Seminary, December 5, 1974, in Box 3, Folder 13, “Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals for Social Action (1974): Reportage; December 1974-January 1975,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

¹⁶⁴ Nancy A. Hardesty, “Blessed the Waters That Rise and Fall to Rise Again,” *EEWC Update* 28, No. 2 (Summer 2004). No one had problems with the first sentence, but many conservatives objected to “mutual submission,” making “repeated attempts were made to soften, subvert, or side-step the second.” See Hardesty, “Reflections,” 124. While younger evangelicals such as Sider and Mott, worked behind the scenes to accommodate female participants, several older evangelicals balked at any suggestion of women’s ordination. Billy Graham, though not present at the workshop, pointed to these sentences as the reason he would not sign the Chicago Declaration. See Hardesty, “Blessed the Waters.” On other objections to the section on gender, see C. Davis Weyerhaeuser to Ron Sider, May 14, 1974, in ESA Archives. Weyerhaeuser wrote, “To call men and women to mutual submission without clarifying how this relates to Paul’s assertions on the subject makes me wonder if the statement is more concerned with being contemporary than with faithfulness to the scriptures.”

their task. On this evening when they left to fetch a snack, Sider recalled, “one group of black and white brothers and sisters went out to enjoy soul food together.”¹⁶⁵

The final text of the Chicago Declaration—printed in full in Appendix A—confessed that evangelicals had failed to defend the social and economic rights of the poor, the oppressed, and minorities. It attacked an American “pathology of war,” sexism, and materialism. And it pledged to acknowledge God’s “total claim upon the lives of his people,” even in the long-reviled political arena. “We endorse no political ideology or party,” signers maintained, “but call our nation’s leaders and people to that righteousness which exalts a nation.” This less radical version, which eliminated references to Nixon’s “lust for and abuse of power” and alleged United States involvement behind the overthrow of the Allende government in Chile, reflected the new reformist consensus.¹⁶⁶ Final approval was given to the Declaration during a worship service on Sunday morning. When the vote had been tallied, Sider rose to speak of “a deep sense of presence and guidance of the risen Lord.” He then invited delegates to sing the Doxology, marking the end of a remarkable weekend of progressive politics and evangelical piety.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Sider, “An Historic Moment,” 28. On reconciliation between New Leftist evangelicals and mainstream evangelicals, see Cliff R. Benzel to Ted W. Engstrom, December 12, 1974, in “1974 Chicago Aftermath,” ESA Archives. Benzel wrote, “I felt a great number of friends were won for World Vision, particularly among some of the more radical elements of the coalition who had many suspicions, few of which were founded in fact.”

¹⁶⁶ In the end a draft from Wallis was used, but not until it was heavily edited to moderate Wallis’s strident rhetoric. On the softening work of Paul Henry’s pen, see Henry to Ron Sider, October 8, 1973, Folder “Chicago Declaration Planning,” ESA Archives; Henry to Ron Sider, November 13, 1973, Folder “Chicago Declaration Planning,” ESA Archives. Henry wrote, “I do fear that we must be very careful in the situation section not to sound too harsh, anti-American, etc.”

¹⁶⁷ In his opening address to the workshop Sider instructed, “When we get bogged down in debate, let’s not hesitate to stop and pray.” One of the major addresses of the workshop dealt with “Prayer and Social Concern.” See Ron Sider, “On Behalf of the Planning Committee,” ESA Archives. For other statements on prayer, see Beth Burbank to Ron Sider, Folder “Chicago Declaration Planning,” ESA Archives; “Minutes of the Planning Committee,” September 19, 1973, in “Chicago Workshop

Both the media and Protestant mainliners, fascinated by the blend of conservative theology and progressive social concern, lent their substantial support. Reporters from United Press International, the *Washington Post*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and others posted stories, typically asserting that mainline Protestants were languishing in their social activism and that evangelicals were taking up the cause in their stead.¹⁶⁸ Given this trend, a reporter for the *Chicago Sun-Times* noted, “Some day American church historians may write that the most significant church-related event of 1973 took place last week at the YMCA Hotel on S. Wabash.”¹⁶⁹ William Sloane Coffin, the liberal mainline chaplain at Yale, upon hearing of Evangelicals for McGovern and the Chicago Declaration, declared, “Now this is the real McCoy, rooted in deep personal experience! ... I’ve always suspected that the future was with these Evangelical guys.”¹⁷⁰

Not all reports, however, were positive. John Howard Yoder refused to sign the Declaration because it “failed to undercut the ‘Christian America’ assumptions of many who will read it.”¹⁷¹ Evangelical journalist Wesley Pippert, bewildered by the praise, declared, “I thought it was inept. It was weak and it was spineless. It said nothing that should not have been said 15 years ago. I don’t know what everybody

Planning,” ESA Archives. For a description of the moving final worship session and the “warmth of fellowship,” see Frank E. Gaebelein, Statement on Chicago Declaration, Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration,” ESA Archives.

¹⁶⁸ See, for example, Alma Kaufman, “Evangelicals Get Cue on Social Concerns,” *Cleveland Plain Dealer* (December 1, 1973).

¹⁶⁹ Roy Larson, “Evangelicals Do U-Turn, Take on Social Problems,” *Chicago Sun-Times* (December 1, 1973).

¹⁷⁰ Quoted in *New York Times Magazine* (June 27, 1976), 6. Copy of article in Folder “1976,” ESA Archives.

¹⁷¹ Yoder to “To Whom It May Concern,” January 28, 1974, in ESA Archives.

was shouting hallelujah about.”¹⁷² Paul Jewett of Fuller Seminary refused to sign the Declaration because it lacked specificity. “My past experience tempts me to greet this plan to have ‘another meeting sometime next year’ with a cool smile,” he wrote. “But we all live in hope.”¹⁷³ Bruce Shearer, leader of a farm commune in New Hampshire that housed Korean and Vietnamese war children, affirmed the Declaration’s language but worried that few evangelicals understood that their “real discipleship, prophetic witness and resistance, etc. may very well cost us our wallets, our jobs, our reputations, our citizenship, life insurance, retirement benefits, comforts such as home and friendships, our families, maybe even our lives.”¹⁷⁴ The Declaration, in the opinion of Jewett and Shearer, came perilously close to being mere empty words. Did signers realize the sort of hard work and sacrifice it would take to bring about justice?

A very different sort of criticism emanated from more conservative fundamentalist and evangelical circles. Bob Jones, when he heard of the Workshop, declared that “no Fundamentalist would be caught dead in this kind of meeting.” A “Mrs. Peter R. Vroon” wrote to the *Presbyterian Layman* that “the 52 signers of the above Declaration are strangely silent about pornography, drugs, lawlessness, immorality, and many of the other evils that are ruining our country and invading Christian homes” and complained about the participation of the “far left *Post American* newspaper.”¹⁷⁵ The most prominent dissenter, Billy Graham, was less vitriolic. Though Graham declined to sign the Declaration, he told *Christianity Today*,

¹⁷² “Door Interview: Wesley Pippert,” *Wittenburg Door*, No. 21 (October-November 1974), 22.

¹⁷³ Paul Jewett, “Why I Won’t Sign,” *Reformed Journal* 24, No. 5 (May-June 1974), 8-10.

¹⁷⁴ Letter from Bruce Shearer, “Put Flesh on Words,” 3, No. 3 *Post-American* (April 1974), 5.

¹⁷⁵ Mrs. Peter Vroon, “Letters,” *Presbyterian Layman* (June 1974), 6. Copy in ESA Archives.

“We have a social responsibility and I could identify with most of the recent Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Concern. I think we have to identify with the changing of structures in society and try to do our part.”¹⁷⁶ The vast evangelical middle seemed to agree with Graham’s perspective—that evangelical had a duty to be more socially and politically active, but that the Chicago Declaration seemed a bit radical.

Despite Graham’s initial rebuff, Sider and other progressive evangelicals remained convinced that evangelicalism, and even the mainline, was in play. Hundreds of prominent evangelicals including Mark Hatfield, Wheaton philosopher Arthur Holmes, prominent historian Timothy Smith, and Billy Graham’s junior evangelist and brother-in-law Leighton Ford sent their names to be added to the Declaration. The InterVarsity branch of the University of Texas, for example, expressed their support of the Declaration and their wish to add signatures.¹⁷⁷ Thousands of letters, most written by pastors, seminarians, college students, and professionals, expressed resonance with the Declaration. Many, asking to be added as signatories, expressed hope that their days as lonely evangelical liberals were over.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ On Thanksgiving planners’ recruitment of Billy Graham despite their critique of Graham’s politics, see David Moberg to Ron Sider, December 28, 1972; Ron Sider to David Moberg, February 19, 1973; Merold Westphal to Ron Sider, August 31, 1973 (Westphal denounces Graham’s distinction between an Old Testament prophet and a New Testament evangelist); Ron Sider to John Howard Yoder, September 14, 1973 (“It probably would be counterproductive to denounce Billy by name!”), all in Folder “Chicago Declaration Planning,” ESA Archives. On Graham’s response, see Billy Graham, “Watergate,” *Christianity Today* 18 (January 4, 1974), 9-19. On the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association’s ambivalence about the Thanksgiving Workshop, see Roger C. Palms to Ron Sider, June 21, 1974. Jim Wallis’s rhetoric concerned them, though they resonated with the Chicago Declaration. Palms, for example, explained that he would sign the Declaration in a letter to Sider, but then wrote a postscript that read, “Just as I was about the sign the statement I took a minute to re-read the article in *Christianity Today* by Jim Wallis, and as a result could not get peace about signing it. Maybe I will in the future. There are questions that I have more about attitude than practical theology and I am not sure if I want to be related to a negative attitude.”

¹⁷⁷ Mike Shepherd to Ron Sider, February 1, 1974, in Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration Aftermath,” ESA Archives.

¹⁷⁸ Transdenominational support came through letters from diverse places such as a Presbyterian congregation in Ohio, the Florida Baptist Conference, a Baptist congregation in Florida, Brethren

These overtures, the impressive exposure in the secular media, and surprisingly positive coverage by evangelical outlets invigorated Workshop organizers. Sider immediately tried to capitalize on the momentum. He campaigned for even more already generous media coverage, scurried to add prominent signatures to the Declaration, and invited ecumenical support.¹⁷⁹ He also announced plans for a second Workshop to be held at the same Chicago YMCA on Thanksgiving 1974 at which specific social-political proposals could add flesh to the skeletal agenda of 1973. The Declaration, planners hoped, was the opening salvo in a battle to retake evangelicalism from “big business Republicanism.”¹⁸⁰ Whether or not the emerging evangelical left would succeed in this effort, the Chicago Declaration signaled a radical shift in evangelicals’ views toward politics. In its repudiation of evangelical apoliticism and in its affirmation that “God lays total claim upon the lives of his

congregation in Pennsylvania, a Bible congregation in Illinois, a Wesleyan congregation in Missouri, an Evangelical Lutheran congregation in West Virginia, a Methodist congregation in Alabama, an Evangelical Free congregation in New York City, and a Baptist congregation in Michigan. Particularly strong networks began to form around institutions such as Fuller Theological Seminary, Asbury, Wheaton, Calvin, and InterVarsity.

¹⁷⁹ Conversations with a surprised National Council of Churches resulted in this statement: “Members of the Division of Church and Society and of other units of the NCC have been impressed with the degree to which that statement lessens the distance that is often assumed to separate ‘evangelical Christians’ from ‘ecumenical Christians.’ ... We are moved by the Holy Spirit to express a deep feeling of kinship with that statement and with our fellow-Christians who issued it.” See “A Response to ‘A Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern,’” Approved October 11, 1974; Folder 6: Thanksgiving Workshop: Evangelical for Social Action: Miscellaneous Materials, November 1974; Box 3, Evangelicals for Social Action Collection, BGA Archives. Donald Dayton invited mainliners to join in the emerging “marvelous network that spreads out across the land,” telling subscribers of *Christian Century* to read *Cross and the Flag*, *The Other Side*, *Post-American*, and *Reformed Journal* and to contact groups like the Urban Ministries Program, Urban Life Center, Urban Ministries in Boston (ECUMB), and the Peoples Christian Coalition. Donald Dayton, “Letters to the Editor: McGovern, Politics, and Evangelicalism,” *Christian Century* 90, No. 5 (January 31, 1973), 133. For internal young evangelical discussions on how to relate to mainline groups, see Richard Quebedeux to Ron Sider, July 12, 1974, Folder 1974 Thanksgiving Workshop Planning, ESA Archives.

¹⁸⁰ Arthur O. Roberts, professor at George Fox University, to Ron Sider, October 17, 1972, in Folder “Evangelicals for McGovern,” ESA Archives.

people,” the signers of the Declaration were contending that both prayer and politics were spiritual disciplines.

“Signs of a new order,” as the Post-Americans called the flood of progressive evangelical organizations and literature in the early 1970s, continued unabated after the Chicago Declaration.¹⁸¹ Intentional communities flourished. Urban networks of progressive evangelicals grew. Journalist Wesley Pippert spotted evangelicals in evangelical pews as he spoke in churches throughout Midwest and even the South.¹⁸² InterVarsity’s Urbana ’73 and the Lausanne convention in Switzerland echoed the social emphases of the Workshop. Key voices in the Anabaptist and Dutch Reformed traditions settled more securely into the evangelical left.¹⁸³ Wallis and the Post-Americans grew in prominence; their magazine

¹⁸¹ “Signs of a New Order” was a regular column in the *Post-American* that highlighted progressive organizations and events. The feature was renamed “Seeds” in the mid-1970s. On mainline resonance with the Chicago Declaration, see George Telford, “Evangelical Social Action: A Report,” *Presbyterian Survey* (July 1975), 64-65, copy in Folder “1974 Chicago Workshop Media,” ESA Archives.

¹⁸² He told *Christianity Today*, “These are hardly hotbeds of liberalism. My own observation is that many evangelicals in the pew are far out front in their social concern of the moment than many of their ‘leaders.’ The pitiful thing is that many church people and religionists could have signed the Chicago declaration ten years ago.” See Pippert, Letter to the Editor, *Christianity Today* (January 18, 1974), 25.

¹⁸³ On the new engagement of evangelicalism by Calvin and the Christian Reformed Church, see Henry Stob, “The Years of the Journal,” *Reformed Journal* 26, No. 3 (March 1976), 10-18; Richard Mouw, “A Bit of a Gadfly,” 118. “The appointment of Paul Henry to the faculty,” wrote Mouw, “can be seen as a symbol of an important transition that was taking place at Calvin College in the 1970s. During that same period quiet discussions were taking place in the admissions department about the need to actively to recruit students from beyond the Dutch Reformed community.” There was an undercurrent of talk about “evangelicalizing” Calvin College. Mouw notes that Paul Henry “led the way in instituting the Calvin Conference on Christianity and Politics, where dialogue took place between the Dutch Kuyperians and the broader evangelical world, between Catholics and Protestants, and between Reformed and Anabaptists. ... This annual conference was, as I see things, one of the most important instruments for the opening up of Calvin College to the larger Christian world. ... In the Christianity and Politics conferences, the outsiders came in droves.” 50% of *Reformed Journal* readers also read *Christianity Today*. See “About You ... About Us,” *Reformed Journal* 24, No. 3 (March 1974), 3-4. On how the Chicago Declaration facilitated the Anabaptist entrée into the

mushroomed to 39,000 subscriptions by the late 1970s. *Eternity*, a left-of-center magazine on the evangelical continuum, grew to 46,000 subscriptions by 1976.¹⁸⁴ A biweekly charismatic-evangelical national newspaper called the *National Courier*, whose editor, a Carter-stumping former *New York Times* journalist declared in 1976 that it “did not equate evangelical Christianity with conservative political dogma,” reached 110,000 subscriptions.¹⁸⁵

As the Lilly Endowment gave \$9,800 to host a 1974 sequel to the 1973 Workshop, political events seemed to validate concerns about a corrupted political conservatism. Sordid Watergate details emerged, Nixon resigned, Billy Graham confessed to blind faith in Nixon and conservative politics, and many evangelicals questioned their 1973 vote for the president.¹⁸⁶ In the 1970s, Democratic identification among evangelicals increased from 34.9% in 1960s to 38.7%, a remarkable increase given southern defections to the Republican Party.¹⁸⁷ Richard Quebedeaux argued that the influence of the emerging evangelical left was being felt

evangelical world, see Dale Brown to Ron Sider, February 21, 1974, Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration,” ESA Archives.

¹⁸⁴ K. B. Kraakevik, “The Political Mobilization of White Evangelical Populists in the 1970s and Early 1980s,” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago Divinity School, 2004), 304.

¹⁸⁵ John D. Keeler, J. Douglas Tarpley, and Michael R. Smith, “The *National Courier*, News, and Religious Ideology,” in *Media and Religion in American History* (Northport, Ala.: Vision Press, 2000), 275-290.

¹⁸⁶ On Watergate and young evangelical outrage at Nixon’s abuse of power, see David Gill, “The Abuse of Power,” *Right On* 6, No. 2 (September 1974), 5; on participation in an Impeach Nixon Rally, see Jill Shook to Edie Black, May 11, Box 2—Jill Shook, CWLF Collection, GTU Archives; Wesley Pippert, “Christ and Crisis in Washington,” (April 1974), 1-3; Henry Stob, “Watergate: Judgment, Healing, and Renewal,” *Reformed Journal* (July-August 1973); Richard Pierard, “Can Billy Graham Survive Richard Nixon,” *Reformed Journal* (April 1974); Paul Henry, *Politics for Evangelicals*, 8; Donald E. King, Jr., “Perspective on the News,” *Vanguard* (September-October 1974), 31; Ben Patterson, “Mere Forgiveness,” *Wittenburg Door*, No. 21 (October-November 1974), 4-5; Lane T. Dennis, *A Reason for Hope* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell, Co., 1976), 57.

¹⁸⁷ Lyman A. Kellstedt and Mark A. Noll, “Religion, Voting for President, and Party Identification, 1948-1984.” In *Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the 1980s*, edited by Mark A. Noll (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 372, 374.

beyond their usual haunts of college campuses and seminaries. Progressive evangelicalism had even infiltrated mainstream evangelical organizations such as the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and the Evangelical Theological Society. The Social Concerns Commission of the National Association of Evangelicals, he asserted, had become a “haven for Democrats, minorities and pacifists.”¹⁸⁸ All the while, Sider and other leaders of the Thanksgiving Workshop tended to the growing progressive coalition, recruited evangelical business leaders, and planned an ambitious agenda that included a massive national congress.¹⁸⁹ They spoke longingly of “Jesus people” and twenty-somethings who were “neither turned on nor turned off to social action—but just uninformed.” If recruited, these young evangelicals could “accelerate the movement.”¹⁹⁰ The mid-1970s was a time of great expectations.

Some participants, however, worried that the progressive evangelical front might not progress beyond an anti-Nixon plank and a vague consensus that racism, sexism, and poverty were bad things.¹⁹¹ One cautioned, “Even though the fresh wind

¹⁸⁸ Richard Quebedeaux, “The Evangelicals: New Trends and New Tensions,” *Christianity and Crisis* (September 20, 1976), 197-202.

¹⁸⁹ See “Sider to Planning Committee” in 1974 TW planning; also see National Congress on Biblical Faith and Social Concern (1973 CD). On the coalition, see letters from Bread for the World (Simon to Sider in 1974 TW planning); NAE, NHA, Southern Baptists, and Mennonites. On business leaders, see 1974 TW Planning. On hopes that the movement would rapidly spread through large national congresses, see Ron Sider to David Moberg, March 19, 1973, Folder “Chicago Declaration Planning,” ESA Archives.

¹⁹⁰ Steve Knapp to Ron Sider, July 1, 1974, copy in Folder “1974 Chicago Workshop Planning,” ESA Archives. For another statement of hope that the movement could spread beyond its current clique of academics, see C.T. McIntire, “Some Thoughts on the Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern,” January 1974, copy in Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration,” ESA Archives.

¹⁹¹ See, for example, David Moberg to Ron Sider, December 28, 1972, Folder “Chicago Declaration Planning,” ESA Archives; Jim Wallis, “Reflections on the Declaration and Workshop,” in Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration,” ESA Archives; Paul Henry to Ron Sider, August 23, 1973, Folder “Chicago Declaration Planning,” ESA Archives; “From the Political-Social-Economic Involvement Group,” in Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration,” ESA Archives. The group wrote, “We deplore the sin of the lust and abuse of power by President Nixon and some other political leaders, and we call on them to exercise just leadership by publicly confessing their sins. We refer specifically to the sins as

is blowing, the chill will come when conscientious Christians confront particular issues. ... It is easy today to reach agreement on gross social ills on which there is a broad consensus in society. Christians deplore racism, for example, but can one be Christian and *not* believe in busing for racial balance?"¹⁹² Such questions would prove prescient in subsequent years as the evangelical left tried in vain to construct a coherent politics.

revealed in the Watergate scandal, the case of Spiro T. Agnew, and related corruption in high places." *Faith at Work* editor Walden Howard wrote to Sider that "I expect to see such a crisis in confidence as all of these things become public that it will be extremely difficult for President Nixon to govern. The unredeemed part of me is licking its chops, but the better part of me feels sad for our country. Would to God that McGovern had been elected! We would certainly be in a very different position today." See Walden Howard to Ron Sider, April 24, 1973, Folder "Chicago Declaration Planning," ESA Archives.

¹⁹² "Evangelicalism-Action: Either/Or?" *Engage/Social Action* 2 (November 1974), 26. A copy of this monthly periodical of the United Methodist Church is in the ESA Archives.

CHAPTER NINE

IDENTITY POLITICS: THE FRAGMENTATION OF THE PROGRESSIVE COALITION

As Watergate boiled in the early months of 1974, Ron Sider, organizer of Evangelicals for McGovern and the 1973 Thanksgiving Workshop, sought to build the nascent progressive coalition. First, he addressed the most common criticism of the first Workshop's Chicago Declaration—that it was merely another bureaucratic pronouncement lacking specificity or any real plan of action.¹ For the second annual Workshop, held one year later in November 1974, Sider organized six caucuses—on evangelism, evangelical feminism, politics, education, evangelical non-violence, and race—among which the 134 delegates could produce “action proposals.” On the surface, the new approach succeeded. Eight of the nine action proposals passed unanimously, among them proposals to establish a Center for Biblical Social Concern

¹ In a memo to the planning committee for the second Workshop, John Alexander, editor of *The Other Side*, wrote that “the goal of this next Chicago conference should be action. ... I will be very distressed if the conference is just another talk session.” For criticisms of the Declaration, see John Alexander to Ron Sider, February 28, 1974, in Folder “1974 Workshop Planning,” ESA Archives; T. B. Maston, review of *The Chicago Declaration*, edited by Ron Sider, *JCS* 18, No. 2 (Spring 1976), 371, copy in Folder “Reviews of Chicago Declaration,” ESA Archives; John Alexander quoted in Jim Wallis, “‘New Evangelicals’ and the Demands of Discipleship,” *Christian Century* (May 29, 1974), 581-582.

and a forum for dealing with white racism, endorse of the Equal Rights Amendment, plan fifteen regional conferences in major cities across the United States, and further discuss evangelical nonviolent direct action and global hunger. Caucuses appointed individuals to implement each of the proposals within twelve months. The energy of the first Thanksgiving Workshop had carried into the second Workshop, seeming to confirm that “a new movement of biblical social concern is afoot in this land.”²

The public face of success, however, hid deep divisions. The “buckshot approach,” as one observer described the eight action proposals, had “misfired” in its ambition and method.³ The caucus approach divided delegates by interest—blacks to the race caucus, women to the gender caucus, Anabaptists to the economic lifestyles and evangelical non-violence caucuses, Calvinists to the politics and education caucuses. When members of each caucus finally introduced their proposals to the larger Workshop (which devoted only 15 minutes to each proposal), fireworks resulted over idiosyncratic and inordinately specific proposals such as a boycott of lawn fertilizer and an income cap of \$2,000 a year per person.⁴ Moreover, complained political philosopher Jim Skillen of Gordon College, “Each person had only to vote his or her support of a proposal with the intent that such a project could be one

² Ron Sider, manuscript of opening address, in Folder “1974 Thanksgiving Workshop,” ESA Archives. On the ethos of the workshop, see Frances J. Mason, “Third Workshop: Evangelicals for Social Action,” *Covenant Companion* (October 1, 1975). One reporter thought that delegates “could learn something ... in decorum and parliamentary procedure.”

³ Robert T. Coote, “Evangelicals for Social Action Miss Target with Buckshot Approach,” *Evangelical Newsletter* (December 20, 1974).

⁴ Arthur Simon of Bread for the World wrote that of his misgivings that stemmed from “the speed with which a great many statements were cranked through the plenary session.” For a similar criticism see Arthur Simon to Ron Sider, December 4, 1974, in Folder “1974 TW Aftermath,” ESA Archives. Also see Stephen Mott and Wesley Roberts, “A Report on the Second Thanksgiving Workshop,” December 20, 1974, in Box 3, Folder 13, “Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals for Social Action (1974): Reportage; December 1974-January 1975,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

legitimate mode of action for ‘someone’ to take (not necessarily the voter).”⁵

Delegates dutifully ratified most proposals in a process engineered to create an artificial consensus. The unanimous votes hid sharp disagreements. Richard Pierard noted, “Last year’s meeting was focused; we wrote the declaration. This year everyone was doing his or her own thing.”⁶

Battles over identity finally overwhelmed the progressive coalition at the third meeting of the Workshop in 1975. Many black participants continued to bemoan white insensitivity. Many women condemned persistent sexist attitudes and language. Those accused—mostly white men—tired of the charges. “While I am deeply committed to the elimination of prejudice and intolerance, and certainly aware of the need for the elimination of sexism,” wrote Ira Gallaway, pastor of a United Methodist congregation, “it is not my opinion that unrealistic quotas or groveling guilt supply the answer. ... I think that we all should participate as equal human beings and not in the role of continued castigation and suspicion of each other.”⁷ To pacify female and African-American delegates, Sider and other organizers implemented a quota system to fill the planning committee. White men caucused to select four white men; women chose four women; and black participants added eight to the committee. Despite the

⁵ James Skillen to Ron Sider, circa December 1974, in Folder “1974 TW Aftermath,” ESA Archives. On their definition of endorsement, see minutes of the planning committee of Thanksgiving Workshop, May 11, 1974, in Folder “1974 Thanksgiving Workshop Planning,” ESA Archives. A press release written by Sider after the 1974 workshop put it like this: “It meant that one would be happy to pray for and encourage the individuals who did intend to implement it.” See December 3, 1974, news release in Folder “1974 Media,” ESA Archives. On feelings that “there was a basic dishonesty in asking us to affirm something to which many of the participants were not in agreement,” see Rufus Jones to Pamela Cole, December 11, 1974, in Folder “1974 TW Aftermath,” ESA Archives.

⁶ Quoted in Cheryl Forbes, “Doing the Declaration,” *Christianity Today* 19, No. 6 (December 20, 1974), 28-29.

⁷ Ira Gallaway to Richard Pierard, December 17, 1976, in Box 4, Folder 15, “Evangelical Women’s Caucus; records; November 1974-May 1976,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

emergency measure, the contentious Workshop broke up a day early. Indiana State University history professor Richard Pierard confided to a fellow delegate, “I don’t know if the workshops will continue after the way this last one went.”⁸

The historiography on identity politics is rather undeveloped, but scholars have begun to point to the many identities that emerged in new ways in the 1970s.⁹ Claiming identity as gay or black or female, some historians maintain, stunted the agenda of the larger political left and impoverished political and social discourse.¹⁰ The forces unleashed by identity, this chapter contends, were powerful enough to sabotage even a group of evangelicals with remarkably similar theological convictions, religious cultures, and critiques of conservative politics. Such resonances could not prevent the fragmentation of the evangelical left along gender, racial, and

⁸ Richard Pierard to Rufus Jones, September 16, 1975, in Box 3, Folder 15, “ESA and Third Workshop (1975): Correspondence; March 1975-February 1976,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

⁹ L. A. Kauffman, “The Anti-Politics of Identity,” *Socialist Review* 20, No. 1 (January-March 1990), 67–80. On the feminist left, see Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Origins of Women’s Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979); Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989); Douglas Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998). On the gay awakening, see Paul Berman, *A Tale of Two Utopias: The Political Journey of the Generation of 1968* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996), 123-194; Dudley Clendinen and Adam Nagourney, *Out for Good: The Struggle to Build a Gay Rights Movement in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999); and Steve Valocchi, “Individual Identities, Collective identities, and Organizational Structure: The Relationship of the Political Left and Gay Liberation in the United States,” *Sociological Perspectives* 44, No. 4 (Winter 2001), 445-467. For a critical assessment of identity politics, see Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *The Disuniting of America* (New York: Norton, 1993); Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America Is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1995); Richard Rorty, *Achieving Our Country* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998). In various ways, each of these scholars argues that liberal culture requires some basis of commonality. Moreover, the particularism of identity emphasizes differences, resulting in distraction from broader social concerns and an inability to build coalitions.

¹⁰ See Mary Ann Glendon, *Rights Talk: The Impoverishment of Political Discourse* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), x. In arguing for the primacy of law as ordering community life rather than as an instrument to enforce self-interest, Glendon writes that American rights discourse is stark because of “its prodigality in bestowing the rights label, its legalistic character, its exaggerated absoluteness, its hyperindividualism, its insularity, and its silence with respect to personal, civic, and collective responsibilities.”

theological lines. Parallel institutions established by women, African-American, Anabaptist, and Reformed evangelicals sapped the broader evangelical left of needed resources and contributed to its decline in the late 1970s.

I.

Of the many identities that emerged with vigor in the early 1970s within the evangelical left, black racial identity was the most developed. The National Black Evangelical Association (NBEA), founded in 1963 as the National Negro Evangelical Association, was comprised mainly of black congregations within traditionally white fundamentalist and evangelical denominations such as Plymouth Brethren, Christian and Missionary Alliance, and various Pentecostal groups.¹¹ In its earliest years NBEA sought primarily to proselytize non-churched blacks and to encourage black fellowship among members isolated in white denominations.¹² By the mid-1960s, however, the NBEA launched a program of dissent, criticizing the majority of white evangelicals who failed to join the civil rights movement.¹³

¹¹ Albert G. Miller, "The Rise of African-American Evangelicalism in American Culture," 259-269, in Peter W. Williams, *Perspectives on American Religion and Culture* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1999); William H. Bentley, *The National Black Evangelical Association: Reflections on the Evolution of a Concept of Ministry* (Chicago: self-published, 1979); Mary Sawyer, *Black Ecumenism: Implementing the Demands of Justice* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1994), 113-133. The NBEA's white fundamentalist roots contrast with the heritage of most black evangelicals who come out of historic American black denominations such as the African Methodist Episcopal Church and many independent Baptist groups.

¹² For an example of evangelistic literature intended for a secular or Muslim African-American audience, see John Perkins, "The Mendenhall Model Answers the Black Muslims," *Christianity Today* 20, No. 6 (January 1976), 8-13; William H. Bentley, "Black Christian Nationalism: An Evangelical Perspective," *Black Books Bulletin* 4, No. 1 (Spring 1976), 26-31. Bentley affirmed "Christianity as a religion compatible with Black experience."

¹³ See Tom Skinner, *Black and Free* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1968); Bill Pannell, *My Friend, the Enemy* (Waco, Tex.: Word Press, 1968); Columbus Salley and Ronald Behm, *Your God Is Too White* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1970); Tom Skinner, *How Black Is the Gospel?* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970).

The rise of Black Power offered a more complex challenge to black evangelicals, ultimately sparking a renewed and more strident sense of black consciousness. The most prominent black young evangelicals—among them William H. Bentley, Tom Skinner, John Perkins, and Bill Pannell—harbored ambivalence toward Stokely Carmichael, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and other purveyors of Black Power in the late 1960s, on one hand affirming the “black is beautiful” movement, the broad critiques of American society as structurally racist, and the necessity of some independent black institutions.¹⁴ Yet they also criticized what they saw as the corrupt methods and excesses of the movement, specifically the new openness to violence among SNCC members and a more strident black separatism emerging in some quarters. The ultimate goal, they maintained, was to fulfill King’s vision of the “beloved community.”

Their skepticism of Black Power, however, dissolved in the late 1960s. Bitter young black evangelical students, inflamed by the strident rhetoric of Malcolm X and discrimination at evangelical colleges, only “poorly accepted” Skinner’s moderate *Black and Free* at the 1969 Black Christian Literature Conference. Howard Jones, a Billy Graham Evangelistic Association associate who gave the closing address at the conference, came under attack too. Many evangelical blacks regarded Jones as “too White in his thinking, on the ‘house-nigger’ side of things.”¹⁵ Other “black militant

¹⁴ For an evangelical statement of “black is beautiful” sentiment in the spirit of the beloved community, see the poem entitled “I Am an African,” which read in part, “They call me African; African indeed am I, Rugged son of the soil of Africa, Black as my father, and his before him; As my mother and sisters and brothers, living and gone from this world. . . . His blood cleanses not only us, not only the clan, not only the tribe, but all, all MANKIND: Black and White and Brown and Red, All Mankind!” See “I Am an African,” in *Urbana* newspaper, Vol. 1, No. 1 (October 15, 1970), in Box 344, Folder 12, “Urbana Publicity, 1970-1971,” InterVarsity Collection, BGCA.

¹⁵ InterVarsity’s Gladys Hunt, shocked by his poor reception, said that Jones “has a reconciling ministry and I personally respond warmly to his Christian moderation and love.” See Gladys Hunt to

evangelicals” surfaced in *Freedom Now*. Eight of them appeared in a photograph with a black power salute. In an extended interview with John Alexander, they insisted on the creation of separate black institutions. Sidney Gravney explained that most white institutions were irrelevant. White educational institutions created for blacks, he continued, are often inferior and do not use black symbols to teach our children. Matthew Parker asserted, “What we need is a black, fundamental, Bible-believing, Bible institute and college that will dehonkify our minds and teach us how to communicate Christ to black people.”¹⁶ The impulse by early black leaders to create an integrated evangelical community lost momentum as a younger generation embraced racial separatism.

Black evangelical separatists first introduced notions of black power on an institutional level at NBEA’s 1969 convention in Atlanta. Most participants, both black and white, according to association president William Bentley, arrived “totally unprepared” for the “militant emphasis” which broke out among a younger set of black evangelicals.¹⁷ In a fiery keynote address, Columbus Salley, author of *Your*

IVCF Cabinet, May 13, 1969, in Box 52, Folder 3, “Pannell, William; 1967-1970,” InterVarsity Collection, BGCA.

¹⁶ Dan Orme, “Black Militant Evangelicals: An Interview,” *The Other Side* 5, No. 5 (September-October 1969), 20-25. The interview of the eight “interested in a Christian form of black power” included Sidney Gravney, Carl Ellis, Philip Bingham, Joseph Hickman, Jr., Henry Greenidge, Matthew Parker, John Skinner, and Columbus Salley.

¹⁷ Bentley, *NBEA*, 19. Some white young evangelicals embraced black separatism as well, eager to prove their radical credentials by sympathizing with the Black Panthers. On CWLF’s resonance with the Black Panthers, see “Panthers Hit the Courts,” *Right On* 8, No. 6 (May-June 1977), 17; “Survival: *Right On* Interviews Bobby Seale and Elaine Brown,” *Right On* 4, No. 8 (March 1973), 1, 14-15. The Post-Americans likewise were very sympathetic to theologian James Cone’s harsh writings about the “White Church” and the need for alternative institutions and theologies. See Boyd Reese, “Resistance and Hope” (Ph.D. Dissertation, Temple University, 1991), 114. *Freedom Now*’s John Alexander also embraced the ideal of racial separation in the early 1970s. Exclusively black institutions were a temporary measure, he argued, but necessary to enhance black solidarity and confidence to the point where a beloved community could truly be achieved. See John Alexander, “Plastic Domes,” *The Other Side* 8, No. 1 (January-February 1972), 3, 50-51. Also see articles in the January-February 1974 issue

God Is Too White, urged that NBEA nurture a blacker identity. Salley's speech drew a clear line between socially conservative blacks who "enjoyed close relationship with the white evangelical establishment" and those who wanted to relegate white leadership within the NBEA "to the periphery."¹⁸ The conflict threatened to devastate NBEA. After an equally contentious New York City convention in 1970 in which "radicalism" and "get whitey-ism" flourished, participation by both whites (which comprised one-third of the organization in the mid-1960s) and blacks diminished. Many left as black separatists sparked a small exodus, with some whites and blacks thinking that NBEA was being overrun by "a bunch of fanatical, white-baiting bigoted Black reverse racists," a charge that Bentley wondered might be "possibly not altogether untrue." During the rest of the 1970s a range of separatist sentiment continued within NBEA—from those who were "so Black that they found no time for those less 'Black' than themselves" to those who encouraged white participation. But the clear trend by an organization that had previously nurtured strong ties with

of *The Other Side* entitled "The Case for Nationalism," "Was the Early Church Really Integrated?" "Black Christian Separatism," and "Black Beauty and Church Integration."

¹⁸ On the address by Salley, see Ronald C. Potter, "The New Black Evangelicals," in *Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979*, eds. Gayraud S. Wilmore and James H. Cone (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1979), 304. (302-309). On the two camps, see Bentley, *NBEA*, 20. The progressive camp lamented that black evangelicalism was still viewing the world "through White eyes." The NBEA was still afflicted with "a White reactionary world-view" derived from its mid-century background in white fundamentalist and evangelical colleges and new evangelical colleges during mid-century. Many members of NBEA emerged from Wheaton College and Fuller Theological Seminary. As evidence, Potter noted that many of NBEA's members had assumed the racist posture of their white brethren, stereotyping black churches as uniformly inadequate, not biblically sound. See, for example, Tom Skinner, *Black and Free* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1968), 148. "The kind of religion usually found in the Negro churches is highly emotional, often superstitious and has little biblical foundation." William Bentley recalled with bemusement the "best" and "proper" methods for social justice and evangelism emphasized at the first five NBEA conventions. They were all "learned in the Bible Schools and theological seminaries of white evangelicalism" and all "far from prophetic." See William H. Bentley, "Factors in the Origin and Focus of the National Black Evangelical Association," 311, in *Black Theology*. (310-321).

essentially white evangelical institutions was toward heightened black consciousness and separatism.¹⁹

In the meantime, failed attempts at racial integration in other quarters seemed to prove black separatist fears of white interference prescient.²⁰ Conflict over whether insistent whites could participate in a black caucus marred the worship service led by Soul Liberation and Tom Skinner at Urbana 70. When some white students called Skinner “a bad nigger,” many of the black students, while offended, took pride in the designation.²¹ Three years later at Urbana 73 during a seminar on black theology, participants drafted a bitter statement “from the Afro-American People.” They declared that “significant progress” since Urbana 67 in incorporating the black perspective into convention planning had not been realized and found it “imperative to protest all over again.” “These cries of oppression are only scratching the surface of rumblings that are deeply embedded in the black community,” they wrote. “If you don’t hear these rumblings, ask God to give you a will to hear them before they

¹⁹ Bentley, *NBEA*, 20-21, 101. Bentley gave high praise to Paul Jewett of Fuller, Rufus Jones, the Fred and John Alexander, and *Freedom Now* for their efforts in the 1960s. “Although the years have brought a qualitative change in emphasis and even priorities, in the issues Fred struggled with, and to which clear expression was given in the pages of *Freedom Now*, (the fight for Civil Rights has given place to Human Rights) Fred was then right on target.” See Bentley, *NBEA*, 104. It is important to note the diversity in views within NBEA. Rufus Jones wrote the following to a fellow white evangelical after the contentious 1975 Thanksgiving Workshop: “I had a long talk with one of the blacks that was at the conference and he told me that Bill Bentley’s militant views do not represent a majority that is within the National Black Evangelical Association. Most of them, he declares, are more conservative and do want to maintain a harmonious relationship with those of us who are white and concerned about their needs. I have known Bill Bentley for a long time and I know that underneath the outward appearance there is a very warm and kind person.” See Jones to Frank Gaebelein, December 1, 1975, in Box 3, Folder 16, “ESA Third Workshop (1975): Correspondence; January-December 1975,” ESA Collection, BGCA. Some of the so-called “radicals,” irritated by the continued white presence, formed an “intra NBEA Black Caucus” at the second New York City convention in 1975.

²⁰ Christian World Liberation Front in Berkeley was a rare exception, faring better than most communities that tried to intentionally integrate, with nearly half of its community by 1974 comprised of non-whites, a number of whom held key leadership roles. See an untitled and undated history of racial issues in CWLF written by Jill Shook, Sharon Gallagher and others. In Box 2, “Jill Shook,” in CWLF Collection, GTU Archives.

²¹ Potter, “The New Black Evangelicals,” 304.

erupt.”²² The Post-Americans, while drawing praise for its deep involvement in inner-city Chicago, failed to incorporate more than a few blacks into its intentional community. John Perkins, founder of Voice of Calvary in Jackson, Mississippi, discovered the limits of beloved community in his social experiment called “Freedom Summer 1971.” Perkins brought together members of the black student association from the University of Michigan and white fundamentalist youths from California for a three-month period of intense community-building. The whites came armed with Campus Crusade’s “Four Spiritual Laws” booklet, the blacks fresh from reading Eldridge Cleaver. The summer, said Perkins, turned into “a disaster” as cultural misunderstandings and resentments mounted.²³ Half of the black students ended up “bunkered down in the Jackson headquarters of the Republic of New Africa, sparring with local police and the FBI in a gun battle.” The fearful white students could hardly bring themselves to leave the community center in Mendenhall. Perkins would later write, “Here were the fragments of what we believed in coming together—the preaching of the gospel, the social action that met people’s needs, blacks and whites working together. But they were coming together without any mediation. There was nothing to glue them together. The poles were just too far apart. It seemed there could be no reconciliation.”²⁴ The civil rights “moment” of the mid-1960s had passed.

²² “Statement From: The Afro-American People,” December 30, 1973, in Folder, “1974 TW Aftermath,” ESA Archives.

²³ John Perkins interview by Paul Ericksen, June 19, 1987, transcript in Collection 367, BGCA.

²⁴ Charles Marsh, *The Beloved Community: How Faith Shapes Social Justice* (New York: Basic Books, 2005). See another description in John Perkins, *Let Justice Roll Down* (Glendale, Cal.: Regal Books, 1976), 178, and in John Perkins, *A Quiet Revolution: The Christian Response to Human Need* (Pasadena: Urban Family Publications, 1976), 167.

Hoping that the racial divisions within evangelicalism were rooted in youthful immaturity rather than irreconcilable differences, a group of moderate black evangelicals and progressive white evangelicals, many of whom had been active in or sympathetic to the civil rights movement, staged a final effort in the mid-1970s to model the beloved community. At the Thanksgiving Workshops Perkins and Pannell were at first “deeply encouraged” to find whites of “like precious faith” with a commitment to racial justice and willing to sign a statement that confessed “the conspicuous responsibility of the evangelical community for perpetuating the personal attitudes and institutional structures that have divided the body of Christ along color lines.”²⁵ Moreover, the Workshop seemed responsive to a laundry list of proposals from a hastily formed black caucus.²⁶ Yet even the successes of the Thanksgiving Workshops betrayed racial tension.²⁷ Bentley, while welcoming the strong statement in the Chicago Declaration, was troubled by how aggressively he

²⁵ Joel A. Carpenter, “Compassionate Evangelicalism: How a Document Conceived 30 Years Ago Has Prompted Us to Care More about ‘The Least of These,’” *Christianity Today* 47, No. 12 (December 2003), 40.

²⁶ The caucus issued proposals that all Christian groups (including all denominations and colleges) incorporate at least one message or seminar on racism and invite black brothers to speak to them; research the causes and nature of racism in conservative white churches; establish a center “for the study and eradication of racism”; institute a training program of community development and racial reconciliation in Jackson, Mississippi, for promising young black evangelicals; and use recruitment and affirmative action to increase black involvement in evangelical organizations. See “A Proposal on Action to Combat Racism” and James Robert Ross, “A Proposal for an Evangelical Center for the Study and Eradication of Racism,” in Folder “1973 TW,” ESA Archives. On Jackson, Mississippi, proposal, see “The Action Proposals Accepted at the Second Thanksgiving Workshop,” 3-4, 12 and “A Proposal for Community Development through the Training of Black Christian Leaders,” December 1974, in Folder “1974 TW,” ESA Archives.

²⁷ For a more thorough description of racial issues at the first Thanksgiving Workshop, see pages 45-48 of chapter eight.

had to push to include the confession on white evangelical complicity in racial oppression.²⁸

Black ambivalence toward the Workshops continued. In 1974 black participants reconvened a caucus to ensure “substantive” consideration for their proposals in the plenary sessions since the predetermined program still did not “make adequate provision for addressing ourselves specifically to the matter of Race and Reconciliation.” Still dissatisfied by the end of the weekend, the caucus issued a statement that argued that in America “racism is essentially a white problem. ... We believe that white evangelicals are quite capable of dealing with the racism within the white evangelical world with minimal input from blacks. But herewith are some supportive recommendations.”²⁹ One of the recommendations was decisive and immediate action. The 1975 Workshop, which addressed theoretical models of social concern, did precisely the opposite. After listening to long presentations on Anabaptist, Lutheran, and Reformed political theory, William Bentley “rose to shatter the calm, analytical atmosphere,” declaring, “I question whether you people can even see us blacks.”³⁰

²⁸ The Declaration read, “We deplore the historic involvement of the church in America with racism and the conspicuous responsibility of the evangelical community for perpetuating the personal attitudes and institutional structures that have divided the body of Christ along color lines. Further, we have failed to condemn the exploitation of racism at home and abroad by our economic system.” Suspecting that racism, lagging behind feminist and antiwar sentiment, was no longer *the* plank in the young evangelical platform, Bentley wrote, “We felt that while racial prejudice and discrimination are not the only social issues that plague America and her churches, it is the one above all others that colors all others.” See William H. Bentley, “Reflections,” 135-136 in *The Chicago Declaration*, ed. Ron Sider (Carol Stream, Ill.: Creation House, 1974).

²⁹ “The Black Caucus,” 3-4, in Folder “1974 Thanksgiving Workshop,” ESA Archives.

³⁰ Quoted in Bonnie M. Greene, “Confrontation in Black and White: Evangelicals for Social Action, Third Annual Workshop,” *Vanguard* (September-October 1975), 25-26. Bentley complained that “not one of the models presented recognized the Black church in America!” He would later critique the media’s portrayal in 1976 of the “Year of the Evangelical.” “The white media virtually orgasmed over that ‘resurgence,’” wrote Bentley, “but almost completely acted as though we did not

Events over the next several years only exacerbated Bentley's sense of betrayal. A 1975 conference on race and reconciliation, which drew a disappointingly small crowd and few top evangelical leaders, suggested that the battle against racism had been overtaken by concerns over Vietnam, Watergate, and poverty.³¹ Editors of the *Post-American*, after stressing racial concerns in its first issue, failed to devote much space to racism in succeeding years. The Post-Americans' preoccupation with the war led Ron Potter to observe that "many New Black Evangelicals see the White Evangelical 'left' to be as irrelevant to them as neo-evangelicalism was to their predecessors in the fifties. The new Blacks feel that White Evangelicals, as a group, no matter how radical or young, will never come to grips with the demon of racism embedded within them."³² Bentley concurred, "Evangelicalism's treatment of and dedication to the eradication of racism within Christian and other contexts, falls far short of the time, attention, and commitment it invests in other areas of social concern."³³ A series of confrontational meetings between editors of the *Post-American* and representatives of the NBEA in the mid-1970s only aggravated the rift.³⁴

exist, that we were no part of what is meant by 'evangelicalism' in America." He similarly groused about a lack of attention black evangelicals in the book *The Evangelicals*. He wrote, "The fact that the other articles which assumed the normacy of the white evangelical community were as a rule considerably longer (some of them were over two and a half times as long—at least intimates that their assessment of the significance of our contribution to the history of American evangelicalism is that it is a minor one!" See Bentley, *NBEA*, 47, 52.

³¹ John K. Stoner, "National Workshop on Race and Reconciliation, Atlanta, June 13-15, 1975," June 24, 1975, in Folder "1975 Atlanta Race Workshop," ESA Archives.

³² Potter, "The New Black Evangelicals," 306. Bentley noted that many black young evangelicals believed *Sojourners* had "establishment ties despite its radical stance." See Bentley, *NBEA*, 128.

³³ Bentley, *NBEA*, 129.

³⁴ Reese, "Resistance and Hope," 112-113.

Disillusioned with the white evangelical left and dismayed by the lack of cultural identity among black youth, Bentley and other black evangelical leaders redoubled their efforts at nurturing black identity.³⁵ Exploring the ways in which white influence had corrupted black evangelicalism, they sought to establish their independence from white theology and culture. “Black Power begins with the realization that blacks have been conditioned by white institutions to hate themselves and to question their basic worth,” Columbus Salley wrote in *Your God Is Too White*. Evangelicalism had conditioned blacks to believe in a “white, blue-eyed Jesus—a Jesus who negates the humanity of their blackness, a Jesus who demands that they whiten their souls in order to save them.” Potter called for the “theological decolonization of minds,” mourning that black evangelicals still “see through a glass whitely.”³⁶ Bentley, dubbed the “godfather” of militant black evangelicals, proclaimed a “Declaration of Independence from uncritical dependence upon white evangelical theologians who would attempt to tell us what the content of our efforts at liberation should be.”³⁷

He called instead for an authentic black evangelical theology, one that was biblical, grounded in “concrete sociopolitical realities,” and that did not “merely blackenize the theologies of E.J. Carnell, Carl F.H. Henry, Francis Schaeffer, and

³⁵ William Bentley mourned that in a leadership conference of black evangelical students at the University of Michigan the majority of participants (most of whom were from solid middle-to-upper-middle-class black families) were “only faintly familiar with the work of both Malcolm and Martin. And they did not remember the name Medgar Evers at all. It is a shocking commentary of the state of Black youth ...” See Bentley, *NBEA*, 49.

³⁶ Potter, “New Black Evangelicals,” 307.

³⁷ Bentley, “Origin and Focus of the National Black Evangelical Association,” 313-314. Potter writes that Bentley “was attempting to raise the social and ethnic consciousness of Black Christians long before Black Power was in vogue. Bentley, perhaps more than anyone else, has contributed to a distinct Black Evangelical nationalist school of thought.” See Potter, “New Black Evangelicals,” 305.

other White Evangelical ‘saints.’”³⁸ While such thinkers could offer some insight, too many young black evangelicals were “under the academic spell” of white evangelical intellectuals who suffered from “blindness to the specifics of the Black American experience.”³⁹ Rather, Salley insisted, “God must become black.”⁴⁰ Clarence Hilliard echoed, “Jesus stood with and for the poor and oppressed and disinherited. He came for the sick and needy. ... He came into the world as the ultimate ‘nigger’ of the universe.”⁴¹ Black evangelical theology, wrote Bentley and Potter, should build on this “ethnic brand” and draw from black sources such as James Cone and the collective experience of black evangelicalism.⁴²

The call for the creation of a black theology grew into a broader push for black identity generally toward an “ethnic self-acceptance.”⁴³ Since black culture “has been lost, stolen, or destroyed,” wrote Walter McCray, noted author and founder of Black Light Fellowship in Chicago, “syncretism and integration must be checked.

³⁸ Potter, “New Black Evangelicals,” 307. Bentley likewise urged the development of a black apologetic that was “more than a black patina on the art object that is the product of white and European theological activity.” See William H. Bentley, “A Brief Word to Those Who Would Develop a Black Apologetic,” *Handbook*, 71-73, in Ruth Lewis Bentley, ed., *Handbook for Black Christian Students, or How to Remain Sane and Grow in a White College Setting* (Chicago: National Black Christian Students Conference, 1974).

³⁹ Bentley, *NBEA*, 95.

⁴⁰ Columbus Salley and Ronald Behm, *Your God Is Too White* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1970), 65, 73.

⁴¹ Clarence Hilliard, “Down with the Honky Christ, Up with the Funky Jesus,” *Christianity Today* 20, No. 9 (January 30, 1976), 6-8.

⁴² On Cone, see *Black Theology and Black Power* (1969) and *A Black Theology of Liberation* (1970). Arguing for the primacy of black identity in living Christian faith, Cone wrote, “Blackness opened my eyes to see African-American history and culture as one of the most insightful sources for knowing about God.” For a discussion on the development of black theology, see the May-June 1974 issue of *The Other Side* entitled “On Black Theology.”

⁴³ Bentley, *NBEA*, 11.

We must, as best we can, isolate what is our own culture.”⁴⁴ McCray encouraged black students to “read and ponder on Blackness. Students must be ever learning about themselves as Blacks.”⁴⁵ Wyn Wright Potter, staff member of the Douglass-Tubman Christian Center in the Robert Taylor housing project, told the white participants at the second annual conference on politics at Calvin College in 1974 about how “Jesus Christ the Liberator” heals the wounds of black America by “fostering black identity and human dignity.”⁴⁶

As Potter’s statement suggests, by the mid-1970s a psychological dimension supplemented the sociological thrust of ethnic solidarity. Ozzie Edwards, an evangelical professor of African-African-American history at Harvard, worried about the “immeasurable degree of psychological damage and social isolation” of black students on nearly all-white evangelical campuses.⁴⁷ Students attending state universities dealt with a different dilemma. An InterVarsity student at Brooklyn College felt as though she had to make “the difficult choice between being Christian

⁴⁴ McCray, 35. Ronald Potter, “The Black Christian Student and Interracial Male-Female Relationships,” in *Handbook*, 39-43. Also see “Ertie Hilliard Nevels, “Interracial Dating: A Brief Word from a Black Sister,” in *Handbook*, 44. Both articles criticized interracial dating because it damages black solidarity.

⁴⁵ Walter Arthur McCray, *Toward a Holistic Liberation of Black People: Its Meaning as Expressed in the Objectives of the National Black Christian Students Conference* (Chicago: NBCSC, 1977), 29. McCray went on to write a series of books detailing the rich heritage of black Christianity. See, for example, Walter Arthur McCray, *The Black Presence in the Bible: Discovering the Black and African Identity of Biblical Persons and Nations* (Chicago: Black Light Fellowship, 1989). For another treatment of the same theme, see Carl Ellis, “Black Testament: Foundations of a Black Christian Consciousness,” *HIS* 35, No. 7 (April 1975), 1, 4-6, 23.

⁴⁶ Quoted in Jim Wallis, “‘New Evangelicals’ and the Demands of Discipleship,” *Christian Century* (May 29, 1974), 581-582. Look up some *Other Side* references on black identity.

⁴⁷ Edwards noted how black students “are constantly required to be ‘expert’ on black life and culture. They have little privacy on or off campus. It is clear that they are not permitted to follow a normal routine of college life such as are other students.” Quoted in Bentley, *Handbook for Black Christian Students*, 3. For a similar statement, see Howard O. Jones, *White Questions to a Black Christian* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 131-132.

first and then Black or being Black and then Christian.”⁴⁸ Black evangelical authorities offered several psychological solutions to these dilemmas. First, wrote Walter McCray, “Jesus delivers from depressions, fears, hate, despair. He gives courage, peace, joy.” It was important, he asserted, that black people enjoy “individual liberation ... characterized by an integrated life. All facets of his being work together harmoniously.”⁴⁹ Second, blacks needed to be part an all-encompassing black community.⁵⁰ In order to heal the black psyche, whites needed to stay out of the way. To escape “the heritage of slavery,” “defective vision must be corrected,” wrote Bentley. “Blacks ... need to learn that they can do as good a job as others in their own behalf ... without a loss in humanity or an increase in dependency.”⁵¹ Thus, “whatever role whites play in a leadership capacity, it should be of an indirect nature and complementary to, not in advance of indigenous Black leadership.” Before racial integration could occur within evangelicalism, black authorities stressed, black individuals needed psychological wholeness born of an integral ethnic consciousness.⁵²

⁴⁸ Barbara Benjamin, *The Impossible Community: A Story of Hardship and Hope and Brooklyn College in New York* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1978), 26.

⁴⁹ Walter Arthur McCray, *Toward a Holistic Liberation of Black People: Its Meaning as Expressed in the Objectives of the National Black Christian Students Conference* (Chicago: NBCSC, 1977), 13-14. Not until page 25 does McCray treat social change—and only then with a throwaway paragraph: “Besides the individual effects that will occur as a person gets close to the Liberator, there are community effects that will occur as well. For as numbers of Black students are liberated, this will overflow into the communities of which they are a part. Institutions and systems will be challenged and changed in order to meet the current needs of Black folks.” Also see Ruth Lewis Bentley, “Black Identity—Developing Positive Self-Esteem,” in *Handbook for Black Christians*, 17-23.

⁵⁰ “Black students ought to be taught how to work toward living sacrificially by buying Black. They must be shown how to deal with the strain between being a good steward over one’s finances (by shopping for the lowest prices) and building bridges in the Black community (by marketing there).” See Bentley, “Black Identity,” 28.

⁵¹ Bentley, *NBEA*, 109.

⁵² Desires for ethnic solidarity bewildered many whites, resulting in even more misunderstandings. White students at an NBEA meeting for black students in Boston, for instance, so overwhelmed the

The stress on black identity exacerbated the already wide cultural divide and contributed to the deterioration of black-white cooperation on the ground. At Circle Church in Chicago, a bitter clash between white lead pastor David Mains and black associate minister Clarence Hilliard raged.⁵³ In 1978 Gordon-Conwell Seminary fell under sharp attack by Tom Skinner and John Perkins.⁵⁴ Skinner also decried the lack of progress in hiring black faculty and deans at Wheaton. Arguing that the Vietnam War had slowed momentum, he maintained that “we have not made any progress. We don't know each other and that's the name of the game.”⁵⁵ The Sojourners community, as in Chicago, once again ran into difficulty in its efforts to reach poor blacks who seemed suspicious of the group's sudden intrusion in 1975 in the

conference with support and interest that the black students had to caucus to take care of business. See Bentley, *NBEA*, 86.

⁵³ Circle Church enjoyed several years of relatively peaceful integration in the early 1970s. Hilliard later wrote, “Circle Church, for the brief span that it modeled ethnic unity in the midst of diversity, was like Peter who, for a few moments, walked on water.” But the cultural divide was wide, and conditions deteriorated in the mid-1970s. Mains was very conscious of service lengths and sermon preparation. Hilliard, who wanted to “go with the flow,” resented the four meetings each week Mains wanted in order to vet sermons. The dispute came to a head over a Hilliard sermon entitled “The Funky Gospel.” Hilliard accused Mains of “denying a black preacher full and free expression.” The congregation then split along racial lines when the elders temporarily removed both Hilliard and Mains from office. This merely exacerbated the cultural confusion. “Silencing the pastor” was a big deal for black evangelicals, and whites in the congregation had “no idea of the significance of such a move.” In the end, the white majority of elders asked Hilliard to resign. He refused and was fired. Mains left a year later. “My greatest loss,” remembered Circle Church member Glen Kehrein, “was that not even one personal relationship with a fellow black believer survived the holocaust.” See Glen Kehrein and Raleigh Washington, *Breaking Down Walls* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1993), 75-81; Manuel Ortiz, “Circle Church: A Case Study in Contextualization,” *Urban Mission* 8 (January 1991), 6-18; Hilliard, “Down with the Honky Christ,” 6.

⁵⁴ For details on the twenty courses offered each year in the Black Studies program, see “Course Offerings, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary: Christianity and Society and Black Studies,” October 30, 1974, “1975 Atlanta Race Workshop” folder, ESA Archives. On black criticism of Gordon-Conwell, see Titus Presler, “Perkins’ Visit Impetus for Criticism,” *The Paper* 4, No. 6 (April 17, 1978), 1. In a speech at the seminary, Skinner declared that “Gordon-Conwell is the biggest rip-off in evangelical history” for its failure to fulfill A.J. Gordon’s original intent of training urban blacks.

⁵⁵ Anita Moreland, “Skinner Seeks Progress,” *Wheaton Record* 98, No. 1 (January 10, 1974), 3.

Columbia Heights neighborhood in the District of Columbia.⁵⁶ Efforts by ESA to build a center for the study of racism went nowhere. Moreover, ESA's plan to include blacks in its leadership—reserving four of eight spots on the planning committee for blacks—backfired when it became difficult to find enough blacks to serve. By the late 1970s, white evangelical energy on racism seemed spent and black evangelicals seemed intent on opting for a separatist approach.⁵⁷

Thus as the 1970s progressed, portions of black evangelicalism increasingly renounced their white evangelical heritage and built black institutions. Bill Pannell, though he remained at Fuller Seminary and participated widely in the white evangelical world in subsequent years, said that he had not “felt like an evangelical for years,” maintaining that it was “perfectly possible to be a separate organization and still be brothers.”⁵⁸ Bentley, preaching what he called a “black evangelical Christian nationalism,” argued that a truly evangelical black theology could only be

⁵⁶ Philip Muston, “Sojourners: Unique Community, Unique Message,” *On Being* (December 1979/January 1980), 63-66, copy in Folder IV1, “Articles and Critiques about Sojourners,” Sojourners Collection, WCA.

⁵⁷ On the debate over white funding of black evangelical organizations and concern about institutional control and cycles of dependency, see John Perkins, “A Proposal for Community Development through the Training of Black Christian Leaders,” in Folder “1974 Action Proposals,” ESA Archives; Bentley, *NBEA*, 12. By the mid-1970s, indigenous support became the norm. A “conscious determination was made to abjure reliance on foundations, grants, and solicitation of gifts from traditional white sources—a major means made use of by many contemporary Black organizations who minister to Black people. The rudimentary philosophy behind this was two-fold: he who pays the piper calls the tune; and ‘if Black people are really serious about Black liberation, they ought to be willing to pay for it themselves.’ In this way, the first Students Conference set the pattern for all others which have followed.” See Bentley, *NBEA*, 87. Regarding his fear of cooption by white organizations, Bentley wrote, “Outstanding examples of contemporary co-optation would be the bulk of former Black Nationalist leadership of the late sixties who are now safely ensconced within the minor inner circles of white middle-class institutions, financial and otherwise! It is more than a suspicion within the Black community that the best way to corrupt a promising leader is not to kill him, but to promote him.” See Bentley, *NBEA*, 41.

⁵⁸ Quoted in *The Branch* (October 1, 1974), in Box 124, Folder 12, “The Branch,” InterVarsity Collection, BGCA; Ron Sider notes on Bill Pannell’s address, in Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration,” ESA Archives.

articulated by black theologians.⁵⁹ Black evangelicals began to rely on dozens of thriving black organizations for support. In addition to the launch of the National Black Evangelical Students Association, the National Association of Christian Communicators, the Women's Commission of NBEA, the NBEA itself built local chapters in Portland, Chicago, New York City, Pittsburgh, Dallas, Seattle, Phoenix, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Cleveland, San Francisco, and Detroit.⁶⁰ By 1980, NBEA had a mailing list of 5,000 with an "extended constituency" of 30,000 to 40,000.⁶¹

Meanwhile, other racial minorities within evangelicalism emerged, many dismayed with the overwhelming focus on black-white issues.⁶² Ka Tong Gaw, a sociology professor at Wheaton and a Filipino of Chinese descent, resigned his position on the Thanksgiving Workshop planning committee in 1975 because of committee's lack of attention to Asian affairs. When we refer to "minorities," Gaw complained, "we are referring primarily to the blacks." He felt like a "token chink," he told Sider, and suffered from a "blatantly unfair, let alone unchristian, expulsion of my participation in their caucus." "All I have received so far are laughs and more

⁵⁹ John Maust, "The NBEA: Striving to Be Both Black and Biblical," *Christianity Today* 24, No. 12 (June 27, 1980), 58-59.

⁶⁰ Bentley, *NBEA*, 81.

⁶¹ Maust, "The NBEA," 59.

⁶² On 1970s identity politics historiography beyond white and black, see Troy R. Johnson, *The Occupation of Alcatraz Island: Indian Self-Determination and the Rise of Indian Activism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996); Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); William Wei, *The Asian American Movement* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); Eric Cummins, *The Rise and Fall of California's Radical Prison Movement* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994); Carlos Munoz, Jr., *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicago Movement* (London: Verso, 1989); Armando Navarro, *La Raza Unida Party: A Chicago Challenge to the U.S. Two-Party Dictatorship* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000).

laughs” at “my Third World Action proposal.”⁶³ Gaw and other non-black, non-white evangelicals held an “ABC Conference” of Asian, black, and Chicano participants in Pasadena, Cal., in February 1976.⁶⁴ While hopes for a minority coalition never materialized, racial identities within young evangelicalism flourished in the 1970s and 1980s.⁶⁵ InterVarsity Press printed nearly 100 books about multiethnicity over the next several decades.⁶⁶

While the white evangelical left in principle affirmed separate racial institutions in the 1970s, the reality, according to *The Other Side*’s John Alexander, left them “hurt, confused, and frustrated.”⁶⁷ That “letting Christ live through my blackness” would lead black evangelicals to bitter racial separation heightened the

⁶³ Ka Tong Gaw to Ron Sider, March 14, 1975, in Folder “1975 TW Planning,” ESA Archives. For other expressions of Asian evangelical identity, see *The Asianamerican Journey* from a community called Agape Fellowship based in Los Angeles.

⁶⁴ See April 1, 1976, issue of *The Branch* in Box 124, Folder, 12, “The Branch,” InterVarsity Collection, BGCA.

⁶⁵ Bentley forecasted a coalition between Black and Latino evangelicals. He further hoped that NBEA could serve as a model for the ethnic liberation of other races and interest groups. Bentley wrote that an Indian man from a major evangelical seminary came to the Atlanta convention in order to learn from “the indomitable spirit, the refusal of the Afro-American to utterly acquiesce in his own degradation, his will to fight against overwhelming odds, and to see victory through God at the end of his struggle,” had fired the imagination of his own Indian people, and the oppressed caste to which he belonged, to seek deliverance in their own struggles, using, with suitable adaptation, the Afro-American model of liberational activism.” The problem, he noted, was that as other groups such as women, gays, and war protestors gained solidarity, they were “progressively deemphasizing their involvement in our cause.” See Bentley, *NBEA*, 111, 137.

⁶⁶ For an extensive list of InterVarsity’s multiethnic publishing, see Andrew T. LePeau and Linda Doll, Heart. *Soul. Mind. Strength. An Anecdotal History of InterVarsity Press, 1947-2007* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 86-87. For other examples of the new preoccupation with ethnic identity, see Phil Shenk, “The Frontier Days Are Here Again: The Impact of the Energy Crisis on Native Americans,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 1 (January 1978), 20-24; Phil Shenk, “The Longest Walk,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 7 (July 1978), 10-12; Charlie Garriott, “Captives in Their Homeland,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 7 (July 1978), 12-13. Phil Shenk, “The Frontier Days Are Here Again: The Impact of the Energy Crisis on Native Americans,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 1 (January 1978), 20-24; “ESA Supports Native Peoples’ Rights, Lays Plans for 1979,” *Public Justice Newsletter* (November 1978), 3-4. “Politics and Pluralism in America: An American Indian Perspective,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 10 (August-September 1980), 5-7; Ward Churchill, “Behind our Backs,” *The Other Side* 20, No. 8 (August 1984), 12-16.

⁶⁷ John F. Alexander, “Counting the Cost,” *The Other Side* 7, No. 2 (March-April 1971), 3; Carl Ellis, “Black Militant Evangelicals,” *The Other Side* 5, No. 5 (September-October 1969).

evangelical left's sense that their tradition had forfeited its moral voice. The loss of beloved community, they also recognized, was dissipating much-needed talent, and social perspective. The emergence of racial identity proved to be a devastating blow to the prospects of the emerging progressive evangelical coalition.

II.

The disastrous 1974 Thanksgiving Workshop also sparked dissent from women. In the weeks after the Workshop, upset female participants sent Ron Sider dozens of letters, one of them a fiery dispatch postmarked from Minneapolis. Evon Bachaus, one of the nearly 30 women who had attended the Workshop, accused men at the Workshop of following precisely the same pattern as the New Left, which “fell apart as a cohesive movement when the men ... refused to take feminism seriously.” Evangelical men at the Workshop, Bachaus reported, gave inordinate attention to racial issues, failing to take women's issues seriously and repeatedly warning her that highlighting the ERA or women's ordination might “ruin the credibility of the Workshop” and that “we need to take more time to study this thoroughly.” Bachaus dryly noted that “‘further study needed’ has been the Church's standard answer to women for some time now.” For the sake of the progressive evangelical coalition, she implored, give us 50% representation on the planning committee and 50% of the delegate body. As a sign of good faith, Bachaus requested 50 copies of the Chicago Declaration to distribute to the Minneapolis chapter of the just-formed Evangelical Women's Caucus.⁶⁸ Such gestures of support for the larger progressive movement,

⁶⁸ Evon Bachaus to Ron Sider, December 31, 1974, in Folder “1974 Chicago Aftermath,” ESA Archives.

however, would soon fade. After successfully pushing their way onto the agenda of the Thanksgiving Workshops, evangelical feminists largely abandoned the broader movement to instead build an organization focused more directly on women's issues.

The confidence and stridency of Bachaus' letter belied the undeveloped progressive evangelical female consciousness prior to the early 1970s.⁶⁹ To be sure, evangelical women, particularly as they encountered feminist literature at state universities, issued isolated complaints of sexism and periodic calls to use women's talents in the 1960s.⁷⁰ "Women have been forced (literally or by default) to deal with the details of garbage, dirt, etc. for centuries," wrote Nancy Goodwin, an InterVarsity student from New York in the mid-1960s. "Men prop up their feet and discuss world problems. They then see their wives' narrowness of thought as part of their sexuality and look down upon their intellect."⁷¹ In numerous InterVarsity chapters and at Urbana 70 itself, students grumbled about the sexist title of the convention theme: "God's Men—From All Nations to All Nations."⁷² In Chicago the Post-Americans

⁶⁹ Margaret Lamberts Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender, 1875 to the Present* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 120-122.

⁷⁰ For acknowledgements of the influence of feminist literature, see "A liberated sister," "Women's Lib," *Right On* 2, No. 23 (February 3, 1971), 3; Pamela Cochran, *Evangelical Feminism: A History* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 35-36; contributions by Mildred Meythaler and Sharon Gallagher in Virginia Hearn, ed., *Our Struggle to Serve: The Stories of 15 Evangelical Women* (Waco: Word Books, 1979), 50-61, 93-100. Meythaler wrote, "I have never called myself a feminist ... Yet in the sixties I was surprised to see myself, and my mother-in-law and grandmother, in the pages of *The Feminine Mystique*." Anne Eggebroten, for example, converted to Christianity in 1964, then to feminism while at Stanford University as an undergraduate. She joined the National Organization for Women, went to graduate school at the University of California at Berkeley to study medieval English literature. In 1974 she was a participant at the second Thanksgiving Workshop.

⁷¹ Letter from Nancy Goodwin, *HIS* 25, No. 8 (May 1965), 23; Letha Scanzoni, "The Feminists and the Bible," *Christianity Today* 17, No. 9 (February 2, 1973), 10-15.

⁷² Keith Hunt and Gladys M. Hunt, *For Christ and the University: The Story of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship of the U.S.A., 1940-1990* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 252-253. On feminist sentiments within InterVarsity, see Box 68, Folder 1, "Conference on Womanhood; 1971," InterVarsity Collection, BGCA; "I'm a Woman, I'm Free," *Manna* 1, No. 2 (October 5, 1970), 1, copy in Box 344, Folder 4, InterVarsity Collection, BGCA. The article was sympathetic to women's

offered free university courses on sexism in 1971.⁷³ In Berkeley the Christian World Liberation Front offered a safe haven for emerging evangelical feminists.⁷⁴ As a whole, though, feminist sentiments were isolated, dependent upon the larger feminist movement for inspiration and lacking a coherent program of action.⁷⁵

liberation rhetoric, then ties it to Christ: "Freedom comes from knowing one's own identity. This freedom comes from knowing and accepting the love of God through Christ." The same issue of *Manna* also advertised an InterVarsity seminar called "Gyne," which was described as an "all-day rap session about all aspects of women's identity." Seminars included "Is God a Male Chauvinist?" David M. Scholer, a professor at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary who offered a course entitled "Women and Ministry in the New Testament," after a successful speaking engagement at an InterVarsity chapter meeting of 150 students at Brown University, began traveling the InterVarsity lecture circuit speaking about women's issues from a progressive perspective. He became very involved in the Evangelical Women's Caucus in the 1970s and 1980s. See Scholer in "My Fifty Year Journey with Women and Ministry in the New Testament and in the Church Today," *Christian Feminism Today* 30, No. 2 (Summer 2006). Ginny Hearn remembers Trinity Seminary professor Clark Pinnock giving some InterVarsity students some feminist literature. Hearn also remembers being upset that InterVarsity refused to pay a woman a full-time wage. See oral interview with Virginia Hearn interview, July 9, 2006.

⁷³ "The Quest for Discipleship: A Summer Education-Action Seminar led by members of the Post-American staff," brochure in Box XI1, Folder "Post-American—Internal," Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

⁷⁴ Sharon Gallagher nearly single-handedly reoriented CWLF's view of women. In its first year *Right On* was hostile toward the feminist movement. One of its first issues declared that feminists "don't deserve a man" and that "deserving a man" was one of the best things a real woman could work for. Christ could help a feminist be such a woman." Soon thereafter Gallagher was told to write an anti-feminist article for *Right On* in the first years of CWLF. But as her research progressed, Gallagher increasingly identified with the movement. Gallagher began to take CWLF women to feminist conferences and protest marches. Women also began to offer "teachings" (the CWLF equivalent of a sermon) during meetings. On feminist sensibilities within CWLF, see Ina J. Kau, "Feminists in the American Evangelical Movement," (M.A. thesis, Pacific School of Religion, 1977), 91; Donald A. Heinz, "Jesus in Berkeley," (Ph.D. dissertation, Graduate Theological Union, 1976), 238-242; Virginia Hearn interview, July 9, 2006; Sharon Gallagher interview, July 7, 2006; Jack Sparks, "The Androclean Outlook," *Right On* 4, No. 8 (March 1973), 4. On CWLF's free university course entitled "Liberating Women Today" offered by Gallagher and Faye Finley, see "Radical Street Christianity Workshop," in undated CWLF newsletter, Box 2, "Jill Shook," CWLF Collection, GTU Archives.

⁷⁵ For the brief list of proto-evangelical feminist writings prior to the Chicago Declaration, see Russell C. Prohl, *Woman in the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957); Letha Scanzoni, "Women's Place: Silence or Service?" *Eternity* 17, No. 2 (February 1966), 14-16. Scanzoni, "Elevate Marriage to Partnership," *Eternity* 19, No. 7 (July 1968), 11-14; Ruth Schmidt, "Second-Class Citizenship in the Kingdom of God," *Christianity Today* 15, No. 7 (January 1, 1971), 13-14; Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, "Women's Liberation and the Bible," *Christian Herald* (December 1972), 17-18, 21-22, 24); Hardesty, "Women and Evangelical Christianity: The Road to Liberation," in Clouse, Linder, and Pierard, eds., *Cross and the Flag* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Creation House, 1972); Scanzoni, "The Feminists and the Bible," *Christianity Today* 17, No. 9 (February 2, 1973), 10-15; Kathryn Lindskoog, "Paul's Bad News for Women," *The Other Side* 9, No. 4 (July-August 1973), 8-11; Evon E. Bachaus, "Personal Experience in Employment," *The Other Side* 9, No. 4 (July-August 1973), 30-33.

The Thanksgiving Workshops gave evangelical feminists both the opportunity to meet and a stage on which to articulate their concerns. Organizers of the first Workshop invited only six women, but those women, energetic and aghast at the “Eastern men’s club” feel of the Workshop, jumpstarted the evangelical feminist movement.⁷⁶ Forming a tiny “women’s caucus,” Nancy Hardesty and Sharon Gallagher pushed through, against substantial resistance from some, a statement—“We acknowledge that we have encouraged men to prideful domination and women to irresponsible passivity. So we call both men and women to mutual submission and active discipleship”—that appeared in the Chicago Declaration text itself.⁷⁷ They also lobbied for more inclusion in upcoming Workshops. Their efforts paid off as Sider fired off letters asking for ideas of women to invite, even urging that “men be willing to stay home to give wives a chance to attend conferences.”⁷⁸ In the end, the planning committee invited over sixty women, each investigated by Hardesty to ensure they were sufficiently egalitarian on gender issues, to attend the 1974 Workshop.

⁷⁶ Hardesty, “Reflections,” *The Chicago Declaration*, 123. For an example of the “Eastern men’s club” ethos at the first Thanksgiving Workshop, see an undated letter from Carl Henry in which he calls his secretaries “girls.” Henry to Ron Sider, in Folder “1974 TW Planning,” ESA Archives. Anne Eggebrotten wrote of her irritation while working as an editor at *Christianity Today* of the organization’s policy that female employees of all ranks had to clean the coffee pots and provide food to men on occasion. Such policies angered her so much that during one lunch break, she pushed a street preacher who was speaking about how wives should be obedient to men off his stand to the cheers of onlookers at Lafayette Park. See Anne Eggebrotten, *Our Struggle to Serve*, 115.

⁷⁷ The caucus also proposed, though it was not officially included in the Declaration, a statement on sharing home and church responsibilities: “We urge the church to present a true picture of male-female relationships in Christ. This may mean revised Sunday School materials, male and female teachers at all levels of church education, and men sharing in the childcare, dishwashing and cooking responsibilities at church functions as women share in leadership responsibilities. We urge Christian schools, organizations and mission boards to affirm the equality of the sexes in the way they hire, promote and pay their employers.” See “Action Proposals: From the Group Concerned with Sexism,” 1973 TW folder, ESA Archives.

⁷⁸ “Proposals from the Women’s Caucus,” November 1974, ESA Archives.

Over thirty nearly all white, urban, professional, and highly educated women came.⁷⁹ They included Bok Lim Kim, assistant professor of Social Work at the University of Illinois; several Wheaton College professors; Letha Scanzoni; Pamela Cole, the first female graduate of Gordon-Conwell Seminary to be ordained; Lucille Dayton, historian of women in the holiness tradition; Karen De Vos of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee; Virginia Mollenkott, English professor at Paterson State College; Neta Jackson of Reba Place; and dozens of others. Together, they comprised nearly one-third of the attendance at the second Workshop. Active participants in the Workshop's plenary sessions, the burgeoning group nonetheless spent much of their time in Chicago organizing. They established a formal organization called the Evangelical Women's Caucus (EWC), which immediately issued demands regarding inclusive language, women's ordination, Equal Rights Amendment, and equal employment opportunities in evangelical organizations.⁸⁰

Of these major planks, the Caucus most vehemently demanded that evangelicals cease "subtle discrimination against women in language which emphasizes the masculine to the exclusion of the feminine." University of Saskatchewan sociologist Kathleen Storrie complained to Peruvian evangelical and InterVarsity administrator Samuel Escobar about the Lausanne Covenant, of which

⁷⁹ In 1978, 65% had been to graduate school. By 1981, that had risen to 71%. See Richard Quebedeaux, "We're on our Way, Lord! The Rise of 'Evangelical Feminism' in Modern American Christianity," in *Women in the World's Religions, Past and Present*, ed. Ursula King (New York: Paragon House, 1987), 139. John Howard Yoder was the lone man to regularly attend early caucus meetings, though others were supportive and sympathetic.

⁸⁰ It also proposed to contact every evangelical college in the nation to encourage them to start women's studies programs, to hire female counselors, to examine local Christian bookstores for sexist publications, and to compile a bibliography of feminist literature. See "Proposals from the Women's Caucus," November 1974, in Box 2, Folder 15, "Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals for Social Action (1974): Action Proposals n.d.," ESA Collection, BGCA.

she considered 17 of 27 uses of “humanity” to be sexist. Such matters were not “picayune,” she maintained. “Language does reflect presuppositions about the relative social status of the members of a given culture or society.”⁸¹ *Right On* editor Sharon Gallagher complained of receiving letters addressed to “Dear Sir” or “Mr. Sherren Gallagher.”⁸² Nancy Hardesty asked Sider to “be a bit more careful about sexist language.” Sider subsequently penciled in “sisterly” before “brotherly” in describing his plea for a cooperative spirit at the Workshop.⁸³ As the 1970s progressed, the evangelical left developed and used a library of non-sexist literature—such as the songbook *Brothers and Sisters Sing!*—and developed manuals on the use of gender inclusive language.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Kathleen Storrie to Samuel Escobar, October 26, 1974, in Folder, “1974 Chicago Workshop planning,” ESA Archives.

⁸² Gallagher, in *Our Struggle to Serve*, 97.

⁸³ Hardesty to Sider, October 25, 1974, in Folder “1974 Chicago Workshop Planning,” ESA Archives. A letter from David Moberg to Ron Sider reveals the awkwardness—and good humor—with which many men in the evangelical left handled the sometimes awkward transition: “Greet all the brethren—of both genders!” See Moberg to Sider, April 15, 1974, in Folder, “1974 Workshop Planning,” ESA Archives. Ron Sider, Text of opening comments, in Folder, “1974 Chicago Workshop,” ESA Archives.

⁸⁴ Sharon Neuffer Emswiler and Thomas Neuffer Emswiler, *Sisters and Brothers Sing!* (Normal, Ill.: Wesley Foundation Campus Ministry, 1975). The Emswilers wrote, “The music in this hymnal consciously recognizes the whole people of God—sisters and brothers together. It also refuses to allow us to box God into narrow sexual identifications.” “Thus the songs chosen to appear in this hymnal all use inclusive language when speaking of people, (sons and daughters, persons, folk, sisters and brothers, etc.) instead of the all too common masculine terms ‘men,’ ‘brothers,’ etc. We have also chosen songs which generally refer to God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit in non-sexual ways. In the few cases where sexual references to God have been allowed, we have kept them in careful balance. To allow God to be over-identified with either male or female ways of speaking is to limit our concept of who God is and how we can relate to this God.” For an advertisement of the songbook, see “Sidelines,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 3 (March 1978), 9. For other statements against sexist language, see Rey O’Day Mawson, “Why All the Fuss about Language?” *Post-American* 3, No. 6 (August-September 1974), 16-17; David Gill, “Prolegomena to the Male/Female Discussion,” *Right On* 7, No. 8 (May 1976), 12; Virginia Hearn, in *Our Struggle to Serve*, 19; “Non-Sexist Language,” *Right On* 9, No. 5 (March-April 1978), 11, 19; Sharon Gallagher, in *Our Struggle to Serve*, 97. For a gender language workshop used in ESA’s Discipleship Workshops in the late 1970s, see Elaine Amerson, “A Sensitivity to Language,” December 3, 1977, in Folder “Discipleship Workshops,” ESA Archives. For a gender language manual used at Fuller Theological Seminary in the early 1980s, see “Suggestions for Using Non-Discriminatory Language,” in Folder 4, “Non-Discriminatory Language,” Fuller Archives. For the results of an “inclusive language questionnaire” of Sojourners community, see Box VI11,

Evangelical feminists, many of whom felt trapped in motherly and wifely duties, also sought to rearrange traditional gender roles. Jean Milliken, wife of a Young Life representative and mother of one son, complained, “The creativity supposedly inherent in marriage and child rearing has squeezed spontaneity from my life. Why am I cooped up here in this lousy apartment while you go traipsing off across the country preaching freedom?”⁸⁵ Even in counter-cultural settings, where women were often freer to engage in intellectual conversation, they felt constrained by more subtle means. Gallagher, who visited Francis Schaeffer’s L’Abri community in 1970, noted the *Room of One’s Own*-dilemma: women were “responsible to maintain the place, so they didn’t have time. It was inevitable that it is Franky, the son, whom we are seeing on the podium ... not one of his three very bright sisters.”⁸⁶ Even after most in the evangelical left had come to a consensus on gender equality, many found dilemmas of gender roles difficult to navigate.⁸⁷ Discipleship Workshops organized by Evangelicals for Social Action instructed that “Husband and wife should come together. ... The style of child care (with men and women taking turns in caring for the children present) should foster mutuality in child care tasks.”⁸⁸ Among the Post-Americans, who also tried to promote mutuality by sharing

Folder “Inclusive Language and Worship,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC; Mark Olson, “Two Inclusive Language Lectionaries,” *The Other Side* 20, No.1 (March 1984), 34.

⁸⁵ Quoted in Bill Milliken, *So Long, Sweet Jesus* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Press, 1973), 171.

⁸⁶ Sharon Gallagher, review of *How Should We Then Live?* by Francis Schaeffer, *Right On* 8, No. 5 (March-April 1977), 12-14.

⁸⁷ For an example of a successful transition to an egalitarian marriage, see Jeffrey McClain Jones, “Ron Sider and Radical Evangelical Theology” (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1990), 424. Arbutus Sider did all the housework and typed all of her husband Ron’s papers while in graduate school in the 1960s. “We can’t imagine how we accepted that arrangement,” Ron Sider recalled over a decade later, after they had begun to share household and work duties.

⁸⁸ Ron Sider, “Discipleship Workshops: Focus on Justice” proposal, January 7, 1976, in Folder “Discipleship Workshops,” ESA Archives.

household duties in the early 1970s, the “deep reservoir of conscious and unconscious attitudes and behaviors we had accumulated throughout our twenty-some years of being either male or female” contributed to the collapse of its intentional community in Chicago. Only one woman remained in the reconstituted community in Washington, D.C.⁸⁹ Others wondered if the pendulum had not swung too far. Neta Jackson of the Reba Place community asked, “Isn’t there even one mother among you who feels free enough to be a full-time ‘housewife’? I mean, if you can have a ‘househusband,’ why not? When that time comes, you may have gone full circle and will indeed experience liberation from our over-corrective state.”⁹⁰ For evangelical egalitarians wading through the minefield of fluid gender roles, *The Other Side* printed an advice column entitled “In the Realms of the Sexes.”⁹¹

In addition to promoting gender inclusive language and mutuality in marriage, EWC sought to institutionalize gender equality through support of the Equal Rights

⁸⁹ Jackie Sabath, “Principles to Partnership: A History of Male-Female Relationships at Sojourners,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 7 (July 1980), 19-21. Sabath describes her insecurities and fears about “sharing leadership with men without being intimidated by their strength.” Sojourners’ men, she writes, are learning to become “more sensitive, humble, nurturing, and loving; more accepting of their own and others’ weaknesses; more able to listen to others,” yet she felt an identity crisis upon becoming a mother. She found herself “seriously questioning my value as a person and confused about my identity. ... I had given all I had to others, and now I had a helpless, clamoring infant needing from me what I did not have. I was tempted, yet refused, to resolve my identity issues by becoming the ‘total mother.’ My emotions were in turmoil: Withdrawal and depression progressed to expressive rage, which is now moving toward greater self-awareness, acceptance, and creative change.” For a more theoretical discussion of mutuality within marriage and society, see Virginia Mollenkott, “Feminism and the Kingdom: From Machismo to Mutuality,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 6 (June 1977), 28-30.

⁹⁰ Neta Jackson, “Full Circle,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 9 (September 1980), 38-39.

⁹¹ Letha and John Scanzoni answered reader questions such as “How can a man who intellectually believes in male/female equality overcome his feelings of emotional insecurity when his wife goes back to school or starts earning more money than he does?” See, for example, “Liberated, but ...” *The Other Side* 14, No. 3 (March 1978), 52-53. And “Help! I made the mistake of suggesting that my wife go back to school or get a job. She got all upset and burst into tears. I can’t figure out why she’s so hurt and angry when I thought I was helping her to be ‘liberated.’ I thought I was being the kind of husband women want! What went wrong? What should I do?” See Letha and John Scanzoni, “Help! My Wife’s in Tears!” *The Other Side* 14, No. 7 (July 1978), 48-49; Philip Harnden, “I Never Saw Clark Kent Cry,” *The Other Side* 20, No. 1 (March 1984), 21.

Amendment. EWC urged passage of the ERA at its first meetings in 1974. Sojourners held prayer meetings on behalf of the ERA. Evangelical feminists wrote dozens of articles that salved fear and evangelical misconceptions of the amendment. And many in the evangelical left lobbied politically for the ERA.⁹² As the deadline for states' ratification loomed in the early 1980s, national coordinator for EWC Britt Vanden Eykel lobbied legislators in Oklahoma to vote yes on ratification. EWC's *Update* urged readers to wear buttons that read "People of Faith for ERA" and to affix pro-ERA bumper stickers on their cars. *Update* also printed the text of a pro-ERA speech given by Virginia Mollenkott at a National Organization for Women rally.⁹³

If the nascent evangelical feminist movement enjoyed outspoken support from the evangelical left on behalf of the ERA, non-sexist language, and equal treatment at evangelical organizations, one proposal did not. When the Caucus urged the ordination of women in evangelical circles and affirmed the eleven Episcopal women ordained in Philadelphia in July 1974, a significant minority of Workshop delegates, including several women, objected.⁹⁴ Rufus Jones, a Workshop planner and a Baptist denominational leader, found the ordination proposal difficult to square with Pauline injunctions. Under pressure from constituents unhappy with the feminist rhetoric, Jones dismissed the "extreme proposals" and the Caucus as "merely a discussion group which had no proper organization and therefore, got out of hand when three or

⁹² See, for example, Betsy Rossen, "ERA: Three Short Sentences You Should Know About," *HIS* 38, No. 4 (January 1978); Carolynn Hudson, Letter to the Editor, *Right On* 9, No. 3 (November-December 1977), 2.

⁹³ Cochran, *Evangelical Feminism*, 40-41.

⁹⁴ "The Action Proposals Accepted at the Second Thanksgiving Workshop Evangelicals for Social Action Chicago, 1974," 5-9, copy in Folder "1974 Chicago Workshop," ESA Archives.

four extremists took advantage of the situation.”⁹⁵ While delegates defeated a motion from the floor to strike ordination from the proposal list, a reporter noted that “the minority wanted it to be known that they did not feel bound by the majority decision.”⁹⁶

The considerable dissent over ordination, even as many leaders and participants strained to accommodate much of their agenda, alienated many women from the Workshops. Increasingly, a burgeoning network of frustrated women began to build their own movement. The Caucus printed and distributed a directory of “evangelical feminists,” produced study materials for churches, and launched its own publication called *Daughters of Sarah*. By 1975, the Caucus more explicitly declared itself autonomous from the Workshops.⁹⁷

The movement gained even more traction with the 1974 release of *All We’re Meant to Be*.⁹⁸ Completed three years earlier by Caucus participants Letha Scanzoni, a “pious and quiet, but tell-it-like-it-is feminist,” and Nancy Hardesty, a more dynamic, fiery woman, the book at first proved difficult to publish. Six evangelical publishers in three years rejected the manuscript.⁹⁹ When Word Books, an evangelical publisher out of Waco, Texas, finally printed the evangelical feminist tract just prior to the second Thanksgiving Workshop, it earned rave reviews. The volume drew

⁹⁵ Rufus Jones to Jay Wells, February 10, 1975, in Box 3, Folder 16, “ESA Third Workshop (1975): Correspondence; January-December 1975,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Roy Larson, “Evangelism God’s ‘Truth’ in Action,” *Chicago Sun-Times* (Dec. 7, 1974).

⁹⁷ The first issue of *Daughters of Sarah*, edited by Lucille Sider Dayton, began with these words: “We are Christians; we are also feminists. Some say we cannot be both, but Christianity and feminism for us are inseparable.” See *Daughters of Sarah* 1, No. 1 (November 1974), 1.

⁹⁸ Letha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty, *All We’re Meant to Be: A Biblical Approach to Women’s Liberation* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1974).

⁹⁹ Quebedeaux, “We’re on our Way, Lord!” 136.

applause when mentioned during a Workshop session. *Vanguard* praised its “scholarship, compassion, and commitment to Christ.”¹⁰⁰ *Eternity* named it “Book of the Year” in 1975, based on a survey of 150 evangelical leaders. InterVarsity’s *HIS* magazine urged its tens of thousands of subscribers to read the book.¹⁰¹ Even the conservative *Christianity Today* published a positive review of the book, written by the sympathetic Cheryl Forbes. Brisk sales matched the editorial praise. By 1978 it had gone through seven printings. At Logos Bookstores, *All We’re Meant to Be* outsold Marabel Morgan’s *The Total Woman* by a six-to-one margin.¹⁰²

Reviewers extolled the book for impressively marshaling cutting-edge psychological, biological, and exegetical research. Hardesty and Scanzoni emphasized the authority of Scripture, but came out firmly against traditional interpretations of the biblical texts, calling subordination of women a “misrepresentation of the Word of God.”¹⁰³ In fact, they argued, not letting women

¹⁰⁰ Bonnie Green, review of *All We’re Meant to Be*, by Nancy Hardesty and Letha Scanzoni, *Vanguard* (March-April 1975), 16.

¹⁰¹ Barbara Sroka, “Undercover,” *HIS* 35, No. 4 (January 1975), 18-19.

¹⁰² On Morgan’s *The Total Woman*, see Ina J. Kau, “Feminists in the American Evangelical Movement,” (M.A. thesis, Pacific School of Religion, 1977), 57. *The Total Woman*, which sold millions of copies, was the preference of most fundamentalists and many new evangelicals. Marabel Morgan advocated total submission of a wife to her husband, writing that “It is only when a woman surrenders her life to her husband, reveres and worships him, and is willing to serve him, that she becomes really beautiful to him.” In addition to urging submission and offering tips on beautification and sexual techniques at hundreds of Total Woman seminars across the country, she ended the seminars with an invitation to accept Christ as personal Lord and Savior. See Marabel Morgan, *The Total Woman* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell Publishing, 1973). Young evangelicals bristled at the success of *The Total Woman* and other strident complementarians such as Bill Gothard. On criticisms of Morgan and Gothard, see Cheryl Forbes, “Wasted Talent in the Evangelical Community,” *Vanguard* (March-April 1975), 2; “Wilfred Bockelman, “The Pros and Cons of Bill Gothard,” *The Christian Century* 91, No. 32 (September 25, 1974), 877-770; Sharon Gallagher, “The Soul of the Total Woman,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 5 (May 1977), 31.

¹⁰³ A flood of books and articles on biblical interpretation soon added to *All We’re Meant to Be*, most asserting a “developing egalitarianism” view, which acknowledged that Old Testament texts were heavily patriarchal but that the New Testament had launched a trajectory toward gender egalitarianism. See Paul King Jewett, *Man as Male and Female: A Study in Sexual Relationships from a Theological Point of View* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975); Richard Boldrey and Joyce Boldrey, *Chauvinist or*

preach or administrate was “wasting the church’s gifts.” This latter argument—that women’s liberation was necessary for full service to God and the Church—went a long way in reassuring conservatives that evangelical feminists were not “man-hating, marriage-hating, family-hating females who are selfishly trying to take over the world.”¹⁰⁴ Specifically, Hardesty and Scanzoni argued for women’s ordination, the validation of the unmarried life, and a “true egalitarianism” in which wives and husbands could interchange gender roles. Either husband or wife could “fulfill the roles of breadwinner, housekeeper, encourager, career-achiever, child-trainer, and so on.”¹⁰⁵ For large numbers of evangelical women, *All We’re Meant to Be* successfully translated mainstream feminism into evangelical categories.

Hardesty and Scanzoni’s manifesto catalyzed thousands of evangelical women into rejecting gender complementarity. Judith Applegate, for instance, grew up

Feminist?: Paul’s View of Women (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976); Karen DeVos “The Place of Women: A Look at the Biblical Evidence,” *Reformed Journal* 22, No. 3 (March 1972), 7-12; Virginia R. Mollenkott, *Women, Men, & the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1977); George W. Knight III, *The New Testament Teaching on the Role Relationship of Men and Women* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976); Alvera Mickelsen, *Women, Authority & the Bible* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1986); Patricia Gundry, *Woman, Be Free!* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. Co., 1977); Patricia Gundry, *Heirs Together* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980); Gundry, *The Complete Woman* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981); Paul Jewett, *The Ordination of Women: An Essay on the Office of Christian Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980); Vernard Eller, *The Language of Canaan and the Grammar of Feminism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982); Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen, “The ‘Head’ of the Epistles,” *Christianity Today* (February 20, 1981), 20-23; Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen, “Does Male Dominance Tarnish Our Translations?” *Christianity Today* (February 20, 1979), 23-29; Kari Torjesen Malcolm, *Women at the Crossroads: A Path Beyond Feminism and Traditionalism* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1982); Gilbert G. Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles: A Guide for the Study of Female Roles in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1985). E. Margaret Howe, *Women and Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982). Mary J. Evans, *Woman in the Bible* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1983). Gordon Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984). For a helpful discussion of the trajectory of theological and exegetical research on gender in Scripture, see Harvie M. Conn, “Evangelical Feminism: Some Bibliographical Reflections on the Contemporary State of the Union,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 46, No. 1 (Spring 1984), 104-124; Elaine Storkey, *What’s Right with Feminism?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985).

¹⁰⁴ Nancy A. Hardesty and Letha Scanzoni, “All We’re Meant to Be: A *Vanguard* Interview with Letha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty,” *Vanguard* (March-April 1975), 14.

¹⁰⁵ Hardesty and Scanzoni, *All We’re Meant to Be*, 145-181.

following the typical spiritual pilgrimage out of fundamentalism, complete with two conversion experiences: one at a vacation Bible school at age ten where she checked a box indicating that she had “accepted Jesus in her heart” and another as a nineteen-year-old college student following a lapse in spiritual commitment during her teenage years. After college, Applegate married, had children, and began attending a conservative Baptist church. She also began going to Bill Gothard’s Basic Youth Conflict seminars, which, she later explained, “made a biblical case for male domination and female submission in the family, in the church, and in society.” Gothard’s influence led her to defer all decisions in marriage to her husband, “who was not highly motivated to be a leader in the home.” She also stopped teaching adult Sunday School classes and sharing in open worship at her church. The result, she explained, “was a deeper depression, a deep, deep dryness of soul and spirit.” Then Applegate encountered *All We’re Meant to Be*. Reading the evangelical feminist manifesto convinced her of gender equality and launched her on an academic career in biblical interpretation that tried to “enable people to benefit from the positive power of the Bible that I had experienced and still be protected them from the abuses I had experienced.”¹⁰⁶ Many other young evangelical women experienced similar epiphanies while listening to Scanzoni preach the cause on her tours of evangelical campuses such as Calvin, Roberts Wesleyan, Dordt, Northwestern, Fuller, and Westmont.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Judith Applegate, “The Bible as Friend, Foe, and Elder: A Monday Night Lecture,” May 6, 1996, Pendle Hill, Pennsylvania; Lorraine Peters, in *Our Struggle to Serve*, 73-82; Anne Eggebrotten, in *Our Struggle to Serve*, 109-199. Another woman told of “crying in relief” while reading *All We’re Meant to Be*. See Kau, “Feminists in the American Evangelical Movement,” 61.

¹⁰⁷ Letha Scanzoni, “Door Reports,” *Wittenburg Door*, No. 31 (June-July 1976), 19.

In addition to Scanzoni and Hardesty's classic apology for evangelical egalitarianism, evangelical feminists constructed a historical genre that explored precedents for female spiritual leadership in American evangelicalism. At the 1974 Workshop Lucille Sider Dayton distributed a startling paper arguing that the nineteenth-century holiness movement encouraged women to preach.¹⁰⁸ Dayton's continuing historical work, distilled in her husband's book *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage*, tried to show that next to Quakerism, nineteenth-century evangelicalism gave "the greatest role to women in the life of the church." Free-Will Baptists and faculty at Oberlin College encouraged women to attend school and to preach. The Wesleyan Methodists nurtured close ties with the woman's rights movement launched at Seneca Falls. Luther Lee preached the sermon for the first woman to be fully ordained in America. Nazarene women, Dayton noted, comprised 20% of the denomination's total clergy around the turn of the century, a figure that dropped to about six percent by 1973. The Daytons blamed the corrupting influence of fundamentalism for the precipitous drop, which left women subject to lives of "total' and 'fascinating' womanhood that completely submerges their own personalities and aspirations."¹⁰⁹ This underlying theme also animated Nancy

¹⁰⁸ Lucille Sider Dayton, "Women in the Holiness Movement," Convention of the Christian Holiness Association, Louisville, Ken., April 17-19, 1974, copy distributed at 1974 Thanksgiving Workshop in Folder, "1974 Chicago Workshop," ESA Archives. Other publications by the Daytons included Lucille Sider Dayton, "Our Foremothers: Catherine Booth: Co-founder of the Salvation Army," *Daughters of Sarah* 1, No. 1 (November 1974). Donald W. Dayton and Lucille Sider Dayton, "Women as Preachers: Evangelical Precedents," *Christianity Today* 29, No. 17 (May 23, 1975), 4-7; Donald W. Dayton and Lucille Sider Dayton, "Recovering a Heritage: Part II, Evangelical Feminism," *Post-American* 3 (August-September 1974), 7-9; Lucille Sider Dayton and Donald W. Dayton, "Your Daughters Shall Prophesy: Feminism in the Holiness Movement," *Methodist History* 14, No. 2 (January 1976), 67-92. Also see unpublished manuscripts "Women as Preachers: Evangelical Precedents," "The Rise of Women in Evangelicalism," and "Evangelical Roots of Feminism," see Box 300, John H. Yoder Collection, Mennonite Church-USA Archives, Goshen, Ind.

¹⁰⁹ Donald Dayton, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage*, 85-98.

Hardesty's 1976 doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago, which argued that, prior to the influence of fundamentalism, a "biblical feminism" rooted in Finneyite revivalism and the Wesleyan Holiness tradition sparked the women's rights movement.¹¹⁰ The evangelical feminist movement of the 1970s drew much inspiration not only from the contemporary feminist movement, but also from evangelicalism's comparatively progressive record on gender and social reform in the nineteenth century.

Historical and biblical scholarship undergirded a growing popular evangelical feminist literature. The *Post-American*, *Vanguard*, and the *Reformed Journal* regularly featured women contributors and women's concerns.¹¹¹ *HIS* magazine regularly encouraged female students to lead mixed-group Bible studies and to seek graduate training and professional advancement.¹¹² The *Wittenburg Door*, an

¹¹⁰ Nancy Hardesty, "Your Daughters Shall Prophesy: Revivalism and Feminism in the Age of Finney" (Ph.D dissertation, University of Chicago, 1976). It later turned into a book. Nancy Hardesty, *Women Called to Witness: Evangelical Feminism in the 19th Century* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984). For a similar treatment, see Janette Hassey, *No Time for Silence: Evangelical Women in Public Ministry around the Turn of the Century* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1986).

¹¹¹ Especially see the August-September 1974 issue of the *Post-American* featuring articles on evangelical feminism by Jim Wallis, Donald and Lucille Sider Dayton, Sharon Gallagher, Rey O'Day Mawson, Richard Mouw, and Nancy Hardesty. Also see Karen De Vos, "The Place of Women: A Look at the Biblical Evidence," *Reformed Journal* 22, No. 3 (March 1972), 7-12; Nancy Hardesty, "The Status of Evangelical Women," *Reformed Journal* 23, No. 6 (July-August 1973), 4-9; Paul K. Jewett, "No Male and Female," *Reformed Journal* 24, No. 5 (May-June 1974), 24-26; Cheryl Forbes, "Wasted Talent in the Evangelical Community," *Vanguard* (March-April 1975), 2; V. Mary Stewart, "The Movement of the Spirit Challenges a Feminist," *Vanguard* (March-April 1975), 9-12.

¹¹² See Sue Gibbons, "Evangelical Women Focus on Feminism," *The Branch* 4, No. 8 (April 1, 1976), 3; Elvise Strong, "Male and Female in Leadership," *HIS* 34, No. 1 (October 1973), 28-31; Richard and Catherine Kroeger, "The Other Disciples," *HIS* 38, No. 4 (January 1978), 6-8; Beverley Williams and Katie MacDonald Baisley in "Letters," *HIS* 39, No. 1 (October 1978), 2; Kathleen Storrie, "Women, Dogs, and Other Impure Animals," *HIS* 38, No. 8 (May 1978), 16-20; Pat Ward, "But Can She Make Coffee?" *HIS* 38, No. 8 (May 1978), 24-27; Pat Gundry, "Submitting to Each Other in Marriage," *HIS* 40, No. 9 (June 1980), 22-24; David Neff, "What's a Woman to Do in Your Church or Your Chapter?" *HIS* 45, No. 7 (April 1985), 1-4; Laurie Skiba, "Why I Am a Christian Feminist," *HIS* 45, No. 7 (April 1985), 5-7;

Andy LePeau and Linda Doll, InterVarsity insiders in the 1970s, note that on the issue of women in the home, the church, and society, InterVarsity Press was "generally more one-sided. Women held

evangelical satire magazine, devoted an entire issue to “The Totaled Woman.”¹¹³ EWC advertised in *Ms.*, *Family Circle*, and *Woman’s Day*. Even the mainstream *Christianity Today* printed articles by evangelical feminists.¹¹⁴ Publications solely devoted to the movement flourished as well. Evangelical feminists launched regional magazines *Green Leaf*, *Update*, and *freeindeed*. Within two years of its first issue in November 1974, the editors of EWC’s national magazine *Daughters of Sarah* were mailing issues to over 1,000 subscribers.¹¹⁵ The proliferation of evangelical feminist publications birthed numerous informal local, regional, and ecclesiastical networks. Students, housewives, and professionals with a feminist bent gathered in InterVarsity-sponsored Christian Women’s Seminars and Nurses Christian Fellowship, the Women’s Commission of the NBEA, and EWC chapters.¹¹⁶ Especially strong chapters thrived in California, particularly in Los Angeles, which had 400 members, and in the Bay Area, which had 70 members and 320 people on its mailing list.¹¹⁷ Chapters soon followed in New Jersey, Detroit, Seattle, Albany, N.Y., Minneapolis,

an equal place in the ministry of IVCF from the very first, and many of IVP’s first books were by women. ... IVP books wholly devoted to gender issues, however, generally supported so-called egalitarian perspectives.” See LePeau and Doll, *Heart, Soul, Mind, Strength*, 129.

¹¹³ For interviews with Marabel Morgan and Letha Scanzoni in an issue entitled “The Totaled Woman,” see the August-September 1975 issue of *The Wittenburg Door*.

¹¹⁴ See, for example, Letha Scanzoni, “How to Live with a Liberated Wife,” *Christianity Today* 20, No. 18 (June 4, 1976), 6-9; John Scanzoni, “Assertiveness for Christian Women,” *Christianity Today* 20, No. 18 (June 4, 1976), 16-18.

¹¹⁵ Cochran, *Evangelical Feminism*, 33. By 1983, they had over 3,000 subscribers. See Quebedeaux, “We’re On Our Way, Lord,” 138.

¹¹⁶ Bentley, *NBEA*, 59. On InterVarsity’s Nurses Christian Fellowship, see Frank Barker to James McLeish, September 24, 1984, in Box 345, Folder 25, “Brave New People; 1984-1985,” InterVarsity Collection, BGCA.

¹¹⁷ Kau, “Feminists in the American Evangelical Movement,” 94.

the central valley of California, Boston, Oklahoma, Portland, Ore., Indiana, Ohio, Nebraska, Newark, N.J., Colorado, Missouri, and Toronto.¹¹⁸

These regional networks matured into a national movement in the mid-1970s.¹¹⁹ Over 350 women (with dozens more turned away at the door for lack of space) attended the first Evangelical Women's Caucus convention in Washington, D.C., with a theme of "Women in Transition: A Biblical Approach to Feminism." Broadly evangelical, the 1975 conference featured progressives such as Hardesty and Scanzoni as well as those with more conservative views on gender issues.¹²⁰ Delegates passed two resolutions—one to support ERA as "consistent with Christian convictions" and a second which expressed solidarity with the 2,000 Catholic women meeting simultaneously in Detroit on the ordination of women. During the same year, the 1975 Continental Congress on the Family in St. Louis, for example, an event typically cited for its conservative impulse in regard to gender issues, actually carried a progressive tone. At the Congress, which, according to historian John Turner, signified "the arrival of the family as one of the central spiritual and political concerns of evangelicals during the last quarter of the twentieth century," Letha Scanzoni contended that "genuine equality [between men and women] plainly means

¹¹⁸ Cochran, *Evangelical Feminism*, 36-38, 41; Kau, "Feminists in the American Evangelical Movement," 95.

¹¹⁹ While the movement enjoyed more visibility in its national conventions, EWC organizers struggled to fund large gatherings. The organization fared much better in regional settings, which required less financing, according to Cochran, *Evangelical Feminism*, 38-39.

¹²⁰ Hardesty later spoke of the discomfort she felt when speaking in front of Elisabeth Eliot, widow of martyr Jim Eliot and soon-to-be author of *Let Me Be a Woman*, a complementarian tract. See Hardesty, "Blessed the Waters That Rise and Fall to Rise Again"; Elizabeth Elliot, *Let Me Be a Woman* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1976); Bonnie Greene, "We're On our Way! The Evangelical Women's Caucus in Washington," *Vanguard* (January-February 1976), 18-19.

that there is no ‘fixed’ or ultimate head; power is shared equally.”¹²¹ The diversity of thought at these conferences shows the contested nature of sexual politics in the 1970s, a time when it was still unclear how evangelicals might emerge politically.

For evangelical feminists gathered in St. Louis and Washington, meeting like-minded egalitarians proved to be both psychologically and politically significant. Jackie Sabath and other women in Sojourners met monthly to explore “how we felt about ourselves, including discussion about sexuality, singleness, marriage, roles we play or do not play.” The results of the meetings encouraged Sabath. “Exciting to us all,” she reported, “is the personal and corporate growth that we sense from being together. We have experienced more freedom and flow of conversation than we do in mixed groups.”¹²² Women not involved in intentional egalitarian communities found gatherings of evangelical feminists even more inspiring. A woman in Washington told a journalist, “I had no one else to turn to. My church and family told me I was a troublemaker and mentally sick for wanting equality.” Another tearfully said, “I thought I was alone and that I was wrong in what I was feeling; and now I find that I am not.”¹²³ As scores of participants told their “coming to feminism” stories at one of EWC’s national conventions, *Vanguard’s* Bonnie Greene felt an “overwhelming sense of love.”¹²⁴ At the 1,000-women-strong 1978 convention at Fuller Seminary in

¹²¹ John Turner, “Selling Jesus to Modern America: Campus Crusade for Christ, Evangelical Culture, and Conservative Politics” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 2005), 299-301.

¹²² Jackie Sabath, “Principles to Partnership: A History of Male-Female Relationships at Sojourners,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 7 (July 1980), 19-21

¹²³ “Evangelical Women’s Caucus Says ‘Jesus is a Feminist,’” *Greeley Tribune*, Feb. 13, 1976, p. 23. Copy in Box 4, Folder 15, “Evangelical Women’s Caucus; records; November 1974-May 1976,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

¹²⁴ Greene, “The Evangelical Women’s Caucus in Washington,” 18-19. For other stories, see Virginia Hearn, ed., *Our Struggle to Serve*.

Pasadena, Claire Wolterstorff of Michigan felt “as if I were being carried along a river whose quick currents were hidden while the surface bore me over emotions and issues into which I wanted to dive and swim.”¹²⁵ Student Sue Horner, served communion by a woman for the first time, knelt with other women at simple wooden tables encircling the sanctuary. White-robed dancers and violists performed in the aisles, and daisies were passed out. “Even now, I am moved,” she still recalls, of Letha Scanzoni’s assertion in the convention’s sermon that “We did not become feminists and then try to fit our Christianity into feminist ideology. We became feminists because we were Christians.”¹²⁶

If being a feminist was rooted in their faith, it was nonetheless their gendered identity that seemed most salient to critics.¹²⁷ Continued hostility drove evangelical feminists to level more charges of sexism toward evangelicals, even those

¹²⁵ Claire K. Wolterstorff, “Encouragement and Unanswered Questions: Evangelicals Discuss Women’s Issues,” *Reformed Journal* (August 1978), 16-19.

¹²⁶ S. Sue Horner, “Remembering: Writing EEWc’s Herstory” *EEWC Update* 25, No. 2 (Summer 2001); Phyllis E. Alsdurf, “Evangelical Feminists: Ministry Is the Issue,” Folder, “Evangelical Women’s Caucus Conference,” Fuller Archives.

¹²⁷ For a sense of the opposition that evangelical feminists faced from the right, see the story of Patricia Gundry’s dismissal from Moody Bible Institute for speaking at a “Housewives for ERA” meeting. Jim Stentzel, “Called on the Evangelical Carpet,” *Sojourners* 8, No. 10 (October 1979), 9. Even some women within the evangelical left questioned EWC’s activities. Dana Powell, an Evangelical Women’s Caucus member and staff member with the Sojourners Peace Ministry, criticized the movement’s “unhealthy division between the personal and the political and its singular concern with biblical feminism.” Christians, she wrote, have “more critical questions to be concerned about than self-actualization.” See Dana Powell, “Solidarity with Whom? Evangelical Women’s Insular Struggle toward Servanthood,” *Sojourners* 8, No. 7 (July 1979), 31-32. Letha Scanzoni in turn sharply criticized Powell, writing, “groups that have felt powerless must first come to believe in their own worth before they can effectively confront those who perpetuate oppression in any form. Often the first step means painful struggles with self-doubt and fear and working for change in their own personal lives. Only then can they march on to other fronts, working for change in those broader social structures and systems that have fostered racism, sexism, economic exploitation, and violence throughout our fallen world.” See Letha Scanzoni, “Feminism Reviewed,” *Sojourners* 8, No. 10 (October 1979), 37-38.

sympathetic to their cause. They warned of further struggle.¹²⁸ “If you take us seriously,” wrote Elouise Renich Fraser, an assistant professor at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, “there will be a struggle. ... The real struggle will take place within our hearts, within our families, within our committees and churches as we begin to uncover the ever-changing masks of the sin of paternalism. ... Evangelical feminism poses a profound threat to the very foundations of our evangelical identity.”¹²⁹

This mutual castigation merely reinforced organizational segregation as evangelical feminists directed their considerable energies toward building their own movement. Anne Eggebroten, newly energized by the all-encompassing “sisterhood,” explained in the late 1970s that “most of my time has been devoted to sharing with others what I have learned, both in my own church and with Christian women in other churches.”¹³⁰ Others too devoted their considerable energies and talents to networking and writing literature in the evangelical feminist sphere.¹³¹ In consequence, they devoted less time to the Workshop movement. Ironically, building structures devoted

¹²⁸ Notes from the journal of a Sojourners member reveal charges and bitterness from a female member about “latent sexism” within the community. That women generally worked for men, that women still took dictation from men revealed that “this is not an egalitarian community or staff.” See “Report of the Sojourner Magazine Retreat,” October 20-21, 1978, p. 3, 6, in Box IV2, Folder, “Direct Mail and Editorial Reports,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

¹²⁹ Elouise Renich Fraser, “Evangelical Feminism: The Threat of its Survival,” 49, in Kenneth Kantzer and David A. Fraser, eds., *Evangelicalism: Surviving its Success* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

¹³⁰ Anne Eggebroten in *Our Struggle to Serve*, 118. On how biblical feminism “undermines Western values and institutions,” see John Alexander, “Feminism as a Subversive Activity,” *The Other Side* 18, No. 7 (July 1982), 8-9.

¹³¹ Evangelical feminists spent relatively less time compared to their socialist feminist counterparts on issues of the poor, third-world women, and on capitalism as an oppressor of women. For more on this see Quebedeaux, “We’re on our Way Lord,” 139.

to ending “wasted talent in the evangelical community” sapped the evangelical left of much of its talent and deepened the cracks in the progressive front.¹³²

III.

If heightened racial and gender identities deepened cracks in the progressive front, diverging theological commitments created an unbridgeable chasm. From the beginning those in the emerging evangelical left recognized that the progressive coalition was just that—a coalition of many ecclesiastical bodies and theologies. An attendee of the first Thanksgiving Workshop classified participants into six groups: “old-line evangelicals,” “traditional Anabaptists,” “neo-Anabaptists,” “black evangelicals,” “non-aligned denominations,” and “Calvinists.”¹³³ Particularly sharp

¹³² The Evangelical Women’s Caucus itself fragmented in the early 1980s over homosexuality. Several key EWC members came “out of the closet.” See the beginnings of this discussion in Letha Scanzoni and Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, *Is the Homosexual My Neighbor?* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978); Lewis Smedes, *Sex for Christians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976); Joop Rinzema, *The Sexual Revolution* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), which calls for a “viable homosexual ethic,” in other words, “a plea for permanent relationships between unchangeable homosexuals”; Letha Scanzoni, “Conservative Christians and Gay Civil Rights,” *Christian Century* 43, No. 32 (October 13, 1976), 857-862; Kent Philpott, *The Third Sex: Six Homosexuals Tell Their Stories* (Logos International, 1975). In 1976 a very small, loosely connected network of 12 chapters called “Evangelicals Concerned” organized around a gay identity. Evangelicals Concerned held Bible studies, produced a regular newsletter called “Record,” and held its first national meeting concurrently with the National Association of Evangelicals in 1976. See Richard Quebedeaux, *The Worldly Evangelicals* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), 128-31. On the controversial politics of gender and homosexuality in The Other Side community, see Cleveland, “The Politics of Jubilee,” 99-104, 109; the June 1978 issue of *TOS* entitled “The Gay Person’s Lonely Search for Answers.” For a guide to Christian organizations for gays and lesbians, see “Where to Turn,” *The Other Side* 20, No. 2 (April 1984), 16-19. On gay identity at Fuller Theological Seminary, see Folders “Fuller Alliance of Gay Students” and “Homosexuality,” Fuller Archives.

¹³³ Text of Marlin Van Elderen speech at Calvin Theological Seminary, December 5, 1974, in Box 3, Folder 13, “Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals for Social Action (1974): Reportage; December 1974-January 1975,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

clashes between neo-Anabaptists and Calvinists (also called Reformed) dashed hopes that these groups might coalesce politically.¹³⁴

The Anabaptist-Calvinist dispute first emerged in the Workshop caucus on economic lifestyles in 1974. The caucus, dominated by Anabaptists, submitted a constellation of rather “startling” proposals: a graduated tithe that would increase as income increased; an additional 1% tithe meant for evangelical projects that would change “white attitudes and power structures”; a boycott of lawn fertilizer; a national day of fasting; one meatless day per week; and a commitment that a family of four live on an annual income of \$8,000.¹³⁵ Some members of the caucus wanted to propose that “renunciation of possessions was the ideal they saw in the life and teaching of Jesus.”¹³⁶

Non-Anabaptist delegates, such as Russ Reid who accused economic lifestyle caucus members of hijacking the Workshop with a “radical/Anabaptist” perspective, strenuously objected to the proposals.¹³⁷ Noting the moral dilemmas and impracticality of such proposals, another wondered, “The question is, does our cutting out meat help hungry people or does it just reduce inflation in America so the comfortable can buy more meat for the same money.” The lawn fertilizer boycott

¹³⁴ Both the Anabaptist and Calvinist/Reformed traditions are rooted in the sixteenth-century Reformation as break-off movements of the Catholic Church. After centuries of virulent conflict in Europe, the two traditions, ensconced in ethnic enclaves, ignored each other for centuries in the American context.

¹³⁵ On “startling,” see “Piety’s Progress,” *Christian Century* 41, No. 45 (December 25, 1974), 1214. For a fuller list of proposals from the caucus on economic lifestyles, see Box 2, Folder 15, “Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals for Social Action (1974): Action Proposals,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

¹³⁶ Robert T. Coote, “The Second Thanksgiving Workshop: Evangelicals for Social Action Miss Target with Buckshot Approach,” *Evangelical Newsletter* 2, No. 4 (December 20, 1974), copy in Folder, “1974 Chicago Workshop Media,” ESA Archives.

¹³⁷ Steve Knapp, “Background and Preliminary Proposal: ‘An Evangelical Dialogue on Strategies of Social Change,’” January 17, 1975, ESA Archives.

encountered resistance from a delegate who wondered if using fertilizer would be appropriate to grow rice in famine-stricken India.¹³⁸ Carl F. H. Henry denounced the proposals for reflecting an “inadequate biblical rationale.” Conservative Baptist leader Rufus Jones warned against replacing old evangelical legalisms with “a new set of legalisms.” Annoyed by John Alexander’s proposal that “no one should live above \$2,000 a year,” Jones declared, “I would need to question his hermeneutics if he gets that out of the Bible.”¹³⁹ Reformed delegates suggested that changing political institutions from within offered more potential than taking vows of poverty that might limit political influence.¹⁴⁰ In the end, Workshop delegates compromised, agreeing to release an open-ended “Commitment of Economic Responsibility” that pledged “solidarity with all people who are hungry, poor and oppressed.” Delegates promised to “share my personal resources with them” and to create a church “less enmeshed in its property and possessions.”¹⁴¹ Calvin College professor Gordon Spykman, sensing that the pledge was only a temporary bandage over the pronounced clashes, declared, “It is imperative that we as evangelical Christians arrive at a measure of unanimity on these pressing problems if we are to make any sort of meaningful and lasting impact

¹³⁸ “Other 1974 Proposals,” Box 2, Folder 15, “Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals for Social Action (1974): Action Proposals,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

¹³⁹ Wally Kroeker, “Another Step for Social Concern,” *Moody Monthly* (February 1975), 8-10; Cheryl Forbes, “Doing the Declaration,” 19, No. 6 *Christianity Today* (December 20, 1974), 28-29; Rufus Jones to Paul Henry, January 14, 1975, Box 3, Folder 16, “ESA Third Workshop (1975): Correspondence; January-December 1975,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

¹⁴⁰ “Some of our younger evangelicals are adopting a very simple lifestyle patterned somewhat after the Mennonite denomination feeling that they can best influence society by creating models for them to follow,” wrote Rufus Jones. “Some of the rest of us do not think that it is necessary for us to live a life of poverty but that we certainly should certainly reject materialistic philosophy and that we should use whatever influence we have to change the basic structures of Society that have been creating and maintaining poverty within the ghettos of our cities and on our Indian reservations.” See Rufus Jones to J. Robert Ross, July 22, 1975, Folder “1975,” ESA Archives.

¹⁴¹ “Commitment of Economic Responsibility,” November 1974, ESA Archives.

upon the course of events in our times and be a blessing to the nations.”¹⁴² Workshop organizers, hoping for a lasting resolution to the dispute, dedicated the third Thanksgiving Workshop to discussion of theological models for social action.¹⁴³

The third Workshop opened with a presentation—entitled “An Anabaptist (or Counter Culture) Model”—by Dale Brown, a Brethren seminary professor.¹⁴⁴ Brown suggested that true discipleship required distance from temporal structures. As “aliens in a strange land” compelled to imitate Christ in his suffering, Christians should speak prophetically to political structures from outside the system, not from within. Brown drew heavily from John Howard Yoder’s influential 1972 book *The Politics of Jesus*, an exegesis of several New Testament books that sought to rebut Reinhold Niebuhr’s Christian realism and just war theory.¹⁴⁵ Yoder argued that Jesus emphatically

¹⁴² Spykman, “Christian Societal Responsibility: A Reformed Model,” in Folder “1974 Chicago Workshop Planning,” ESA Archives.

¹⁴³ On use of “liberal-radical” terminology, see John Alexander to Jim Wallis, January 28, 1975, in Folder “1974 Chicago Aftermath,” ESA Archives. Sider noted divisions even within the Anabaptist contingent. Less eager to claim the word “radical,” Sider wrote, “I tend to have a less totally negative reading of American history than Jim Wallis does. ... My instinct is to reform, and only when you discover that you can’t, then change the entire system.” See Jones, “Ronald Sider and Radical Evangelical Political Theology,” 420-421. Sider was aware enough of the conflict to quip in an apology to a would-be participant that was mistakenly not invited that “it was certainly not an Anabaptist plot to avoid the Calvinist input!” See Ron Sider to Gordon Spykman, September 25, 1975, in Folder “1975 Chicago Planning,” ESA Archives.

¹⁴⁴ For the complete text of Brown’s speech, see “Christian Social Responsibility—An Anabaptist Model,” Folder 8: ESA Third Workshop (1975): Papers presented,” ESA Collection, BGCA. Presenters also delivered papers on other models for social action: eighteenth-century British evangelicals; nineteenth-century evangelicals at Oberlin who worked toward prohibition and abolitionism; and Anabaptist (“or counter-cultural”), Lutheran, and Reformed models. For a detailed account of the third workshop, see Bonnie M. Greene, “Confrontation in black and white: Evangelicals for Social Action, Third Annual Workshop,” *Vanguard* (September-October 1975), 25-26; Frances J. Mason, “Third Workshop: Evangelicals for Social Action,” *Covenant Companion* (October 1, 1975).

¹⁴⁵ *The Politics of Jesus* was perhaps the most formative book for most young evangelicals. It was translated into ten languages and named one of the most important Christian books in the twentieth century. One observer noted that Yoder’s *The Politics of Jesus* “has become virtually required reading among [young evangelicals].” Senator Mark Hatfield read Yoder in the woods on a retreat, which led him to more firmly reject the Vietnam War and military escalation in general. See Marlin J. Van Elderen, “Evangelicals and Liberals: Is There a common Ground?” *Christianity and Crisis* 34, No. 12 (July 8, 1974), 153. (151-55); Stephen Charles Mott, “‘The Politics of Jesus’ and our Responsibilities,”

rejected political uses of power, pointing out that that Jesus withdrew from the feeding of the 5,000 and that he asked that his exploits of healing not be publicized. Rather, Jesus worked toward the visible restructuring of the social relations among the people of God. Critiquing the Constantinian merging of church and state, Yoder argued against the Christian coercion of society.¹⁴⁶ The state, to which Christians did not owe a reflexive obedience, is inherently corrupt, Yoder maintained, and entanglement in the state is fraught with danger and compromise. Be a faithful church, he urged, that does not resist evil with evil and that is willing to suffer for the sake of the gospel. The example of Jesus, which ought to be central to Christian social ethics, seemed to promote nonresistance and eliminate “utilitarian thinking, compromising in the short-run for a long-term goal.”¹⁴⁷ Jesus’ greatest temptation was that of wielding political power, or as Yoder suggested at conference at Calvin College, of becoming a Calvinist.¹⁴⁸

Reformed Journal 26, No. 2 (February 1976), 7-10; Richard Mouw interview, July 12, 2006, Pasadena, Cal. Yoder himself grew up an Ohio Mennonite. After college he spent years in Europe studying with Karl Barth and working on postwar relief projects. Along with other Mennonite graduate students, missionaries, and relief workers, Yoder helped launch the “Concern” movement. As the 1950s and 1960s progressed, Concern moved toward an embrace of social responsibility. Gordon Kauffman in “Non-resistance and Responsibility” called responsibility a “derivative of Christian love” motivating Christians to participate in politics, even to help manage military budgets. He was roundly criticized for this last suggestion, but his broader point held sway as participants in Concern began pushing for egalitarian relations between the races, sexes, and in church polity. Yoder and others in Concern also grew more ecumenical, increasingly interested in reaching evangelicals with their peace stance. See Mark Thiessen Nation, *John Howard Yoder: Mennonite Patience, Evangelical Witness, Catholic Convictions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 55, 77-108.

¹⁴⁶ John Howard Yoder, “The Persistence of the Constantinian Heresy,” *Radix* 10, No. 4 (January-February 1974), 4-5.

¹⁴⁷ John Howard Yoder, in Ron Sider, ed., *The Chicago Declaration*, 86-114; Yoder, *Nevertheless: A Meditation on the Varieties and Shortcomings of Religious Pacifism* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1971). Jim Wallis wrote, “John Yoder inspired a whole generation of Christians to follow the way of Jesus into social action and peacemaking.” See Wallis, “Lives of Peacemaking,” *Sojourners* 27, No. 3 (March-April 1998), 8.

¹⁴⁸ Marlin J. Van Elderen, “Evangelicals and Liberals: Is There a Common Ground?” *Christianity and Crisis* 34, No. 12 (July 8, 1974), 151-55. This criticism of power politics and utilitarian realism characterized much of Anabaptist-oriented young evangelical rhetoric. See for example Wes

At the same time, Yoder, an associate editor of the *Post-American*, saw Jesus' ministry as eminently political. As a political strategy, Yoder's theology fit nicely with the approach of New Leftist evangelicals, who feared that working from within the system would compromise their ideals.¹⁴⁹ In fact, evangelical New Leftists of the late 1960s and early 1970s—Jim Wallis, Dale Brown, Art Gish, John Howard Yoder, Boyd Reese, John Alexander, and Joe Roos—and Anabaptist participants in the Thanksgiving Workshops of the mid-1970s were often one and the same. For many, according to Clark Pinnock, Anabaptist theology “facilitated the radicalization process by providing theological foundations. When it dawned upon us, we had the feeling of a second conversion. It was Christ-centered and Biblicist and so appealed to our evangelical instincts, but it was radical and subversive of every status quo and so confirmed the cultural alienation we felt.”¹⁵⁰ In *Politics* Yoder offered the evangelical left a respectable scholarly and spiritual rationale for their radical engagement of American politics. Rooting political participation primarily through the Church, Yoder suggested that evangelicals serve as a model for the public sphere by feeding the hungry and caring for the sick, and by speaking prophetically on

Michaelson, “The Piety and Ambition of Jimmy Carter,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 8 (October 1976), 14-18; Wes Michaelson, “Christianity in the Corridors of Power,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 1 (January 1978), 7-8.

¹⁴⁹ Paul Henry noted the parallel when he wrote to Sider about a draft of the Chicago Declaration, “I’ve made a few minor changes in the confession to remove some of the Anabaptist flavor of the document, since that sounds new leftist to some of our brethren. ... I do fear that we must be very careful in the situation section not to sound too harsh, anti-American, etc.” Henry to Ron Sider, November 13, 1973, Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration Planning,” ESA Archives.

¹⁵⁰ Pinnock quoted in Dean C. Curry, “Biblical Politics and Foreign Policy,” 51, in Michael Cromartie, ed., *Evangelicals and Foreign Policy: Four Perspectives* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1989).

behalf of the oppressed.¹⁵¹ Servanthood, grassroots action, and persuasion, rather than coercion, ought to characterize Christian politics.

As an example of this approach, Yoder often cited his involvement with an ecumenical group of Christians who were trying to ameliorate the racially segregated community of Evanston, Illinois, in the 1960s. Most in the group found it self-evident that the ministers in the community ought to persuade the mayor and city council to adopt open housing policies. This would be the church discharging her social responsibility. But the conversation fell into disarray when someone pointed out that most of the real estate dealers and sellers of houses were members of the very Protestant churches that the ministers led. The problem, reported Yoder, was that the typical minister seemed “powerless to get his own members to take Christian ethics seriously without the coercion of government to get ‘the church’ as membership involved in lay professions to be less unchristian.” More effort ought to be dedicated to discipleship at the church level, he suggested. Why should Christians expect other forces in society to be more effective and insightful than the “body of believers in their structured life together?”¹⁵² The primary social structure through which the

¹⁵¹ Yoder emphasized the year of Jubilee in his exegesis of this Lukan passage: “The spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” The “acceptable year of the Lord,” explained Yoder referred to the year of Jubilee, the “time when the inequities accumulated through the years are to be crossed off and all God’s people will begin again at the same point.” Jesus’ invocation of Jubilee signaled his wish that contemporary Christians should cultivate economic justice. See Yoder, *Politics of Jesus*, 36; Yoder, *The Christian Witness to the State: Discipleship as Political Responsibility* (Newton, Kan.: Faith and Life Press, 1964).

¹⁵² John Howard Yoder, “The Biblical Mandate,” *Post-American* 3, No. 3 (April 1974), 21-25.

gospel works to change other social structures, wrote Yoder, “is that of the Christian community.”¹⁵³

For traditional Mennonites, *Politics of Jesus* was revolutionary. Yoder struck at the assumption of passivity and otherworldly separation, sacralizing political awareness and even involvement in prophetic activities such as civil rights and antiwar protest. Evangelicals found *Politics of Jesus* revolutionary in a different sort of way: in its proposal of an entirely alien form of politics that questioned electoral politics.¹⁵⁴ For many in the evangelical left who espoused this countercultural politics, historic Anabaptist theology offered a sense of stability and credibility.¹⁵⁵ It was important for radical evangelicals wishing to speak from outside the

¹⁵³ Yoder, *Politics of Jesus*, 157. For an example of what this looked like concretely, see “John Perkins, “A Strategy for Change: Evangelism, Community Development and Political Encounter,” *Post-American* 4, No. 6 (June-July 1975), 6-11.

¹⁵⁴ Anabaptists worked hard to influence evangelicals. Sider hoped that Yoder’s addresses at the Thanksgiving Workshops would be “one further step in increasing Anabaptism’s influence on contemporary evangelicals.” See Sider to John Howard Yoder, September 14, 1973, in Folder “Chicago Declaration Planning,” ESA Archives. For more on the Mennonite influence, see Perry Bush, “The Flexibility of the Center: Mennonite Church Conflict in the 1960s,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 72, No. 2 (1998); Bush, “Anabaptism Born Again: Mennonites, New Evangelicals, and the Search for a Useable Past, 1950-1980,” *Fides et Historia* 25 (Winter-Spring 1993), 26-47. Anabaptists were somewhat ambivalent about voting. Some couldn’t bring themselves to vote for a commander-in-chief. Others felt that both parties offered candidates that were equally corrupted. Stringfellow, in fact, felt so strongly about the powers that he refused to vote in 1976, feeling that a vote for either Nixon or McGovern was a compromise. See William Stringfellow, “An Open Letter to Jimmy Carter,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 8 (October 1976), 7-8. Stringfellow wrote, “Abstention from voting may be, in 1976, a political act of maturity, and of conscience and faith.” The Post-Americans, for instance, ended up endorsing McGovern, but only reluctantly in an effort to end the war. Wallis wrote, “The primary focus of the Christian community is not to become part of the power structure of this world,” he wrote. Rather, he added, the “very presence of an obedient Church undercuts the present system with all its injustices.”

¹⁵⁵ For a study of similar views held by Ron Sider, see Jeffrey McClain Jones, “Ronald Sider and Radical Evangelical Political Theology” (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1990). On the Anabaptist sensibilities of the Post-American community, see Boyd T. Reese, Jr., “Resistance and Hope: The interplay of theological synthesis, biblical interpretation, political analysis, and praxis in the Christian radicalism of ‘Sojourners’ magazine” (Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1991). On the Anabaptist influence on The Other Side community, see Kyle Cleveland, “The Politics of Jubilee: Ideological Drift and Organizational Schism in a Religious Sect” (Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1990).

establishment—and confronting objections from Reformed critics—that this radical, prophetic sensibility had not come out of nowhere.

To mainstream, especially Reformed, evangelicals, Yoder's politics, classified by Richard Niebuhr as "Christ against culture," seemed naïve, otherworldly, and flat-out irresponsible.¹⁵⁶ Gordon professor Stephen Mott, troubled by "the most widely read political book in young evangelical circles" that sold over 75,000 copies in its first edition alone, declared, "The book ... provides comfort and motivation for the increasing number of evangelicals who are rejecting legislative change as a method of social action in favor of the creation of Christian community ... and a participation in forms of direct action."¹⁵⁷ Marlin Van Elderen noted the reputation of Anabaptist ethics as "a simple-minded exercise in idealism not capable of being sustained by careful and informed reasoning."¹⁵⁸ "For all of its political relevance and all of its political language," wrote Paul Henry, "it is in the end an apolitical strategy rejecting power, and thus rejecting politics as well."¹⁵⁹ Jim Skillen criticized Jim Wallis and Yoder for radically separating the City of God and the City of the Earth. "This Augustinian notion negates the possibility of Christians effecting meaningful changes in society."¹⁶⁰ Bruce Tolley, a student from Santa Cruz, criticized *Right On* for being "too Anabaptist" and for ignoring "the greater and possibly more profound contribution of other traditions as salt and light (though imperfectly) to their

¹⁵⁶ On Niebuhr's typology, see H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper, 1951).

¹⁵⁷ Mott quoted in Bush, "Anabaptism Born Again," 44. On the popularity and sales of *The Politics of Jesus*, see Nation, *John Howard Yoder*, 25.

¹⁵⁸ Van Elderen, "Evangelicals and Liberals," *Christianity and Crisis*, 153.

¹⁵⁹ Paul B. Henry, "Love, Power and Justice," *Christian Century* 94 (November 23, 1977), 1089.

¹⁶⁰ Skillen quoted in Bert Witvoet, "Christian Social Action—Opportunity and Challenge," *Vanguard* (August-September 1978), 16.

surrounding cultures and historical situations.”¹⁶¹ “Anabaptism was a dirty word,” remembered Theodore Plantinga, and a perspective that lacked “an adequate understanding of the cultural mandate.”¹⁶² Calvin professor Richard Mouw noted that “orthodox Calvinists are afflicted with a ‘Menno-phobia’ of sorts. We want very much not to sound like Anabaptists.”¹⁶³

In his 1975 address at the third Workshop, Gordon Spykman sought to counter neo-Anabaptist politics with a traditional Reformed approach. Spykman asserted that “God so loved the cosmos that he sent his son to save it. If then God has not turned his back on the world that he made, we have no right to do so either.” God had charged humanity with a cultural mandate to reverse the effects of sin that “distort, corrupt, and pervert” social structures. “Redemption is the restoration of creation,” Spykman asserted. Consequently, “All of life is religion. ... No dichotomy between Church and world. No separation of piety and politics.”¹⁶⁴ Others echoed Spykman’s call for political participation, contending that evangelicals could gradually reform broken, but not unredeemable, social structures.¹⁶⁵ Promoting a

¹⁶¹ Bruce Tolley, “Letters,” *Right On* 7, No. 2 (September 1975), 2, 4.

¹⁶² Theodore Plantinga, “The Reformational Movement: Does It Need a History?” *Myodicy* 24 (September 2005).

¹⁶³ Richard J. Mouw, “Why I Support Nuclear Disarmament,” *Vanguard* (March-April 1979), 17-18. Mouw was in fact accused of sounding too much like a Mennonite. He wrote, “This fear [of Mennonites] can be an unhealthy one. It could keep us from being obedient to the Gospel.”

¹⁶⁴ Gordon J. Spykman, “Christian Societal Responsibility: A Reformed Model,” in Folder, “1974 Chicago Workshop Planning,” ESA Archives. For a repeated conviction that “God is Lord of creation,” see Barbara Whitehead Seerveld, “Educational Experiment in the City of Steel,” *Vanguard* (September-October 1975), 14-15. In a review of Mennonite John Driver’s *Community and Commitment*, Lowell A. Hagan wrote that the book “limits the Lordship of Christ to lordship in the church ... and ignores the necessity of changing the institutional structures of the society as a whole.” See “Reviewing Stand,” *Vanguard* (May-June 1977), 30.

¹⁶⁵ Reformed evangelicals differed in their approach. Most urged participation within existing political structures. Spykman and a minority of other Reformed evangelicals (typically associated with ICS) urged separate political organizations. Ultimately, Spykman said, Christians should form Christian political associations that would transform American politics by challenging “the tyranny of

principled Christian realism—a perspective with a long tradition in Christian social and theological thought, carried by Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, and Reinhold Niebuhr—could reform American politics.¹⁶⁶

Some in the evangelical left hoped to integrate these divergent theological identities. In a third presentation at the 1975 Workshop, Robert Webber, a Wheaton College theology professor, proposed such a consensus. Arguing for the validity of each approach, Webber affirmed the Anabaptist commitment to “live life both personally and communally by a new set of standards” as well as Reformed transformationalism which “affirms the new order in the midst of the old.” No one model contains the whole truth, Webber insisted. Each one could be “examined, modified, and used as a unifying framework” that would help the group get beyond words and on to the task of demonstrating social concern. “The separatism principle of the anabaptists ought to separate us from the gods of our age (imperialism, capitalism, etc.) so that we can then use the transformation principle of the reformed to go about our christian social and political task in the world.” Moreover, said Webber, if the evangelical left could learn to think and work in specifics, it could overcome theological differences and arrive at a consensus on practical ethics and

majoritarian rule, the spirit of win-at-all-costs, the system of winner-take-all, the sanctity of the two-party system, the self-perpetuating tendency of political office-holders, the pretended neutrality of current politicking, the crassly pragmatic and short-term outlook of most contemporary politicians.” Theodore Plantinga echoed, “Christians are not just permitted but are positively enjoined” to form “power organizations.” See Theodore Plantinga, “The Reformational Movement: Does It Need a History?” *Myodicy* 24 (September 2005). This transformationalist view should be distinguished from the Christian Reconstructionism (or Dominion theology) of Rushdoony and Gary North. This theocratic view, pieces of which were adopted by the Christian Right, urged the construction of a theocratic society based on Old Testament law.

¹⁶⁶ For a concrete sense of what Reformed politics might look like, see James Skillen, *Christians Organizing for Political Service* (Washington, D.C.: APJ Education Fund, 1980).

activism.¹⁶⁷ Both Calvinists and Anabaptists, Richard Pierard echoed, could have participated in British abolitionism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹⁶⁸ Others cited Mark Hatfield, who despite his close ties to the Post-Americans, maintained a reformist perspective and a deep involvement in electoral politics.¹⁶⁹

Webber's plea failed spectacularly. The explicit discussion of theoretical models in the third Workshop, while clarifying the conversation for some bewildered new evangelicals uninitiated to the intricacies of the debate, only exacerbated theological and methodological differences.¹⁷⁰ Meanwhile, activists condemned the "ponderous think approach," wanting to get on with political action already. Jim Wallis quit his leadership position because the Workshop was becoming too structured and institutional.¹⁷¹ Then William Bentley, angered that the Workshop

¹⁶⁷ Robert E. Webber, "Historic Models of Social Responsibility," November, 1975, Folder "1975 Chicago Workshop," ESA Archives; Bonnie Greene, "Confrontation in Black and White: Evangelicals for Social Action, Third Annual Workshop," *Vanguard* (September-October 1975), 25-26; Webber, "Division in Evangelicalism," *The Other Side* 7, No. 3 (July-August 1971), 27-28, 36

¹⁶⁸ Richard Pierard, "The Eighteenth-Century Model of British Evangelicals," in Folder "1975 Chicago Workshop," ESA Archives.

¹⁶⁹ In a review of Hatfield's *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, Lowell A. Hagan wrote, "I think his pacifism is the product of an inadequate understanding of the biblical idea of office, but still preferable by far to the mindless war-mongering of those who read red, white, and blue Bibles." See "Reviewing Stand," *Vanguard* (January-February 1977), 31. Hatfield, while a regular contributor to the Calvinist-oriented Association for Public Justice and *Vanguard*, in turn criticized their efforts to create "Christian" political parties. See "Hatfield on Politics, Parties, and Christian Service," *Public Justice Report* 5, No. 5 (February 1982), 3-6; James Skillen, "APJ's Christian Politics," *Public Justice Report* 7, No. 4 (January 1984), 4-5.

¹⁷⁰ Anabaptist and Calvinist young evangelicals continued to differ on 1) in how society is evil and how pervasive corruption is; 2) Sojourners' stress on community and Reformed stress on organizations; 3) cross-bearing. Sojourners says being poor and marginalized is important in itself. See Bert Witvoet, "A Sojourner Came to Town," *Vanguard* (September-October 1979), 5-7.

¹⁷¹ Activist Roger Dewey of the Evangelical Christian Urban Ministries of Boston declared at the meeting, "We can analyze for five more years—that will only be a way of hanging onto this power we have instead of changing." Gilbert James of Asbury Theological Seminary said, "I can't think of any better way to theologize than to do social action." See Mason, "Third Workshop."

failed to consider a black model of social action, got into a shouting match with a white delegate.¹⁷²

On Monday morning, amidst a poisonous atmosphere, the Workshop broke up a day early without delegates “having done much real reflection,” according to Judy Brown Hull.¹⁷³ During final negotiations, delegates reconstituted the Workshop board to include eight blacks and four women on the sixteen-member body. *Christianity Today*, suggesting that the Workshop was struggling for survival, quoted one long-time Workshop participant as saying “They don’t come back. ... Many of the old-timers have simply gone off in other directions. Some who have been persuaded to stay at the helm acknowledge that their hearts are not in it; their philosophies have changed.”¹⁷⁴ Another participant, urging that the Workshop movement disband, argued that the organization had become an “albatross” that could “pre-empt the Holy

¹⁷² Greene, “Confrontation in Black and White,” 26; “Chicago Crisis,” *Christianity Today* 20, No. 1 (October 10, 1975), 69. In the following years other black radical evangelicals condemned white radical Anabaptists—who despite a common antipathy toward apoliticism and political conservatism, seemed “strangely reminiscent of the otherworldliness of fundamentalism”—as well as Calvinists. Ozzie Edwards, for example, wrote, “The teaching of predestination, God’s control of human affairs, may mean that one does not try to change his society. Existing conditions were brought about by the sovereign hand of God, and the future can be entrusted to that same process. This can very easily result in racist behavior, if not attitudes. The task of effecting change is abdicated in favor of a laissez-faire approach. The Christian simply goes along with the stream of events, assuming that change will take place when God so wills it and therefore it will be by divine action.” See Edwards, “Christian Racism,” *Cross and the Flag*, 127-8; Potter, “The New Black Evangelicals,” 306.

¹⁷³ Judy Brown Hull to “Whoever is interested,” November 1975, in Box 4, Folder 7, “ESA Third Workshop (1975); An Open Letter,” ESA Collection, BGCA.

¹⁷⁴ “Planning for Action,” *Christianity Today* 21, No. 4 (November 19, 1976), 51-52; Richard Pierard, “Floundering in the Rain: Evangelicals for Social Action Meets Again,” *Reformed Journal* 25, No. 8 (October 1975). The reconstituted board retained only four of the original Workshop founders. One of the founding members, John Alexander, complained to a fellow participant, “ESA is always asking, not ‘What is true?’ but ‘how much truth can we get away with saying without offending the evangelicals too badly?’” The problem, wrote Alexander, was that “as a more-or-less radical of the more-or-less Anabaptist camp I tend to take the biblical moral standards very seriously.” The compromising stance of ESA made him wonder if the fledgling organization ought to continue. See John Alexander to Richard Lovelace, May 16, 1976, in Folder “1976,” ESA Archives.

Spirit.”¹⁷⁵ The fragmentation extended to a second conference on politics at Calvin, which one participant likened to a “tower of Babel” in which delegates spoke different theological languages and held to “a motley array of divergent viewpoints.”¹⁷⁶ “Here we are in Grand Rapids, all evangelicals, one in Christ, yet our political bases are miles apart,” wrote Sherwood Wirt. “And when we leave this conference we shall probably return home believing what we did when we came, only more so.”¹⁷⁷ The brief window during which Swiss-German Mennonites and Dutch Reformed Calvinists had emerged out of cultural isolation to engage evangelicalism seemed to be rapidly closing. Neither group was willing to abandon its ecclesial structures and traditions.

Events in subsequent years further entrenched the Anabaptist-Calvinist division. Stephen Mott wrote to Sider complaining of “an Anabaptist tilt” in the Workshops and urging him to be sensitive to the “great number of Evangelicals in Calvinist circles” who reflected “the Kingdom of God posture in social ethics.”¹⁷⁸ Critiques of Calvinist and Anabaptist political theory filled evangelical left journals.¹⁷⁹ Jim Wallis and contributors to the *Reformed Journal* exchanged a series

¹⁷⁵ Richard V. Pierard, “Chicago Declaration: Barely Audible,” *Christianity Today* 21, No. 17 (June 3, 1976), 33.

¹⁷⁶ Gordon Spykman, “The Tower of Babel Revisited: The Calvin Conference on Christianity and Politics,” *Vanguard* (July-August 1975), 23-25.

¹⁷⁷ Quoted in James Davison Hunter, “Shaping American Foreign Policy,” 77, in Michael Cromartie, ed., *Evangelicals and Foreign Policy: Four Perspectives* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1989).

¹⁷⁸ Stephen Mott to Ron Sider, January 25, 1976, Folder “1975 Chicago Aftermath,” ESA Archives.

¹⁷⁹ For a small sample of affirmations of Anabaptism and critiques of Calvinism in CWLF’s *Right On*, see David Gill, review of *The Cross and the Flag*, edited by Clouse, Linder, and Pierard, *Right On* 4, No. 7 (February 1973), 17; David Gill, “Toward a Radical Christian Identity,” *Right On* 6, No. 3 (October 1974), 3, 11; “Radical Christianity: An Interview with John Howard Yoder,” *Right On* 6, No. 6 (February 1975), 1, 5, 11.

of fiery missives.¹⁸⁰ Richard Mouw wrote a series of books intended to rebut Yoder's *Politics of Jesus*.¹⁸¹ In the end, those still interested in dialogue could no longer hope for a constructive integration of the two perspectives; they could only assert that they had an important corrective influence on each other.¹⁸² "The Anabaptists can warn the Reformed against selling out to a corrupt establishment," wrote Gordon-Conwell professor Richard Lovelace, "and the Reformed can warn the Anabaptists to avoid accusatory despair."¹⁸³ But Lovelace's tactic of soft affirmation—and other pleas to keep "justice-minded evangelicals are squaring off against each other"—rarely won

¹⁸⁰ Steve Mott, "The Politics of Jesus and our Responsibilities," *Reformed Journal* (February 1976); Isaac Rottenberg, "The Shape of the Church's Social-Economic Witness," *Reformed Journal* 27 (May 1977), 16-21; Jim Wallis, "What Does Washington Have to Say to Grand Rapids?" *Sojourners* 6 (July 1977), 3-4; Isaac Rottenberg, "Continuing the Dialogue," letter to the editor, *Sojourners* 6, No. 10 (September 1977), 38; Nicholas P. Wolterstorff, "How Does Grand Rapids Reply to Washington?" *Reformed Journal* 27 (October 1977), 10-14; Isaac Rottenberg, "Dimensions of the Kingdom: A Dialogue with Sojourners," *Reformed Journal* 27 (November 1977), 17-21. Representatives from *Sojourners* and the *Reformed Journal* met for a two-day conversation in April 1978. For a report of the meeting, see Marlin Van Elderen, "Setting Aside Common Stereotypes," *Sojourners* 7, No. 6 (June 1978), 32.

¹⁸¹ Richard Mouw, *Political Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974); Mouw, *Politics and the Biblical Drama* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976); Mouw objected to Yoder's emphasis on imitation in suffering. After Mouw's book was published, he was "excommunicated" from the *Sojourners* editorial board list. See Richard Mouw interview, July 12, 2006, Pasadena, Cal. For continuing exchanges between Yoder and Mouw, see Yoder, "Reformed vs. Anabaptist Social Strategies: An Inadequate Typology," *Theological Students Fellowship Bulletin* 17 (May-June 1985), 2-7; Mouw, "Abandoning the Typology: A Reformed Assist," *TSF Bulletin* 17 (May-June 1985), 7-10; Yoder and Mouw, "Evangelical Ethics and the Anabaptist-Reformed Dialogue," *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 17 (Fall 1989), 121-137.

¹⁸² Eerdmans Publishing Company in Grand Rapids, Mich., sponsored a meeting in April 1978 of a dozen young evangelicals. They released a series of statements of understanding and affirmation. But the sides clearly had already parted ways. See Martin Van Elderen, "Setting Aside Common Stereotypes," *Sojourners* 7, No. 6 (June 1978), 32.

¹⁸³ Richard Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life: An Evangelical Theology of Renewal* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 387. "Participants will have to die to their own agendas, especially the tendency to isolate the justice issue which involves one's own party and ignore the whole complex of issues about which we presume that God is concerned. Radical pacifists may have to pray and plead with Niebuhrians, feminists with opponents of abortion, and so on. But if in even a few cases what emerged out of this was a 70%-30% split which could be communicated to the Evangelical community and the church at large through existing ... Even if your agenda or mine ended up on the 30% side occasionally, this would be better than the present total apathy and invertebracy toward social issues among Evangelicals." See Richard Lovelace to Ron Sider, May 10, 1977, Folder "1977," ESA Archives.

the day between two religious identities that insisted on their perspective as “the biblical” approach.¹⁸⁴ In the meantime, Evangelicals for Social Action, the organization born out of the Thanksgiving Workshop movement, came to be dominated by Anabaptist and pietistic-oriented evangelicals.¹⁸⁵ Mouw and “some other Calvinists” who initiated “something of a withdrawal” from ESA in the late 1970s soon inhabited a Reformed equivalent.¹⁸⁶ “The cause of Christian politics in America is now identified with a new name: The Association for Public Justice,” declared the first issue of the *Public Justice Newsletter*.¹⁸⁷

IV.

An epidemic of splits and the growing salience of other identities in the 1970s added to white-black, male-female, and Anabaptist-Reformed cleavages in the evangelical left. Loyalty to mainline, Lutheran, charismatic-Pentecostal, and holiness traditions plagued the progressive front.¹⁸⁸ Baptists also warily eyed the movement,

¹⁸⁴ Judy Brown Hull, “In Praise of Holding Together,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 2 (February 1977), 35.

¹⁸⁵ The magazine of the Evangelical Covenant Church reported a significant Covenant bloc—over 10% of total attendance—at the third workshop. See Frances J. Mason, “Third Workshop; Evangelicals for Social Action,” *Covenant Companion* (October 1, 1975), copy in ESA Archives.

¹⁸⁶ See Richard Mouw interview, July 12, 2006.

¹⁸⁷ “Same Cause, New Name,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 1, No. 1 (October 1977), 1. APJ, like its preceding organization the National Association for Christian Political Action, enjoyed most of its support from the Christian Reformed Church. Its platform included a defense of private education, minority rights, environmental protection, and a “principled pluralism.” For more on APJ, see chapter 11.

¹⁸⁸ On a continuing divide between the mainline and radical Anabaptists, see Martin E. Marty, “An Offending Fool,” *Christian Century* (May 31, 1978), 599. Marty argued that Sojourners’ attempt to follow the Sermon on the Mount was “an impossible ideal.”

On a Lutheran approach to social justice, see Robert E. Webber, “Historic Models of Social Responsibility,” 5-6, in Folder “1975 Chicago Workshop,” ESA Archives.

On Pentecostal loyalty, see Section #2 in “Evangelical Social Concern” in “Resolutions Adopted in the 1974 Convention,” in undated issue of *Christian Holiness Association Bulletin*, in Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration Press,” ESA Archives; Larry Christenson, *A Charismatic Approach to Social*

hesitating to join over historic social and ecclesiastical differences.¹⁸⁹ Foy Valentine, a Southern Baptist from Texas, told a *Newsweek* reporter that he did not even want to be identified as an evangelical. “That’s a Yankee word,” he explained. “They want to claim us because we are big and successful and growing every year. But we have our own traditions.”¹⁹⁰ Moreover, high church traditions, particularly the Eastern Orthodox Church, poached surprising numbers of young evangelicals.¹⁹¹

Action (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1974); Jim Wallis and Robert Sabath, “The Spirit in the Church,” *Post-American* 4, No. 2 (February 1975), 3-5; Clark Pinnock, “Charismatic Renewal for the Radical Church,” *Post-American* 4, No. 2 (February 1975), 16-21; Dan Danielson, “Charismatic Renewal and Social Concern,” *Post-American* 4, No. 2 (February 1975), 24-25; Nan Pagano, “Charismatic Social Action: Church of the Redeemer at Lantrip School,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 1 (January 1976), 24-28; and James W. Jones, “The Charismatic Renewal after Kansas City,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 9 (September 1977), 11-13; Brian Hathaway, “The Spirit and Social Action—A Model,” *Transformation* 5, No. 4 (October 1988), 40-43; Eldin Villafane, *The Liberating Spirit: Towards a Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethics* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1992). On tensions between charismatics and Sojourners that pulled the Community of Communities apart in the 1980s, see Donald Dayton, “Pentecostal/Charismatic Renewal and Social Change: A Western Perspective,” *Transformation* 5, No. 4 (October 1988), 7-13.

On Catholic charismatic approaches to social action, see Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens and Dom Helder Camara, *Charismatic Renewal and Social Action: A Dialogue* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Servant, 1979); Sheila McManus Fahey, *Charismatic Social Action: Reflection/Resource Manual* (New York: Paulist, 1977); Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., “Pentecostals and Social Ethics,” *Pneuma* 9 (1987), 103-107; Murray Dempster, “The Church’s Moral Witness,” *Paraclete* 23, No. 1 (1989), 1-7.

On holiness critiques of Reformed theology and social inaction, see issues of *The Epworth Pulpit* in the late 1970s; Dayton, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage*, 128-133; Dayton, “Women in Evangelicalism,” *Radix* 10, No. 4 (January-February 1979), 8-9, 14; Dayton, “The Embourgeoisement of a Vision: Lament of a Radical Evangelical,” *The Other Side* 23 (1987), 19. Dayton noted that the Christian Holiness Association at first hesitated to sign the Chicago Declaration. “The CHA board said they didn’t need to confess—Paul Bassett of the Nazarenes said he had been imprisoned for civil rights work in the 60’s and the Salvation Army had its similar reservations—but they finally unanimously endorsed it to help their ‘weaker brothers—the evangelicals—on this issue.’” See Dayton interview, June 27, 2005.

¹⁸⁹ Baptist participants in the Thanksgiving Workshops refused to participate in communion services in ecumenical settings, causing misunderstandings with other delegates. See Rufus Jones to Pamela Cole, December 11, 1974, and David Moberg to Ron Sider, December 20, 1974, both in Folder “1974 Chicago Aftermath,” ESA Archives. On disputes over separation of church and state and public education, see Joyce Ribbens Campbell interview with James E. Wood, “Christian Responses in Politics: Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Part I,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 4 (January 1980), 6-8.

¹⁹⁰ Quoted in “Born Again!” *Newsweek* 88 (October 25, 1976), 68-70.

¹⁹¹ CWLF split when Jack Sparks felt called by God to become a bishop in the Evangelical Orthodox Church. On “The Chicago Call,” a document by Orthodox evangelicals, and the National Conference of Evangelicals for Historic Christianity in 1977, see Collection 33, “The Chicago Call,” Billy Graham Center Archives; Robert Webber and Donald Bloesch, eds., *The Orthodox Evangelicals:*

Division within ecclesiastical camps further fragmented the already deteriorating consensus. On the Calvinist side, the strident revolutionary rhetoric of the Institute for Christian Studies offended the reformist sensibilities of the *Reformed Journal*. Moreover, use of marijuana, profanity, tobacco, and idiosyncratic Reformed language alienated those who hailed from a new evangelical heritage.¹⁹² On the Anabaptist side, *Sojourners* and *The Other Side* clashed.¹⁹³ Black women, while sympathetic to the feminist cause, often found race to be a more salient category than gender. “I cannot as a black woman fully participate as an activist in a separatist women’s movement,” explained Wyn Wright Potter, “The black man and woman must stand together to fight a common foe: white, racist America.”¹⁹⁴ Young evangelicals also extended the politics of identity to the elderly, the physically

Who They Are and What They Are Saying (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1978); Robert E. Webber, *Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail* (Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 1985); Peter E. Gillquist, *Becoming Orthodox: A Journey to the Ancient Christian Faith* (Ben Lomond, Cal.: Conciliar Press, 1989). On this continuing trend, see Jason Zengerle, “The Iconoclasts: Evangelicals Turn toward the ... Orthodox Church?” *New Republic* (August 27, 2007). For the story of Thomas Howard, an evangelical who converted to Catholicism, see Thomas Howard, *Christ the Tiger: a Postscript to Dogma* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1990) and Randy Frame, “Well-known Evangelical Author Thomas Howard Converts to Catholicism,” *Christianity Today* 29, No. 8 (May 17, 1985), 46-62.

¹⁹² Richard Mouw interview, July 12, 2006; Morris Greidanus interview, January 20, 2008. *Vanguard* the *Reformed Journal*’s compromising, reformist tendencies. See an ICS position paper published as “Where Are the Christians Hiding?” *Vanguard* (January 1971), 8-11, 20. *Reformed Journal* contributors, in contrast, found *Vanguard*’s fiery rhetoric to be juvenile, and its “sweeping” methodology of Christian political action “repugnant.” Dale Vree suggested that their perspective be called “Theocracy Revisited.” See Dale Vree, review of *A Christian Political Option*, by Bob Goudzwaard, *Reformed Journal* 23, No. 7 (September 1973), 25. For more exchanges between the *Reformed Journal* and *Vanguard*, see Nicholas Wolterstorff, “The AACS in the CRC,” *Reformed Journal* 24, No. 10 (December 1974), 9-16; Hendrik Hart, “The AACS in the CRC—A Response,” *Reformed Journal* 25, No. 3 (March 1975), 25-28.

¹⁹³ For a letter detailing the conflict, see Joe, Jim, and Joyce of *Sojourners* to John, Phil, Mark, and Eunice of *The Other Side*, May 20, 1983, in Folder “Correspondence,” *Sojourners Collection*, WCSC.

¹⁹⁴ Wyn Wright Potter, “A Black Woman’s Perspective,” *The Other Side* 9, No. 4 (July-August 1973), 28-29. Also see “Report from Women’s Meeting,” *Update* (April 19, 1982), 1. Copy in Box VII, *Sojourners Community*, *Sojourners Collection*, WCSC.

disabled, prisoners, and human fetuses.¹⁹⁵ Preoccupation with minority rights and identity, while essential to their platform, hurt the political viability of the evangelical left.

If group identity fragmented the evangelical left, individual identity, sparked by the rise of evangelical psychology, sabotaged the movement in more subtle ways. Psychology departments in evangelical colleges thrived.¹⁹⁶ Laity read the enormously

¹⁹⁵ The *Wittenburg Door* devoted an entire issue the elderly, including an interview with the founder of the Gray Panthers. See "Door Interview: Maggie Kuhn," *Wittenburg Door* (December 1976-January 1977), 6-16, 25. Also see Robert M. Cray and David O. Moberg, *The Church and the Older Person* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962); Bonnie Greene, "Plight of the Aged," *Vanguard* (March 1973), 14-15, 29; Jim Stentzel, "Gray Panthers," *Sojourners* 6, No. 10 (October 1977), 16; David O. Moberg, "Numbering our Days: Aging and Christian Stewardship," *Right On* 9, No. 4 (January-February 1978), 4-7; Sharon Gallagher, "An Interview with Maggie Kuhn," *Right On* 9, No. 4 (January-February 1978), 8-9; James Hefley and Marti Hefley, *The Church That Takes on Trouble* (Elgin, Ill.: David C. Cook Publishing, 1976), 197; Adrian Vandenberg, "Beyond Old Age Ghettos," *Vanguard* 11, No. 4 (July-August 1981), 12-13.

Beyond a focus on the rights of the elderly, intergenerational vicissitudes arose within the evangelical left. Dale Vree dismissed Paul Henry as "an angry young man." See Dale Vree, "Beyond Worldly Somnolence," *Reformed Journal* 25, No. 7 (September 1975), 23-25. Similarly, Frank Gabelein, the headmaster of Stony Brook School in genteel Long Island, and Jim Wallis argued vociferously in the drafting of the Chicago Declaration. Gabelein calls Wallis "angry." See Gabelein to Rufus Jones, November 5, 1973, in Folder "1973 Chicago Declaration Planning," ESA Archives. Sharon Gallagher observed that at the first Thanksgiving Workshop in 1973, "An equal amount of time seemed to be spent deciding on how to word the ideas of the younger members in ways that would not offend the older members." See Gallagher, "Radical Evangelicalism: A Conference Report," 64, undated copy in Folder "Chicago Declaration Press," ESA Archives. On divisions within the National Black Evangelical Association, see Bentley, *NBEA Reflections*, 37. Bentley writes, "At one point, especially following Pittsburgh, it was the fashion of some of our younger critics to ridicule our major emphasis on fellowship as juvenile and not in keeping with the maturity the times demanded. ... All of this climaxed at the Dallas Convention amid charges that the present leadership did not make sufficient provision and opportunity for younger, more dynamic men at the top." Richard Lovelace, concerned about generational conflict, suggested that "if a whole generation of young Evangelicals can mature in their spirituality, and if older Evangelical leaders can expand their vision, we have the potential for a new level of evangelical impact within the church and on society." See Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, 399. Similarly, Carl F.H. Henry blamed division partly on the "remarkable exuberance" of the young evangelicals and the "reactionary stance" of some elder evangelical statesmen. See Henry, *Evangelicals in Search of Identity* (Waco, Tex.: Words Books, 1976), 13; Henry, "Revolt on Evangelical Frontiers," *Christianity Today* 18 (April 26, 1974), 4-8. Wallis responded with a lengthy retort in the *Post-American*, which in part said, "Primarily, it is a difference in how we view the world and American power in particular. Henry and others are quick to attribute Marxist leanings to young evangelical activists. His bias toward the general acceptability of the present American system is betrayed along with a rather paranoid and unbalanced view of socialism." See Jim Wallis, "The Young Evangelicals," *Post-American* 3, No. 5 (June-July 1974), 3.

¹⁹⁶ Many evangelical colleges started psychology departments in the 1950s and 1960s. Fuller Theological Seminary started a doctoral program in clinical psychology in 1964. The Rosemead

popular book *I'm OK—You're OK* and listened to radio programs dedicated to psychological issues.¹⁹⁷ Evangelical self-help books multiplied.¹⁹⁸ Many in the evangelical left, eager to nurture stable egalitarian communities, avidly consumed the new genre. Echoing the themes of recent psychological literature, the Evangelical Women's Caucus in 1974 encouraged women to learn "skills of assertiveness, negotiation, creative conflict, and confrontation to resist the forces that have so often made women feel 'victims,' helpless, and passive."¹⁹⁹ Observer Richard Quebedeaux noted the popularity of sensitivity training, "group encounter" weekends, Transactional Analysis, and nonverbal forms of communication such as hand-holding, embracing, and dancing among young evangelicals, who sought to create

School of Psychology, associated with Biola University, began in 1970, and shortly thereafter started the *Journal of Psychology and Theology*. Reformed evangelicals formed the Christian Association for Psychological Studies in 1956.

¹⁹⁷ Thomas A. Harris, *I'm OK, You're OK: A Practical Guide to Transactional Analysis* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969). On the popularity of *I'm OK, You're OK* among young evangelicals, see Quebedeaux, *Worldly Evangelicals*, 110. Clyde Narramore launched a radio program "Psychology for Living" that aired on over 200 stations in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1980s the organization Focus on the Family became a large and influential clearinghouse for information on mental health information. See Eric L. Johnson and Stanton L. Jones, "A History of Christians in Psychology," 34-41, in *Psychology and Christianity: Four Views*, eds. Johnson and Jones (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000).

¹⁹⁸ Hildreth Cross, *An Introduction to Psychology: An Evangelical Approach* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952); Clyde M. Narramore, *The Psychology of Counseling: Professional Techniques for Pastors, Teachers, Youth Leaders, and All Who Are Engaged in the Incomparable Art of Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1960); D. F. Tweedie, *Logotherapy and the Christian Faith: An Evaluation of Frankl's Existential Approach to Psychotherapy from a Christian Viewpoint* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1961); Jay E. Adams, *Competent to Counsel* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1970); Jay E. Adams, *Christian Counselor's Manual* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1973); Gary R. Collins, *Effective Counseling* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Creation House, 1972); James Dobson, *Hide or Seek: Building Self-Esteem in Your Child* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1974); M. Wagner, *The Sensation of Being Somebody: Building an Adequate Self-Concept* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975); Larry Crabb, *Basic Principles of Biblical Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975); Gary R. Collins, *The Rebuilding of Psychology: An Integration of Psychology and Christianity* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale, 1977); Jay E. Adams, *Lectures on Counseling* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977); Bruce Narramore, *You're Someone Special* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978).

¹⁹⁹ "Proposals from the Women's Caucus," November 1975, Box 2, Folder 15, "Thanksgiving Workshop, Evangelicals for Social Action (1974): Action Proposals n.d.," ESA Collection, BGCA.

environments in which “an individual can be honest about who he is, his hopes, aspirations, and hurts.”²⁰⁰ Some in the evangelical left complained that the new focus on personal authenticity distracted from the larger movement agenda.

Meanwhile, third-way evangelicals learned that even all-encompassing communal structures characterized by love and local political action inevitably clashed with the exigencies of life. The very resources that defined the third way—smallness, egalitarianism, rigorous spirituality, and simple living—often proved to be crippling liabilities. Third-way evangelicals consistently bumped up against the limits of community.

Some communities, flush with early success, grew rapidly to an unwieldy size. Members of the burgeoning Circle Church in Chicago, for example, complained about the sudden loss of intimacy. At its first Sunday morning meeting in February 1967 amidst the “fumes of liquor ... the shambles of cigarettes, leftover dinners, and torn paper cloths” of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local 705 building, only several couples showed up. By September, there were 28; by February 1968, 150; by September 1968, 200; by 1970, over 500. “As the year wore on,” reported the minister, “disgruntled feelings began to rise more and more to the surface.” Several key members left, and others grew increasingly dissatisfied, as the congregation built bureaucratic structures.²⁰¹ While a sign of success, the high numbers also indicated a failure of ideal.

²⁰⁰ Quebedeaux, *Worldly Evangelicals*, 111.

²⁰¹ Mains, *Full Circle*, 29-31, 135, 176. On the massive centralized bureaucracy that contributed to the demise of Shiloh Youth Revival Centers, see Peterson, “Christ, Communes, and the Counterculture,” 117-118.

For CWLF, the logistical challenges of maintaining its geographically sprawling and organizationally complex community (Dwight House, Grove House, Agape House, Roosevelt House, Rising Son Ranch, a magazine, and half a dozen other ministries) were complicated even more by the drawn-out meetings demanded by egalitarian methods. Members tried to give equal time to old-timers and newcomers, young and old, men and women, and the quiet and the boisterous as meetings veered in unpredictable directions. Since process was as important as productivity, meetings often unraveled into probing psychological evaluations over feelings and intentions. Paradoxically, Sojourners' fascination with the dynamics of communal living often devolved into a preoccupation with individual psychology. One Sojourners member, for example, wrote of her struggle to resolve "identity questions" in a quest of "greater self-awareness, acceptance, and creative change."²⁰² "Bob," an elder in Sojourners, told the group in a January 1977 that he "cannot keep up pace" and was "not enjoying this life." There were, he said, "bad relationships among even those in leadership" that took "endless time ... to resolve all the pastoral conflicts." There was no longer "time in my life for social change." "Shall I use my life for pastoral resolution of such pettiness—I'm tired of this whole god-damned thing." Bob's journal continued, "Can we pray and leave it there? No keen expectation of god doing anything miraculous among us. Cost of good things: weariness and tiredness, low expectations, lifestyle of overextension; little sense of empowering of God to accomplish tasks set before us."²⁰³ Members, even as they

²⁰² Allan C. Carlson, "Radical Evangelicals and Their Anti-Capitalist Crusade," *Gazette Telegraph* (November 8, 1981), 11AA. Copy in Box IV3—News Releases and Post-American, WCSC.

²⁰³ "Reflections from Elders Group—January 1977"; "Reflections from Elders Group—November 1977," in Box IV1, Folder 8, "Community and Magazine: Notes and Ideas," Sojourners Collection,

affirmed smallness, often complained that authentic communal living too often spiraled into conflict or co-dependency.²⁰⁴

Egalitarian devotion to dissent and ambiguous leadership also crippled evangelical communities. The lack of formal authority sometimes slowed expeditious decision-making. On other occasions, informal charismatic leadership became a surrogate for formal authority. The Post-Americans' Jim Wallis, for instance, became the de facto chief of a "chiefless" community by virtue of his charisma, evident spirituality, and incisive mind—an arrangement difficult to square with the egalitarian ideal. His self-initiated efforts not to dominate decision-making only complicated the group's interpersonal dynamics. Another Sojourner member talked of his "internal resistance" to hearing Jim Wallis's eloquent meditations on community. "He doesn't know what it's like to be in the community without traveling, which provides a regular break from the endless hassles."²⁰⁵ Conversely, some leaders exerted too much influence in the eyes of their community.²⁰⁶ Jack Sparks, for example, felt "a

WCSC; Robert Sabath, "Burnout: A Hazard of Community Life," *Sojourners* 10, No. 4 (April 1981), 20-21.

²⁰⁴ For an example of divisive interpersonal conflict within CWLF, see CWLF Collection: "Edie has, in Jack's, Arnie's and Jerry's view 1) a contentious and proud spirit; 2) contrary and ungodly competitive spirit; 3) contempt for leadership; 4) a certain degree of guilt; "It is more than a personality or psychological or physiological problem. It is a spiritual problem and to some degree they believe the judgment of God is on Edie in her physical ailment. They want Edie to repent ... and tear up her grievances against Jack within two weeks. If not they will excommunicate her. In the interim they ask Edie not to attend the church functions." October 1976, p. 30-32, in Box 2, "CWLF and Redeemer Church," GTU Archives. On the breakdown of relationships within *Vanguard* and ICS, see Tom Malcolm to Wedgewood Publishing Foundation, April 13, 1978, in Folder "Wedgewood Foundational Financial Records, 1970-1981," Vanguard Collection, Calvin College Archives. On fracture within Sojourners, see Jackie Sabath, "From Principles to Partnership," *Sojourners* 9, No. 7 (July 1980), 19-21; "Crucible of Community," *Sojourners* 6, No. 1 (January 1977), 16-17.

²⁰⁵ "10/30/82 Personal Reflections," in Box IV1, Folder 8, "Community and Magazine: Notes and Ideas," Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

²⁰⁶ "Many saw it [Shiloh] as too authoritarian, not accountable enough, not trusting or open, and not honest enough. They wished that it had been more accessible, more democratic and flexible and

leading” that CWLF should join the highly liturgical Evangelical Orthodox Church that featured a “chain of command” structure of apostles and bishops. In a spring 1975 meeting, according to one observer, Sparks “really laid it on the line: this is what we’re going to do. If you’re really my followers, these are the rules. At the end of the meeting, he refused to take questions. That’s just not the way you do things in Berkeley. That really bothered people.” Half the community, typically dressed in overalls and used to calling each other “brother and sister,” refused to go along with him, bewildered by the introduction of robes, scepters, and titles of bishop and father.²⁰⁷ As more and more communities began to experience debilitating conflict and divisions, however, some began to establish clearer lines of authority. Even Sojourners, the most egalitarian of evangelical left communities, began to select elders (but not ministers) in the late 1970s. In the meantime, devotion to process exhausted some members, tempted others toward self-referentialism, and hamstrung the larger community’s efforts toward social change. As with many other New Left and countercultural groups of the 1960s and 1970s, the lack of clear leadership and the decentralizing ethos, even as these impulses remained essential to its identity, nonetheless contributed to the demise of third-way evangelicalism.²⁰⁸

that they, the leadership, could have worked things out better that summer of 1978.” See Peterson, “Christ, Communes, and the Counterculture,” 126, 131.

²⁰⁷ Walter and Ginny Hearn interview, July 9, 2006; Sharon Gallagher interview, July 7, 2006. Gallagher also remembers Sparks’s clear authority in the early years. “If Jack liked you, he’d hire you.” CWLF declined after Sparks left. For a similar story of the dissolution of the Shiloh communities after the departure of a charismatic leader, see Marion S. Goldman, “Continuity in Collapse: Departures from Shiloh,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 34, No. 3 (September 1995), 344.

²⁰⁸ Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Random House, 1973), 92; Richard J. Ellis, *The Dark Side of the Left: Illiberal Egalitarianism in America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 177-185.

Perhaps the most contentious aspect of young evangelical egalitarianism had to do with the question of whether to keep a common purse. The more rigorously communal young evangelicals—Reba Place in Evanston, Ill., Sojourners in Washington, Fellowship of Hope in Elkhart, Ind.; and the Australian House of the New World—garnered entire paychecks of its members. After using the large pot to pay for housing, food, transportation, and charity activities, members were given between \$15 and \$20 a month for personal items. Most disagreed that the common purse ought to be a test of true devotion to the third way. CWLF and the House of the New World, for example, severed ties in the early 1970s over disputes about a common purse.²⁰⁹ By the 1980s, however, even the most rigorously communal communities had softened their commitment to the common purse. After an intensive study of the Paul’s letter to the Galatians, Reba Place decided in 1981 that “communal living was not a requirement of the gospel and to make it so (even unofficially) was to violate scripture.”²¹⁰ Sojourners came to a similar conclusion. Finding that administration of the common treasury resulted in a high degree of centralization, they decided that the common purse violated their egalitarianism.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ Hearn interview; Gallagher interview; “Proposed Official Letter of Invitation to John Hirt” and “Response to Council’s Meeting with Me on March 10, 1975,” March 18, 1975, in Folder “CWLF Council,” GTU Archives.

²¹⁰ Jackson and Jackson, *Glimpses of Glory: Thirty Years of Community: The Story of Reba Place Fellowship*, 265. For more on the relaxing of communal requirements at Reba Place and Fellowship of Hope, see Keith Harder, “Membership Structure and Change,” *Coming Together* 1, No. 2 (April 1983), 3-6. Both communities adopted, with some variation, two levels of membership: a “congregational sector” and a “communal sector,” which allowed for membership without living communally. Reba Place leaders told visiting Sojourners members in 1982 that “the common treasury was not working out.” See “3/29/82: Community Economics,” in Box IV1, “Articles and Critiques about Sojourners,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

²¹¹ Many camp followers of Sojourners had also expressed interest in worshipping regularly with the community without living in full communal fellowship. See “Ad Hoc Group on Internal Economic Structure,” *Sojourners Fellowship Update* (April 12, 1982), 1, copy in Box VI2, Folder 2, “Updates,”

This consensus, however, came too late to restore communities broken by disputes over financial control.

If living in community sometimes sparked fierce debate about its economic structure, it also sometimes undermined the spirituality it was supposed to reinforce. Some complained that unending social service projects and politics superseded times of corporate prayer. Others complained that they lacked times of personal prayer. Marcia Dunigan, a member of CWLF, while “still committed to community as a way of life,” felt “the crunch of never having anytime to myself. ... After 2 ½ years, the glitter has worn off and all that’s left are the bare bones of servanthood.”²¹² One potential Sojourners member, searching in vain for a statement of “a person’s basic commitment to Jesus Christ” in the membership guidelines, worried that the overriding “centrality of the community threatened the centrality of Jesus Christ.”²¹³

Finally, the joy of simple living sometimes soured into the tedium of intentional poverty and envy of consumption. Not every educated, professional young evangelical with earning potential had the fortitude to live below the poverty line for years at a time. Even those that remained in communal arrangement recognized the difficulties of voluntary poverty. A telling caption under a photo of four new babies

Sojourners Collection, WCSC. For extended notes on a detailed discussion by the Sojourners’ elders on “the current crisis” regarding different levels of membership, closed worship services, economic arrangements, see “June 3, 1981: Community Process” and “July 1, 1981: Community Meeting,” in Box IV1, Folder 1, “Articles and Critiques about Sojourners,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC; Joe Roos, “The Common Treasury at Sojourners: Maintaining the Mold,” *Coming Together* 1, No. 2 (July 1983), 13-15. Copy in Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

²¹² Marcia and Clancy Dunigan to “Dear Friends,” August 1977, in Box 2, “CWLF and Redeemer King Church Notes,” CWLF Collection, GTU Archives. On burn-out among Sojourners, see “The Third Era,” (1981), in “Articles about Community,” in Sojourners Collection, WCSC; Dennis MacDonald, “From Faith to Faith,” 115, in Edward T. Babinski, ed., *Leaving the Fold: Testimony of Former Fundamentalists* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1995).

²¹³ Dale Aukerman, “Theological Hesitations,” n.d., Box VII4, Folder 1, “Wallis Correspondence,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

born in the Sojourners community read, “But I don’t want to eat lentils and live on \$15 a month when I grow up!”²¹⁴ As third-way evangelicals grew up, many of their appetites for luxury increased, their family size increased, and more of them opted for the stability of home ownership and well-paying jobs.²¹⁵

For all these reasons, third-way communities fragmented. A Post-American split in 1975 leaving only “eighteen adults, two babies, a puppy and a cat” was followed by two more crises—one in the late 1970s and another in the early 1980s.²¹⁶ In between, a constant flow of members came in and out of the community for a variety of reasons.²¹⁷ The decline of community—joy into tedium; accountability into tyranny; piety into self-righteousness; equality into inertia—dashed the hope for a large-scale movement of small communities. While the Community of Communities, a coalition of a dozen religious communities (most with evangelical ties), flourished for a while in the late 1970s and early 1980s, difficulties in coordinating many small structures and the failure of dozens of potential member communities hampered its

²¹⁴ See Sojourners newsletter, Spring 1977, in Box VII-VI3, “Sojo Community,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

²¹⁵ 60% of Sojourners’ members between 1975 and 1981 had left by the end of that period. Of those, 75% of those with children left. Far more single than married people stayed. See “The Third Era,” (1981), 2, in Folder “Articles about Community,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC; Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 220-221.

²¹⁶ *Jim Wallis, Revive Us Again: A Sojourner’s Story* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983); Jackie Sabath, “From Principles to Partnership: A History of Male-Female Relationships at Sojourners,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 7 (July 1980), 19-21; “Crucible of Community,” 16-17. A youthful, bearded Jim Wallis recalled the moment of “a real shift” in his worldview when the first commune was falling apart. “It first came, I remember, while speaking at a conference on global justice and economics.” He realized that while their goals were admirable, rule-based communal living was not working out. The groups’ “discussions turned into arguments and real disagreements over what model of community we would choose. ... [We] literally began to lose faith and hope.”

²¹⁷ Natalie Zett, “On Leaving Community,” *The Other Side* 18, No. 4 (April 1982), 9-11; Etta Worthington, “Once Again: What I’ve Learned from My Two Attempts to Live in Community,” *The Other Side* 18, No. 4 (April 1982), 16-18.

growth.²¹⁸ Sojourners member “Graham” wrote in his 1977 journal about the “cost of good things.” The intimacy of community was good, but it also brought “weariness and tiredness” with its “lifestyle of overextension.” Before long, he could feel “little sense of the empowering of God to accomplish tasks before us.”²¹⁹ The very ideals that animated the third way doomed the movement.

By the late 1970s, it was clear that the evangelical left—in its third way or politically progressive forms—was not going to live up to its promise. The limits of community and the politics of identity dashed hopes that the movement would, in the words of Quebedeaux, “be the vanguard of a revolution in Orthodoxy under the leadership and in the power of the Liberator who promised to set men and women free from every kind of oppression.”²²⁰ Rifts between men and women, black and white, Anabaptist and Calvinist—and in all manner of permutations—subverted the creation of a coherent alternative to the conservative apoliticism of the new evangelicalism or the conservative activism of the religious right. Instead, women were cordoned off in the Evangelical Women’s Caucus, African-Americans in the National Black Evangelical Association, Anabaptist progressives in Evangelicals for Social Action, radicals in *Sojourners* and *The Other Side*, and Calvinists in the Association for Public Justice.

The increased salience of racial, gender, theological, and personal identities led to a sense of crisis within evangelicalism. The rising prominence of

²¹⁸ Bob Sabath, “A Community of Communities: The Growing Ecumenical Network,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 1 (January 1980), 17-19; Box VIII, Folder 1, “Community of Communities,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

²¹⁹ “Reflections from Elders Group—November 1977,” in Box IV1, Folder 8, “Community and Magazine: Notes and Ideas,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

²²⁰ Quebedeaux, *Young Evangelicals*, 60.

evangelicalism, mourned leaders in dozens of jeremiads, merely gilded a cracked movement. “The ironic fact,” wrote Jim Wallis, “is evangelicalism as we have known it in the past few decades is actually coming apart, just when it has been ‘discovered.’”²²¹ Robert Johnston, a Fuller Seminary professor, mourned divisions on issues such as women’s roles in the church, homosexuality, social ethics, and biblical authority.²²² Harold Lindsell lamented, “It is clear that evangelicalism is now broader and shallower, and is becoming more so. Evangelicalism’s children are in the process of forsaking the faith of their fathers.”²²³ Lindsell’s predecessor at *Christianity Today*, Carl F.H. Henry, likewise mourned the loss of the great new evangelical consensus in his 1976 book *Evangelicals in Search of Identity*. In an interview with Jim Wallis and Wes Michaelson of *Sojourners*, Henry declared, “There is a lack of a sense of body in the evangelical community. It is fragmented.”²²⁴ Evangelical emergence, wrote Robert Seiple half a decade later, had “fostered competition within the evangelicals’ ranks. Theologies, life styles, economic and justice issues, sanctity of life positions are being advanced, argued, and sadly, debated to the point of anger and alienation in

²²¹ Jim Wallis, “Conversion,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 5 (May 1978), 10-14.

²²² Robert K. Johnston, *Evangelicals at an Impasse: Biblical Authority in Practice* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1979), 77-112. After surveying the political perspectives of *Moody Monthly*, *Christianity Today*, *Reformed Journal*, and *Sojourners*, Johnston writes, “The lack of consensus within the evangelical community in regard to a Christian social ethic suggests that there exists within evangelicalism an inability to translate a theoretical commitment to Biblical authority in practice.”

²²³ Harold Lindsell, “Evangelicalism’s Golden Age,” *Moody Monthly* (December 1985), 114.

²²⁴ Carl F. H. Henry, *Evangelicals in Search of Identity* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1976), 13; “Interview: Carl Henry on Evangelical Identity,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 4 (April 1976), 27-32; Henry, “Footnotes: Strife over Social Concerns,” *Christianity Today* 20, No. 18 (June 4, 1976), 944-945; “The House Divided: An Interview with Carl Henry” *Eternity* 27, No. 10 (October 1976), 36-39.

the body of Christ.”²²⁵ Evangelicals typically framed the divisions as declension, as the fragmentation of a golden age.

The declension narrative, however, failed to recognize the already entrenched diversities revealed so spectacularly in the 1970s. Henry and other boosters very effectively created the illusion of a single evangelical identity in the 1950s and 1960s. The rise of *Christianity Today* and the NAE, however, masked the reality that evangelicalism was a coalition of people who had numbers of traits in common but also some other strong identifying markers that often eclipsed commonalities. Henry and others so remarkably succeeded in portraying a unified evangelicalism that the secular media in the 1970s fell over themselves to write about “the evangelicals” and to proclaim “the blossoming evangelical movement.”²²⁶ Even diverse numbers of conservative Protestants fell into line. In 1973 a surprisingly diverse group gathered (though a good many, such as Southern Baptist, Pentecostal, and Holiness traditions, did not) to write the Chicago Declaration. Evangelical elites, even as they capitalized on the “year of the evangelical” in 1976, were surprised when Carter’s campaign revealed that many southern evangelicals were Democrats.²²⁷ The rise of identity politics among the evangelical left not only exposed the illusion of evangelical unity

²²⁵ Robert Seiple, “Preface,” in *Evangelicalism: Surviving Its Success* (St. Davids, Pa.: Eastern College, 1986). In the same volume, Denver Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary president Vernon Grounds writes an exposition of I Corinthians 11:22 in which he urges evangelicals to avoid “ecclesiastical civil war.” Also see Vernon C. Grounds, “Finis to Fratricide,” 1-11, in *Evangelicalism: Surviving Its Success*; Dean R. Hoge, *Division in the Protestant House* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976).

²²⁶ Garry Wills, “Born-Again Politics,” *New York Times Magazine* (August 1, 1976), 8-9; Michael Novak, “The Hidden Religious Majority,” *Washington Post*, April 4, 1976, p. 29; “Born Again! The Evangelicals,” *Newsweek* (October 25, 1976).

²²⁷ On evangelical strength, see the twentieth anniversary issue of *Christianity Today*, which featured dozens of articles celebrating evangelical unity on basic doctrinal tenets. See David Kucharsky, “The Year of the Evangelical: ’76,” *Christianity Today* 21, No. 2 (October 22, 1976), p. 12-13. On southern evangelicals, see Jared A. Farley, “The Politicalization of the American Evangelical Press, 1960-1981” (Ph.D. dissertation, Miami University, 2006), 118.

but showed that the progressive evangelical front, despite its considerable hype, had been stillborn in 1973.

Already dismayed by the declining fortunes of a united progressive coalition, members of the evangelical left were even more distressed by the prospect of a conservative coalition. In April 1976 *Sojourners* printed one of the first journalistic accounts—an expose entitled “The Plan to Save America”—of an emerging religious right. In the nine-page investigative report Jim Wallis and Wes Michaelson alleged that Campus Crusade’s Bill Bright, U.S. representative John Conlan of Arizona, Amway’s Richard DeVos, the Christian Embassy, Third Century Publishers, and Howard Kershner’s Christian Freedom Foundation were conspiring to rebuff a growing evangelical progressivism.²²⁸ Wallis and Michaelson charged that Bright was mobilizing born-again Christians to elect politicians who would pursue “an ultraconservative political agenda” that would include abolishing minimum-wage laws, doing away with compulsory education laws, requiring taxes for public schools, passing right-to-work laws, returning to the gold standard, instituting harsher penalties such as capital punishment for criminals, dramatically reducing the federal government’s role in providing social services, balancing the budget with no deficit spending, increasing military spending, and withdrawing support for the U.N. This was a set of policies, wrote Wallis and Michaelson, that “dangerously distorts the

²²⁸ According to DeVos, one goal of the Christian Freedom Foundation was to “get rid of those so-called liberal Christians like Mark Hatfield.” According to televangelist John Hagee, the day the *Sojourners* published its allegations, Bright invited Hagee to dinner at the Christian Embassy. “Vonette and I are going to have dinner with you,” Hagee remembers Bright saying on the telephone. “It’s going to be the three of us, and we’re going to pray the wrath of God on Mark Hatfield.” See Turner, “Selling Jesus to Modern America,” 318-319.

fundamental meaning of the Gospel.”²²⁹ The allegation sparked retaliation from Bright, who threatened Wallis, “If you write this article, I have some power in the churches. . . . If you write this article, I will destroy you.”²³⁰

To be sure, Bright and Wallis occasionally used the apolitical rhetoric of their evangelical heritage, but tellingly, usually only for political or strategic reasons—an aghast Wallis to rebut the growing entanglement of evangelicals in conservative politics, a defensive Bright to insist to critics that his efforts were “not political in any partisan sense.” The most salient narrative was that evangelical heavyweights had entered the political fray with a dualistic, polarizing rhetoric and an activism not seen within evangelicalism for many decades. By the height of election season in 1976, top journalists were repeating the material first published in *Sojourners*, covering the internecine feud, and informing the political mainstream about the arrival of evangelicalism to partisan politics.

²²⁹ Jim Wallis and Wes Michaelson, “The Plan to Save America: A Disclosure of an Alarming Political Initiative by the Evangelical Far Right,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 4 (April 1976), 4-12. For a similar article, see Jim Stentzel, “A Stronger Voice for the American Way,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 11 (November 1977), 11-13.

²³⁰ Jim Wallis interview, July 22, 2004, quoted in Turner. “Selling Jesus to Modern America,” 318-321.

CHAPTER TEN

FROM CARTER TO REAGAN: LEFT BEHIND BY THE RIGHT

*“The anti-Christ in power like nothing better than when pastors proclaim Hell’s party line: ‘religion and politics don’t mix.’”*¹ —Operation Rescue’s Randall Terry

The evangelical left found itself in disarray in the late 1970s, fragmented along gender, racial, and ecclesial lines and fearful of an emerging conservative evangelical coalition. After *Sojourners’* 1976 investigative report of Bill Bright, John Conlan, and the Christian Freedom Foundation, fears of a mobilized religious right reached a crescendo. One of Jimmy Carter’s staunchest supporters, Georgian Robert Maddox, a Southern Baptist minister, sent word to the White House that he was hearing rumblings of dissatisfaction in the heartland. The President, he explained, was in “pretty bad trouble with a lot of religious people.” Evangelicals who had supported Carter might defect to the Republican candidate in 1980. Concerned, the White House hired Maddox as its religious liaison and charged him with shoring up evangelical support. In the summer of 1979 Maddox penned a series of memoranda urging Carter to develop contacts with emerging religious right leaders such as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and Adrian Rogers. Such overtures, wrote Maddox, “could soften their

¹ Quoted in James Risen and Judy Thomas, *Wrath of Angels: The American Abortion War* (Basic Books, 1998), 223.

political rhetoric and tap their strengths to help realize some of President Carter's transcendent goals for the country."²

By late 1979 Maddox's counsel became more urgent. Politically conservative evangelicals had begun to mobilize, Maddox warned. Beyond criticizing Carter over the White House Conference on Families and negative rulings over Christian schools, key leaders of the emerging religious right had actually visited Ronald Reagan and John Connally, two prospective Republican candidates, to determine their worthiness of evangelical support.³ The irony of it all, he pointed out, was that Carter himself had catalyzed this political mobilization. "The Carter Presidency with its emphasis on religion has been a spur to bring these folks together." Evangelicals were asking, "If *he* can be political why can't *we*?" Carter, impeded by advisors unfamiliar with the evangelical community, ignored Maddox's advice. Increasingly agitated by the administration's inaction and conservative evangelicals' action, Maddox again advised Carter to build bridges. "Most of them want to support the president," he wrote on October 5, 1979. "Careful but sustained contact with ... conservative leaders needs to be maintained." Otherwise, "they will set up a 'Christian Party Line' insisting that all born-again Christians have to buy into a set of political stands." Three months later top administration officials finally heeded Maddox's counsel. On January 22, 1980, Carter met over breakfast with Falwell, Oral Roberts, James Bakker, and several other televangelists. The meeting, however, went badly, and

² For Maddox's account of his life as a Southern Baptist preacher, supporter of Carter, and eventual post in the Carter presidency, see Robert L. Maddox, *Preacher at the White House* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1984).

³ Leo P. Ribuffo, "Family Policy Past as Prologue: Jimmy Carter, the White House Conference on Families, and the Mobilization of the New Christian Right," *Review of Policy Research* 23, No. 2 (March 2006), 311-338.

Maddox futilely battled the religious right for the rest of the election season.⁴ Carter decisively lost the presidency ten months later to Ronald Reagan.⁵

Ironies abounded in Maddox's brief tenure in the White House: a Southern Baptist minister, the lone high-ranking evangelical working for a devout evangelical president; that president then battling fellow evangelicals, themselves advocating the candidacy of a divorced Hollywood actor. This chapter attempts to explain the peculiar position of the Carter Administration. How did Carter, an evangelical political moderate, fail to retain support from progressive and conservative evangelicals alike? In 1976 Carter's outspoken religious language had stirred evangelicals of many stripes. Moderate evangelicals, skeptical of global interventionism and unlimited economic growth, appreciated his articulation of the limits of politics, a point that also appealed to fiscal conservatives. Four years later, however, evangelicals abandoned Carter's re-election campaign en masse. Radical evangelicals criticized his conventionally liberal political views. Conservatives turned on Carter when he failed to deliver on their increasingly coherent policy agenda. Moderates, dismayed by his ineffectiveness, failed to mobilize as they had four years earlier. Carter, who had enjoyed a crucial bloc of support from his religious tradition in 1976, turned into polarizing figure. For evangelicals, who were breaking into the

⁴ Accounts of the meeting differ. The White House disputed Falwell's description of his exchange with Carter. At an "I Love America" rally in Anchorage, Alaska, Falwell recounted saying "Sir, why do you have known practicing homosexuals on your senior staff here in the White House?" Falwell said that Carter replied, "Well, I am President of all the American people, and I believe I should represent everyone." Falwell said that he responded, "Why don't you have some murderers and bank robbers and so forth to represent." See Dudley Clendinen, "White House Says Minister Misquoted Carter Remarks," *New York Times*, August 8, 1980, p. A16.

⁵ On Maddox's memoranda, see Andrew R. Flint and Joy Porter, "Jimmy Carter: The Re-emergence of Faith-Based Politics and the Abortion Rights Issue," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 35, No. 1 (March 2005), 35, 42-47. For original copies of the memoranda, see White House Central File, Box: Religious Matters, Jimmy Carter Library, Atlanta, Ga.

political mainstream, negotiating the unprecedented candidacy of one of their own for the highest office in the nation turned out to be an unexpectedly perplexing dilemma.

I.

For all the fascination with his religion, Carter's rise to prominence was rooted in the mundane details of Democratic Party electoral reform. In the early 1970s the McGovern-Fraser Commission stripped mid-level state managers and local bosses of their substantial control of state primaries, leaving delegates unable to freely disregard the wishes of primary voters. In addition to requiring that delegates be represented by the proportion of their population in each state, new federal laws capped the amount of individual financial contributions at \$1,000, which offered political outsiders with an activist constituency hope to upend establishment rivals. The democratizing reforms gave Carter, a Southern Baptist candidate from rural Georgia, and evangelicals, underrepresented in the party machine, new grassroots influence.⁶

Evangelical voters, turning out in high numbers in the primaries to support the first explicitly born-again candidate in many decades, propelled Carter to victory in several early nomination contests. While few reliable voting statistics regarding religious affiliation exist from the 1976 Iowa caucuses, anecdotal evidence suggests that evangelical turnout was critical to Carter's success. Sioux County in northwest

⁶ For more on the Commission on Party Structure and Delegate Selection, commonly known as the McGovern-Fraser Commission, which also tried to increase participation by African-Americans, women, and youth, see, William J. Crotty, *Decision for the Democrats: Reforming the Party Structure* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); Bryon E. Shafer, *Quiet Revolution: The Struggle for the Democratic Party and the Shaping of Post-Reform Politics* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1983).

Iowa, a typically Republican county with a 62% Dutch Reformed population, delivered Carter an easy caucus victory. Floyd Giliotti, a long-time Des Moines Democratic politico with 23 caucuses under his belt, told of attending a Carter event in which he knew only four out of 160 people. Giliotti suggested that many of the new participants were evangelicals.⁷ Other Democratic regulars similarly reported an unprecedented influx of new evangelical activists who resonated with Carter's invocation of religious themes, statements against abortion, his patriotic service in the navy, and his outsider status in Washington.⁸ Carter won the Iowa caucuses with 27% of the vote, easily outpacing Birch Bayh at 13%, Fred Harris at 10%, and Morris Udall at 5%. In Florida and other southern states, where the reapportionment of delegates favored insurgent candidates such as Carter, great numbers of Southern Baptists helped carry Carter to victory.⁹

If religious and regional identity translated into support among evangelicals generally during the primary season, Carter's political progressivism appealed to

⁷ See R.W. Apple, Jr., "Carter and Bayh Favored in Iowa: 2 Seem Ahead in Today's Democratic Caucuses for Selection of Delegates," *New York Times*, January 19, 1976, p. 1, 47.

⁸ For a detailed account of Carter's Iowa campaign among evangelicals, see K. B. Kraakevik, "The Political Mobilization of White Evangelical Populists in the 1970s and Early 1980s" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago Divinity School, 2004), 219-229. C. Everett Koop, the future Surgeon General, attributed Carter's electoral success in part to an "immense pro-life effort in Iowa before it was understood that he talked out of both sides of his mouth concerning abortion." See Koop, "The Other Human Rights Issue," *Eternity* (October 1976), 39. Similarly, the *New York Times* suggested that the "uniquely religious character of this state" and his assertion that he favored "a national statute" to prevent abortion helped carry Carter to prominence. See R.W. Apple, Jr., "Carter and Bayh Favored in Iowa: 2 Seem Ahead in Today's Democratic Caucuses for Selection of Delegates," *New York Times*, January 19, 1976, p. 1, 47. On Carter as a political outsider, see David Kucharsky, *The Man from Plains: The Mind and Spirit of Jimmy Carter* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 97-102.

⁹ On Carter's "southern strategy," see Bruce Nesmith, *The New Republican Coalition: The Reagan Campaigns and White Evangelicals* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 59-61. On Carter's appeal to Southern Baptists, see Robert Fowler, *A New Engagement: Evangelical Political Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 237; Victor Lasky, *Jimmy Carter: The Man and the Myth* (New York: Richard Marek, 1979), 210-211.

some members of the reform-oriented progressive front. Carter's attempt to secure the Democratic base of unionists, feminists, and racial minorities—and his proposals on energy reform, the environment, the Panama Canal, and Mideast peace talks—enhanced his standing among some former members of Evangelicals for McGovern and signers of the Chicago Declaration.¹⁰ Calvin philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff hoped that in Carter “we have evangelical Protestantism coming to progressive political expression.”¹¹ Carter's Christian realism and progressive rhetoric—sometimes accompanied by citations of the biblical prophet Micah—drew inevitable comparisons to Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon. Doug Christgau, a Christian youth worker in California who was “pretty excited” about Carter, compared him to Hatfield, who Christgau felt was “true to his convictions, but doesn't use his political position to advance his religion.”¹² Hatfield himself praised Carter's emphasis on human rights and his intention to return the Panama Canal.¹³

If Carter's entreaties to foster human rights and social justice enticed evangelical left support, his articulation of economic and political limits sounded the perfect pitch for a nation weighed down by an energy crisis and a shaken confidence in political institutions. “We have learned that ‘more’ is not necessarily ‘better,’ that even our great nation has its recognized limits, and that we can neither answer all questions nor solve all problems ... we must simply do our best,” intoned Carter

¹⁰ For a list of Carter's progressive policy positions, see Kucharsky, *Man from Plains*, 121-122. For a sense of what progressive evangelicals liked about Carter's policies, see David Young, “Secret Successes,” *Wheaton Record* 105, No. 4 (October 17, 1980), 5.

¹¹ Nicholas Wolterstorff, “Carter's Religion,” *Reformed Journal* 26, No. 7 (September 1976), 4-5.

¹² Quoted in Robert Christgau, “An Ex-Believer Defends Carter's Religion,” *Village Voice*, August 16, 1976.

¹³ Robert Eels, *Lonely Walk: The Life of Senator Mark Hatfield* (Portland, Ore.: Multnomah Press, 1979), 159.

during his inaugural address. In stump speeches Carter often invoked Niebuhr's maxim that it was "the sad duty of politics to establish justice in a sinful world."¹⁴ While pundits eventually panned Carter's July 15, 1979, "malaise speech," his message that America was mired in "moral and spiritual crisis" nonetheless resonated at first with many in the electorate, especially from young evangelicals whose spirituality and critique of a consumerist culture nearly mirrored Carter's.¹⁵ "He has become an acceptable political spokesman for many evangelicals concerned with the general question of the social implications of the Gospel," wrote Robert Eells, director of the Christian Government Movement.¹⁶

While evangelicals never rose to prominent positions in Carter's campaign and administration, numbers of those in the evangelical left enjoyed a modest working relationship with Carter. At Church of the Savior in Washington, D.C., Robert McCan served as Carter's director of finance for the southeastern United States in the Carter campaign. In Georgia former Young Life worker Bill Milliken,

¹⁴ On Carter's reading of Reinhold Niebuhr, see Kucharsky, *The Man from Plains*, 18-23; Brooks Holifield, "The Three Strands of Jimmy Carter's Religion," *New Republic* 174, No. 23 (June 5, 1976), 15-17. Holifield noted that Carter "stands in a long line of politicians who began to appreciate Niebuhr after becoming involved in the complexities of power. ... Carter's acquaintance with Niebuhr dates back at least to the early '60s, when he and William Gunter, now an associate justice of the Georgia Supreme Court, began having periodic informal discussions about theology. Gunter gave Carter a copy of *Reinhold Niebuhr on Politics*, a compilation of lengthy excerpts that became, in Gunter's words, 'a political Bible' for Carter. After reading Niebuhr the two men agreed that 'love and kindness meant a great deal in one-to-one relationships but not in dealings with structures and corporate groups.'"

¹⁵ Carter enjoyed an immediate 11 percent bump in his job approval rating after the speech. See Richard V. Pierard and Robert D. Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1988), 251-255; "President Carter and the Energy War," *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 10 (August-September 1979), 1-3. On the influence of Christopher Lasch, Catholic intellectuals, and Carter's own evangelical faith on the development of the speech, see Kenneth Morris, *Jimmy Carter, American Moralizer* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 1-7; Daniel Horowitz, *The Anxieties of Affluence: Critiques of American Consumer Culture, 1939-1979* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 225-244.

¹⁶ Robert Eells, "Jimmy Carter and the Public Trust: A Warning to Evangelicals," *Vanguard* (October 1976), 11-14.

previously enamored with new leftist thought, became a close confidant of Carter's and received state funds to combat drug abuse.¹⁷ In Texas Jimmy Allen, a member of Evangelicals for Social Action, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, and close friend to Carter, supported his campaign. Allen later acted as an unofficial emissary to Tehran to help resolve the Iran hostage crisis.¹⁸ At Wheaton College the Organization of Collegiate Democrats met each Tuesday evening during the election, working cooperatively with the local Democratic Party headquarters and bringing to campus Senator Adlai Stevenson, who railed in the college chapel against the "terrible failure of national leadership with Republicans in the White House the past 8 years." A full one-third of Wheaton College students, a significant jump in support for a Democrat compared to the 1960s and even in 1972, voted for Carter in a mock election, and faculty voiced considerably more support for Carter than students.¹⁹ Jay Hakes, a Wheaton alumnus, led the Carter campaign in Louisiana, attended the Democratic National Convention as an at-large Carter delegate, and then worked as an assistant to Carter's Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus.²⁰

¹⁷ See Norton and Slosser, *The Miracle of Jimmy Carter*, 53. Similarly, a group of InterVarsity staff workers—Sheldon Nix, Ron Mitchell, and Barbara Brown—and Voice of Calvary's John Perkins oversaw a \$2.2 million grant from Carter administration that funded the Adolescent Pregnancy Care and Prevention Program in New York City and Washington, D.C. See Ron Mitchell, *Organic Faith: A Call to Authentic Christianity* (Chicago: Cornerstone Press, 1998), 141-143.

¹⁸ See Maddox, *Preacher at the White House*, 161. On other support of Carter from Southern Baptists who resisted the conservative takeover of the Convention in the late 1970s, see William Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America*, revised edition (New York: Broadway Books, 1996), 157, 243; James and Marti Hefley, *The Church That Produced a President: The Remarkable Spiritual Roots of Jimmy Carter* (New York: Wyden Books, 1977), 242.

¹⁹ Ruth McLatchie, "OCD Gets Democrats Involved," *Wheaton Record* 101, No. 21 (April 15, 1977), 2; Steve Ray, "Stevenson Campaigns for Jimmy," *Wheaton Record* 101, No. 7 (October 29, 1976), 1. One student, while criticizing Carter for being "too hawkish when it comes to Russia," endorsed Carter, disclosing that he was "undoubtedly the first vote any member of my family has ever cast for a Democrat."

²⁰ Charles D. Hadley, "News and Notes," *Journal of Politics* 38, No. 4 (November 1976), 1099. Hakes currently serves as the director of the Carter Presidential Library. On Dennis Marker, a

The bulk of evangelical support, however, came not from progressive evangelicals, but rather from those delighted that an outspoken, born-again believer was running for president. Paeans to Carter emanated from evangelical magazines and presses as soon as Carter secured the Democratic nomination in New York City in mid-July. Two days after the convention closed, several full-page advertisements appeared on behalf of Carter in *Christianity Today*. The first urged evangelical readers to purchase a just-released book called *The Miracle of Jimmy Carter*. “The newest book about Jimmy Carter is a chronicle of faith—the spiritual odyssey of a man who rose from farmer to presidential candidate. ... How did the miracle happen? What makes Jimmy Carter different?”²¹ The other advertisement, purchased by an organization called “Citizens for Carter,” asked, “Does a Dedicated Evangelical Belong in the White House?”²² The answer, answered the advertisement, was a resounding “Yes!” The White House needs its windows “thrown open” to “clear out Washington’s smoke-filled rooms.” There was no one better than Carter, a man of integrity who realizes that “America’s problems are the result of a spiritual crisis.” The candidate offered decent government, “courageous national leadership” and the hope of “moral and spiritual renewal.” By voting for Carter, an outsider who could bring heartland values to Washington, “you can help restore the fundamental

Sojourners media expert in the 1980s, who also worked in the Carter administration, see Ed Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace: A Story of Resistance* (Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 1991), 46

²¹ *Miracle of Jimmy Carter* advertisement, in *Christianity Today* 20, No. 21 (July 16, 1976), 50. For a similar ad, see *Eternity* 27, No. 8 (August 1976), 5. Also some advertising for Carter’s autobiographical *Why Not the Best?* in *Eternity* 27, No. 6 (June 1976), 8; *Eternity* 27, No. 10 (October 1976), 73.

²² “Does a Dedicated Evangelical Belong in the White House?” *Christianity Today* 20, No. 21 (July 16, 1976), 43. The origins and constituency of Citizens for Carter are unclear. An independent political action committee of Christians for American Renewal, it claimed no affiliation with the Democratic Party or Carter’s own campaign organization.

principles this country was founded on.” Carter and his supporters combined populist rhetoric with the fear of a lost America to great effect among evangelicals, who still felt on the margins of American culture.²³

A robust hagiographical literature spread quickly through the evangelical world in the last half of 1976. Readers inhaled breathless prose painting Carter as a devout candidate. “When he was governor,” wrote evangelical journalists Norton and Slosser, “and later as a national leader, Carter often—right in the midst of a conference or conversation—closed his eyes, put his fist under his chin, bowed his head slightly, and talked to the Lord for a few seconds while the conversation continued around him.”²⁴ Such spiritual integrity, they explained, gave the candidate special resources which could be used to reshape the nation. Carter, as “sincerely liberal in matters of race, both moderate and conservative in the field of social legislation, and staunchly conservative in fiscal matters,” offered the promise of a humane, efficient administration.²⁵ Moreover, he was one of the “best things to happen to American evangelical Christianity in this century. In the months that he was in the national spotlight campaigning for the nomination, the secular press did

²³ “I’m an outsider and so are you. I’d like to form an intimate relationship with the people of this country,” Carter often said, “and when I’m president, this country will be ours again.” See Peter Meyer, *James Earl Carter: The Man and the Myth* (Kansas City: Sheed, Andrews, McMeel, 1978), 111.

²⁴ Howard Norton and Bob Slosser, *The Miracle of Jimmy Carter* (Plainfield, N.J.: Logos International, 1976), 109. Norton, a Pulitzer prize-winning journalist, had covered the Carter family since their first days of presidential politicking. A year later he authored *Rosalynn: A Portrait* (Plainfield: Logos International, 1977). Slosser, also a journalist, later served on the board of Pat Robertson’s Christian Broadcasting Network.

²⁵ “Dedicated Evangelical in the White House,” 43; Norton and Slosser, *Miracle*, 6, 71-81. Norton and Slosser clearly laid out Carter’s platform—a decrease in military spending, a decision not to support a constitutional amendment outlawing abortion, amnesty for Vietnam desertion—some of which did not appeal to many evangelicals.

more to spread the gospel—by factual reporting of the Carter campaign—than all the religious press combined.”²⁶

At its most exuberant, this hagiography portrayed God and Carter working in concert to preserve America. “There is a sense of history in the making; a feeling that something mysterious and irresistible is at work behind the scenes,” wrote Norton and Slosser. God had engineered conditions “which seem to have worked together to bring [Carter] to this moment in history.”²⁷ A leader in the Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International declared, “God has his hand upon Jimmy Carter to run for president.”²⁸ Carter, in return, could rescue America from decline. Norton and Slosser surmised that the election “could bring a spiritual revival to the United States and its government.”²⁹ Bailey Smith, Jimmy Allen’s predecessor in the Southern Baptist Convention’s presidency, told a crowd of 15,000 that the nation needs “a born-again man in the White House ... and his initials are the same as our Lord’s.”³⁰ Supporters drew a poster that depicted Carter with long, flowing hair and dressed in biblical garb with the caption “J.C. Can Save America.” Others mass-produced posters and pins that read “J.C.,” “J.C. Will Save America,” “J.C. Can Save America,” and “Born Again Christian for Jimmy Carter.” The ambiguous initials and body on campaign ephemera insinuated that Jimmy Carter was a political surrogate for Jesus Christ himself.

²⁶ Norton and Slosser, *Miracle*, 10.

²⁷ Norton and Slosser, *Miracle*, xi.

²⁸ Quoted in Norton, and Slosser, *Miracle*, 9.

²⁹ Norton and Slosser, *Miracle*, xii.

³⁰ Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 157.

More irenic offerings came from evangelicals eager to interpret Carter to a secular elite bemused by reports of the candidate's Pentecostal evangelist sister Ruth Carter Stapleton and his campaigners from Georgia dubbed the Peanut Brigade. Wesley Pippert, a UPI reporter and InterVarsity veteran, complained of the "fundamental lack of understanding of the Christian faith and, therefore, of Jimmy Carter himself." Taking great pains to present Carter's faith as sincere and conventional, Pippert published an essay on Carter's faith with an extensive compilation of quotes—200 pages worth—from Carter on spirituality.³¹ James and Marti Hefley likewise wrote an essay entitled "Religious Experience: The Key to Understanding Jimmy Carter" for political experts and journalists with "traditional secular and relativistic mindsets."³² David Kucharsky, a *Christianity Today* editor, portrayed Carter as standing in a long line of Protestant luminaries such as John Stott, Reinhold Niebuhr, and J. Gresham Machen for whom the Christian faith was rational and respectable.³³

In addition to interpreting Carter's faith to the secular media, the burgeoning literature authenticated the candidate's faith to an evangelical constituency unused to voting Democratic. Pippert's *Spiritual Journey of Jimmy Carter*, an overture to a

³¹ Wesley Pippert, *The Spiritual Journey of Jimmy Carter* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1978), 2. Pippert's complaint that "Jimmy Carter's belief in Christ and perhaps his very essence were not being communicated clearly or competently to the American people," was a long-standing concern. Pippert cited NBC's John Chancellor as an example. In a broadcast Chancellor stated, "Incidentally, we have checked this out. Being 'born again' is not a bizarre experience or the voice of God from the mountaintop. It's a fairly common experience known to millions of Americans—particularly if you're Baptist." Pippert also recalled that in 1972, the national media failed to report on McGovern's important speech at Wheaton on religion and ethics. "Whenever the candidate started using authentic biblical language, the reporters closed their notebooks, grinned at each other indulgently, and looked as though they were trapped as of old in a Sunday School class waiting for the bell to ring." See Wesley Pippert, "Who Covers the Press?" 5, No. 8 *Sojourners* (October 1976), 9-12.

³² Hefleys, *Church That Produced a President*, 247-254.

³³ Kucharsky, *Man from Plains*, 115-119.

politically conservative and skeptical evangelicalism, sought to present Carter's faith as authentic and deep. Pippert described his own "spiritual kinship" with Carter, and Kucharsky likewise explained that the devout, moral Carter was "one of us." Carter, implied several observers, stood in a long line of socially concerned evangelicals such as William Jennings Bryan, nineteenth-century abolitionists, and women's rights activists.³⁴ Moreover, Carter represented an evangelicalism come of age in which American politics was the new missionary field. Carter, who had been discouraged by mentors who wanted him to be a pastor from entering politics, told one visiting revivalist to Plains that he would be the "pastor of a church with 80,000 members," meaning the 14th Senate district of Georgia.³⁵ These and other stories assured readers that Carter thought and behaved in a manner befitting the new politically aspiring evangelicalism.

For evangelicals eager to prove themselves on the national stage and to validate their political relevance, Carter's candidacy once again offered an opportunity to test the theory that evangelical candidates carried "infinitely greater resources into a campaign than the non-believer."³⁶ The case of Nixon, who conspicuously held religious services in the White House during his presidency even

³⁴ Kucharsky, *Man from Plains*, 43, 65-70; Hefley, *Church That Produced a President*, 97. The Hefleys emphasized Carter's progressive racial views and his spiritual piety—and his Baptist tradition's activism in regard to human rights. The book portrayed Carter and progressive Baptists as the end of a long line of activist evangelicals traced back to nineteenth-century abolitionists such as Charles Finney and William Carey. For a generally approving recitation of Carter's moderately progressive policies on busing, fiscal spending, draft dodging, military spending, gun control, energy, and welfare, see Kucharsky, *Man from Plains*, 121-124. On Pippert's resonance with Carter and McGovern and criticism of Nixon, see Wesley Pippert, "The Moral Dimension of the News," *HIS* 38, No. 5 (February 1978), 29-31.

³⁵ Kucharsky, *Man from Plains*, 82-83.

³⁶ Wesley Pippert, "Deciding How to Vote," *The Other Side* 8, No. 5 (September-October 1972), 17-20.

as he presided over Watergate and Vietnam, had sabotaged this line of thinking. Nixon, despite his close ties with Billy Graham and claims to being born again, quickly lost the support of evangelicals in his second term of office. The emerging evangelical left condemned continued aggression in Vietnam. Christian singer Barry McGuire declared, "I can't believe that we have a disciple of Christ in the President. He may call himself a Christian, a lot of people call themselves Christians, but he's not a disciple of the Lord. ... The only way I would believe Nixon is if he were to stop all aggression by the United States."³⁷ Paul Henry similarly wrote that many evangelicals "could not readily believe that a president, supported dominantly by the evangelical community, could conceivably be involved in corruption."³⁸ Even conservatives condemned Watergate.³⁹ Evangelicals could only conclude that Nixon was not authentically Christian.

The more explicitly evangelical Carter allowed evangelicals to again posit the theory that spiritual resources could transform political affairs. As every major presidential candidate in the 1976 and 1980 elections claimed to be born again, the national media splashed cover stories on the rediscovered evangelicals on newsstands. The colorful Arthur Blessitt, a prominent leader in the Jesus Movement, ran for president on his faith alone, claiming that "only a witnessing, born-again

³⁷ "Barry McGuire Interview," *Right On* 4, No. 2 (August 1972), 1, 6.

³⁸ Paul Henry, *Politics for Evangelicals* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1974), 8.

³⁹ Carl F. H. Henry, for example, supported Nixon in part because "as a teenager [Nixon] had made a personal decision for Christ during one of Aimee Semple McPherson's meetings." See Henry, *Confessions*, 196. On Henry's repudiation of Nixon and criticism of Ford for pardoning Nixon, see Carl F. H. Henry, "Open Letter to President Ford," *Eternity* 27, No.1 (January 1976), 22-23 (21-23, 31). On Pat Robertson's repudiation of Nixon, see David John Marley, *Pat Robertson: An American Life* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 40.

Christian has the moral credentials for the office.”⁴⁰ Only Carter, however, carried the political and born-again credentials to be taken seriously by evangelicals.⁴¹ Neither Ford nor Reagan said, as Carter did in a Christian magazine, that “I had accepted Jesus into my heart when a young boy of 11 years. ... I recited the necessary steps of acknowledging my sinfulness, of repentance and asking Jesus to enter into my heart and life as Lord and Savior.”⁴² After a similar proclamation in a 1974 address to the Christian and Missionary Alliance convention, the CMA president said, “Governor Carter, on behalf of the delegates and visitors ... I wish to thank you most sincerely. ... It has been so obviously and evidently an expression of a warm-hearted, dedicated Christian man in public life. I’m sure none of us want to mix politics with this occasion, but regardless of our party affiliation, Governor, I hope if the Lord tarries, that all of us will have the opportunity to vote for you for some national office sometime in the future.”⁴³ Wes Pippert noted that Carter possessed “a healing balm that touched America’s wounds of recent years. Surely this gift comes in part from Carter’s experience of having been born again.”⁴⁴ Detroit mayor Coleman Young implored blacks to vote for Carter “because of his Christian beliefs.”⁴⁵ Even a writer

⁴⁰ Lewis B. Smedes, “Rap 76”: Religion and the Presidency forum,” *Reformed Journal* 26, No. 3 (March 1976), 4-6.

⁴¹ Ford, who belonged to a non-evangelical Episcopal congregation in Grand Rapids, Mich., professed to “something of an evangelical,” and his son attended the evangelical Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. Still, it was apparent that Carter’s faith was lifelong and more comfortable. In a *Time* magazine article Wallis says, “against Carter, he’s just going to be out-evangelicaled—in Carter, evangelicals see they’ve got a real, live one all of their own.” See “Battling for the Blocs,” *Time* (September 13, 1976), 24-25. On Wheaton students’ fascination with Carter, see Steve Smith, “Students Visit Carter’s S. School,” *Wheaton Record* 101, No. 5 (October 15, 1976), 1.

⁴² Quoted in Kucharsky, *Man from Plains*, 14.

⁴³ Kucharsky, *Man in Plains*, 67.

⁴⁴ Wes Pippert, “How I Think I’ll Vote,” *Eternity* 27, No. 9 (September 1976), 27.

⁴⁵ Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 301.

in the fundamentalist *Moody Monthly* implied that Carter was a man “whose time has come.” It was time to elect “a person of integrity who is highly visible who keeps his word, who can be trusted, who sets a wholesome example, who provides the moral leadership and not just passive approval of morality, a man whose private life matches his public claims.”⁴⁶ The overarching motivation for most evangelicals’ support of Carter seems to have been the novelty and the spiritual promise of a born-again candidate running for president of the United States.⁴⁷ For evangelicals not yet established in the political mainstream, Carter’s victory was an assertion of evangelical identity more than an indication of policy resonance.⁴⁸

Carter’s campaign did not appeal to evangelical networks in a systematic manner, yet his natural constituency nonetheless helped carry Carter to victory in the general election.⁴⁹ A straw poll taken in the Shiloh community in Oregon, for example, showed that “didn’t care” ballots—an expression of apoliticism widespread

⁴⁶ Forrest Boyd, “Do We Really Want a Saint in the White House?” *Moody Monthly* 77, No. 1 (July 1976), 22, 24.

⁴⁷ For a discussion of the early religious right’s efforts to “vote only for born again Christians,” see Jim Wallis and Wes Michaelson, “the Plan to Save America,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 4 (April 1976), 4-12. Wallis and Michaelson criticized evangelicalism’s need for affirmation and relevance. “Like a long rejected mistress suddenly claimed and fought over by two new suitors, evangelicalism can barely restrain its pride and availability to being seduced by either one—or even both.” “Graham Advises Evangelical Voters,” *Eternity* 27, No. 11 (November 1976), 6.. To be sure, there were other reasons for Carter’s success among evangelicals. He reflected the reflective, pessimistic mood of the time rooted in Vietnam, Watergate, and “a general domestic upheaval.” Charles Colson told *Christianity Today* editors that he sensed a “widespread apathy and disenchantment” because of “a feeling on the part of the people that as individuals they can’t do anything.” Quoted in Kucharsky, *Man from Plains*, 73.

⁴⁸ Several prominent evangelical authorities—including Billy Graham and *Christianity Today*—urged their constituents not to vote for any candidate solely on the basis of his profession of faith. “If evangelicals give ‘bloc’ support to a candidate, Graham told *Los Angeles Times* reporter Russell Chandler, and the candidate ‘gets in and fall on his face, or corruption gets into his administration close to him, then evangelical Christians are going to be blamed.” Quoted in *Eternity* 27, No. 11 (November 1976), 6. For more such warnings, see advertisement in *Eternity* (November 1976), 97; Fowler, *New Engagement*, 238. Still, *Christianity Today* printed ten articles about Carter’s faith and only three about his political views. See Kraakevik, “White Evangelical Populists,” 255.

⁴⁹ Bruce Nesmith, *The New Republican Coalition: The Reagan Campaigns and White Evangelicals* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 62.

within the Jesus Movement—dropped to only 17% as the “born again” Christian candidate Jimmy Carter swamped the nominal Episcopalian Ford by 83%.⁵⁰ Carter also drew support from apolitical fundamentalists. According to historian John Turner, Campus Crusade staffers, who would turn to Reagan in high numbers in the 1980s, were “very excited” about Carter.⁵¹ Michael Gerson, a speechwriter for George W. Bush in the 2000s, remembers enthusiasm for Carter in his St. Louis home and school, mostly because Carter was “forthright about his faith.” Gerson championed Carter in his school’s debate and rode his bicycle downtown to distribute campaign literature. As president Carter returned to St. Louis aboard the Delta Queen, where Gerson shook a president’s hand for the first time.⁵² Jerry Falwell encouraged evangelicals to vote for Carter. Pat Robertson, who claimed to have helped Carter win the Pennsylvania primary, hosted the candidate on the “700 Club” television show.⁵³ Even those who likely supported Ford appreciated Carter for his spiritual leadership on the national political scene.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Joe V. Peterson, “Jesus People: Christ, Communes, and the Counterculture of the Late Twentieth Century in the Pacific Northwest” (Master’s thesis, Northwest Christian College, 1990), 110.

⁵¹ John Turner, “Sharing God with Modern America: A History of Campus Crusade for Christ” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 2005), 332.

⁵² Carl M. Cannon, “Soul of a Conservative,” *National Journal* 37, No. 20 (May 14, 2005). At Wheaton College Gerson wrote a 1985 editorial on abortion in the student newspaper. Charles Colson read the editorial, met Gerson, and launched him on a career of political speechwriting in conservative circles.

⁵³ David E. Harrell, *Pat Robertson: A Personal, Religious, and Political Portrait* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 176. On Carter’s appearance on the 700 Club, see Flint and Porter, “Jimmy Carter,” 32. Carter discussed the imperative “to assure that secular law is compatible with God’s laws” with the proviso that if a conflict developed between the two, “we should honor God’s law.”

⁵⁴ “I believe,” Bill Bright wrote Carter, “that God has raised you up for this dramatic moment in history to help give spiritual leadership to our world in crisis.” Quoted in Turner, “Selling Jesus to Modern America,” 332.

Beyond a mass of anecdotal evidence, it is difficult to precisely chart evangelicals' influence on the 1976 election, especially given pollsters' imprecision in categorization.⁵⁵ Immediately after the election, Carter's campaign advisers and political scientists credited evangelicals with the win. Robert J. Keefe, a veteran Democratic operative in Indiana, remembers looking at charts showing the vote county-by-county by religion. The map was "totally overlaid" with victorious evangelical-heavy counties.⁵⁶ Political scientist Albert Menendez tracked ten heavily evangelical counties in Missouri where Kennedy won 38% of the vote in 1960. In 1976 Carter won 55%. Similar movement occurred in Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Pennsylvania, likely giving Carter wins in each of these states. Ford probably still received 60% of evangelicals' votes, Menendez estimated, but Carter cut the Republican candidate's evangelical majority to only 3.2 million in 1976 from 7.2 million in 1968. With this shift, Menendez asserted, "Carter was unbeatable."⁵⁷ While more recent scholarship questions whether evangelicals single-handedly delivered the election to Carter as initially assessments suggested, all scholars maintain that evangelicalism was a significant part of the Carter coalition and that the

⁵⁵ Pollsters lumped evangelicals under the broader category of "Protestant," which included fundamentalists, evangelicals, and mainliners, but not Catholics. On these difficulties, see John C. Green, Corwin E. Smidt, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and James L. Guth, "Bringing in the Sheaves: The Christian Right and White Protestants, 1976-1996," in Smidt and James M. Penning, eds., *Sojourners in the Wilderness: The Christian Right in Comparative Perspective* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997), 79-81.

⁵⁶ Quoted in Nesmith, *New Republican Coalition*, 65.

⁵⁷ Albert J. Menendez, Menendez, *Religion at the Polls* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), 197-198; Menendez, *Evangelicals at the Ballot Box* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1996), 128-129.

flood of votes for Carter exceeded any evangelical support for a Democratic candidate in the decades before or after the 1976 election.⁵⁸

If evangelicals helped lift Carter to the presidency, ominous signs already suggested that support might be surprisingly fragile. Some of the more influential members of the evangelical left, who might have been expected to be thrilled with an evangelical Democratic candidate, expressed only lukewarm support of Carter.⁵⁹ Ron Sider, the organizer of Evangelicals for McGovern in 1972, for example, made it clear that he would not be organizing a similar effort for the Democratic candidate in 1976.⁶⁰ Part of the problem lay in Carter's ecclesiastical location. A Southern Baptist, Carter had little contact with the predominately northern young evangelical movement.⁶¹ Gary Scott Smith notes that the archives in Carter's presidential library shows little evidence of familiarity with the luminaries of evangelical political thought in the 1970s. Carter knew national political figures such as Mark Hatfield and Iowa senator Harold Hughes, but there is no evidence that he read Hatfield's political reflections, or those of Paul Henry, Stephen Monsma, Carl Henry, Richard Mouw,

⁵⁸ Stuart Rothenberg and Frank Newport, *The Evangelical Voter: Religion and Politics in America* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Government and Politics, 1984), 4. Mark Noll suggests that evangelical support of Carter speaks to the political moderation of evangelicals into the 1970s. Noll writes, "The solid showing of Jimmy Carter in 1976 demonstrates how relatively bi-partisan the evangelical constituency was at that late date, although it is noteworthy that Bill Clinton, another Southern Baptist from a Southern state, did much worse among evangelicals than had Carter. See "Evangelicals and Politics," paper delivered to CORAH, February 14, 2007.

⁵⁹ For examples of hesitant support for Carter from young evangelicals, see the responses of James W. Skillen, Virginia Mollekott, Wes Pippert, Danny Rydberg, John Alexander, Russell Hitt in "How I Think I'll vote," *Eternity* 27, No. 9 (September 1976), 26-31.

⁶⁰ James Alan Patterson, "Evangelicals and the Presidential Elections of 1972, 1976, and 1980," *Fides et Historia* 18, No. 2 (June 1986), 50-51.

⁶¹ Few evangelical magazines got interviews with Carter. *Eternity* printed a short, two-page interview, but was provided by the Southern Baptist Convention Press services. See "Jimmy Carter Explains His Faith," *Eternity* 27, No. 9 (September 1976), 80-81.

Richard Pierard, James Skillen, Bob Goudzwaard, or John Howard Yoder.⁶²

Conversely, northern evangelicals found Carter's language of political theology bewildering and his Pentecostal sister bizarre.⁶³ The grating of regional and ecclesiastical differences undermined any alliance between Carter and the evangelical left.⁶⁴

The Southern Baptist-northern evangelical friction centered on Carter's invocation of church-state separation. Critics described his faith too strong in its rhetoric and too weak in its shaping of policy. On one hand, Mark Hatfield found Carter's explicit religious confessions nauseating. He wrote, "Most politicians have typically utilized religion much like a woman uses makeup; a little, used discreetly, can improve one's appearance, but too much, used lavishly, can make one look like a clown."⁶⁵ That religion could be used as a tool of a scheming candidate—and that evangelicals could fall prey to Carter's siren song of faith—was profoundly

⁶² See Gary Scott Smith, *Faith and the Presidency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 571-572. In July 1976, just before the party conventions, Mark Hatfield exhorted each major candidate—including Ford, Carter, and Reagan—to declare their commitment to protect the poor and oppressed against institutional exploitation, reject "all forms of violence and militancy," repudiate America's materialism, and view "political leadership as servanthood." None of the candidates responded to this challenge, including Carter, who resonated with Hatfield on many political issues, especially those articulated by Hatfield in his speech. See Eels and Nyberg, *Lonely Walk*, 158-159.

⁶³ Nesmith, *New Republican Coalition*, 62-66.

⁶⁴ James Wall, a *Christian Century* editor and head of Carter's campaign in the Midwest, remembered, "We had some dealings with religious groups, not evangelicals as much as Southern Baptists." Quoted in Nesmith, *New Republican Coalition*, 63. For more on Carter's extensive Southern Baptist connections, see Maddox, *Preacher at the White House*, 40, 51; Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 310. Smith writes, "Carter's relationship with Southern Baptists during his presidency was closer and more cordial than with other groups. He met and corresponded regularly with key denominational leaders, spoke at several Southern Baptist gatherings, and hosted a dinner and reception to raise funds for a Southern Baptist missions organization. At their annual conventions, Southern Baptists adopted resolutions supporting many of Carter's priorities and policies, including multilateral arms control, national security, peace, world hunger, relief for refugees, and lobby disclosure legislation." Some critics, explains Smith, complained that Carter had established a "Baptist Vatican on the Potomac."

⁶⁵ Mark Hatfield, "Schizophrenia on the Campaign Trail," *Sojourners* 5, No. 8 (October 1976), 23-25.

disturbing to many in the evangelical left. *Sojourners* charged that an emerging evangelicalism had been captivated by the siren of cultural and political relevancy. Michaelson wrote, “Like a long rejected mistress suddenly claimed and fought over by two new suitors, evangelicalism can barely restrain its pride and availability to being seduced by either [party]—or even both.”⁶⁶ The October 1976 issue of *Sojourners*—entitled “Election ’76: The Seduction of the Church”—articulated their concern that Carter, unwilling to radically apply faith to his politics, was merely flouting evangelical piety.

That Carter then proceeded to tell Democrats worried about theocratic tendencies that his faith and his politics were separate infuriated the evangelical left. The *Reformed Journal*’s Henry Stob wrote, “I have every reason to believe that President Carter is a committed Christian who allows Christianity to set his goals, posit his values, and shape his personal life. I can scarcely understand, therefore, why, according to reports, he has on several occasions assured his secularist critics that he will not allow his Christian faith to affect his presidency.”⁶⁷ Others accused Carter of outright Gnosticism, of failing to apply biblical truths to temporal realities. Michaelson wrote, “He tries to be two people. He acts as if there are two worlds. Rarely, if ever, does the Plains Baptist Church intersect with the carefully calculated and calibrated Carter campaign.”⁶⁸ Richard Shaull wrote in *Sojourners* that

⁶⁶ Wes Michaelson, “The Fall, the Elect, and the Election,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 8 (October 1976), 5-6. Garry Wills likewise admonished evangelicals, who he argued were “hovering on the peril of trendiness,” to heed the voices of resistance in their midst. Like Catholics, evangelicals would be tempted to “‘belong’ to an America forgetting its past religious style by celebrating ‘secularization.’” See Garry Wills, “Will the Nation Be Saved?” *Sojourners* 5, No. 8 (October 1976), 20-21.

⁶⁷ Henry Stob, “Religion and Politics,” *Reformed Journal* 27, No. 2 (February 1977), 3.

⁶⁸ Wes Michaelson, “The Piety and Ambition of Jimmy Carter,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 8 (October 1976), 14-18.

“Widespread disillusionment lies ahead if Carter’s vision remains bounded by the limitations of his Baptist background.”⁶⁹ Senator Mark Hatfield cited an article by James Wooten in the *New York Times Magazine*: “Carter does not seem to allow his deep religious convictions to impede the fulfillment of his public responsibilities.” That tendency, wrote Hatfield, “points to what in my mind is the most vexing aspect of faith’s relationship to politics during this campaign year. Religious piety is being regarded as the guarantee of a candidate’s morality and integrity, but not as the basis for one’s social and political vision for the society.” Citing the abolition of slavery, women’s suffrage, the civil rights movement, and opposition to Vietnam, Hatfield argued that the constitutional amendment prohibiting the establishment of a state religion should not obstruct religious insight into political dilemmas. Rather, faith could be marshaled to combat oppression of the poor, economic injustice, violence, pretentious political power, unbridled militarism, and rampant materialism. Hatfield wrote, “While many may seem consoled by the tendency of presidential candidates to keep their religious convictions separate from their political actions, I, for one, remain distressed.”⁷⁰ To separate faith from politics, preached members of the evangelical left, was to castrate the Church and to subordinate the cultural mandate of evangelicalism.

In the end, they charged Carter with a weak-kneed liberalism that failed to acknowledge a radical gospel. Robert Eells wrote, “The leftward inclination implicit in his compassion unfortunately remains largely circumscribed within the framework

⁶⁹ Richard Shaull, “Shoring Up the Old Order: President Carter as Baptist Leader,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 1 (January 1978), 12-14.

⁷⁰ Hatfield, “Schizophrenia on the Campaign Trail,” 23-25. A version of this article was also printed in the *Washington Star*.

of conventional American politics on specific issues. Since he is unable or unwilling to transcend this framework, his program can hardly be labeled radically *christian*. ... If he is taking them down the road of moderate liberalism, closely linked with conventional politics, I must regrettably part company with him.”⁷¹ *Sojourners* filled its pages with a litany of astonishingly critical articles, most of which argued that Carter’s progressive politics were mired in establishment politics. William Stringfellow predicted that Carter would only perpetuate “the extraordinary principalities which have flourished as this society has become a technocracy, like the CIA, the Pentagon, the FBI and the whole cabal of secret police and security agencies, and, further the so-called private principalities—the multinational corporations, the utilities, the conglomerates—which are politically associated with the military, intelligence and police powers.”⁷² Wes Michaelson’s bitter list of shortcomings stretched for pages—that Carter’s first criticism of the Vietnam War on moral grounds came not until late 1975; that Carter affirmed Harry Truman’s decision to drop an atomic bomb on Hiroshima; that Carter was only a “lunch counter civil rights” politician who failed to address economic nature of racial inequality; that he was “captive of a generally conservative business ideology.” Carter’s anti-establishment claims and his public persona of being a principled evangelical, a down-home Georgian, and walking in his inaugural parade, were farces. His disingenuous claims of being an outsider belied the fact that he was “intimately connected to corporate wealth and power.” He might have a reputation for not

⁷¹ Eells, “Jimmy Carter and the Public Trust,” 11.

⁷² William Stringfellow, “An Open Letter to Jimmy Carter,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 8 (October 1976), 7-8.

compromising, but “this seems more often motivated by a stubborn urge for self-vindication than by any unyielding commitment to moral principle.”⁷³ Michaelson concluded that Carter was a master politician: “He touches all the bases, calculates, manipulates and compromises adroitly.”⁷⁴

If the evangelical left could not stomach the “hollow righteousness of the smiling messiah who would be king,” who then would they support?⁷⁵ Certainly not Ford, whose politics resonated even less than Carter’s. Some suggested writing in the name of a third choice, such as Eugene McCarthy or “someone even more radical like Mark Hatfield.” Most suggested sitting out the election and waiting for an authentic candidate who would apply his faith to his politics. This wasn’t abandoning the political world, they insisted, especially if “it can be done as an act of positive protest, not just apathy.”⁷⁶ After all, wrote Wallis, if there is no real difference between Carter and Ford or the political parties, if “the importance, the integrity, and the legitimacy of the American electoral process” was in question, then voting was the equivalent of “cheap grace.” “To be saved,” wrote Wallis, “all you must do is raise your hand; to be politically responsible, all you must do is pull the lever.”⁷⁷ A more authentic political

⁷³ Jim Wallis, “The ‘Outsider’ in the White House,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 1 (January 1978), 3-6.

⁷⁴ Michaelson, “Piety and Ambition,” 17. Young evangelicals particularly abhorred Carter’s rhetoric on the promise of America and human goodness. See Jim Wallis, “The Election and Cheap Grace,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 8 (October 1976), 3-4; Michaelson, “Piety and Ambition,” 16; Paul Henry quoted in Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 305; Wesley Pippert, “Carter’s Background,” *Christianity Today* 21, No. 1 (October 8, 1976), 42.

⁷⁵ Michaelson, “Piety and Ambition,” 14-18.

⁷⁶ Eells, “Jimmy Carter and the Public Trust,” 11-14. Also see David Gill, “Radical Christian,” *Right On* 8, No. 2 (September-October 1976), 5. “I just can’t get excited about the options of Carter or Ford; and Eugene McCarthy, who *does* represent a creative alternative, doesn’t stand a chance.”

⁷⁷ Jim Wallis, “The Election and Cheap Grace,” 3-4. Wallis would later boast, inaccurately, that *Sojourners* was the only major evangelical publication that did not endorse Jimmy Carter in the 1976 election. See Jim Wallis, *Agenda for Biblical People* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 252.

witness was to enact a more active resistance to the “purpose and power of death in the political realm.”⁷⁸ That might involve protest, conscientious objection, or simply not voting. “Abstention from voting may be, in 1976, a political act of maturity, and of conscience and faith,” echoed Stringfellow. Reformed members of the evangelical left, though less willing to abandon the voting booth, also found the prospect of a Carter White House troubling. One urged fellow critics to pray for Carter if he wins, “for if he wins and stumbles, it could undermine our efforts to discover and implement a normative politics for North American society. In terms of the coming of the Kingdom, this could be the most unfortunate legacy of the Carter phenomenon.”⁷⁹ Many in the evangelical left asserted that a Carter presidency could sabotage the promise of evangelical politics.

A brief respite after the election itself turned back into bitter criticism midway through Carter’s presidency.⁸⁰ Carter’s continued insistence as president on using a rhetoric that separated faith from politics fed the ire of evangelical radicals, freshly

⁷⁸ William Stringfellow, “An Open Letter to Jimmy Carter,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 8 (October 1976), 7-8. Also see John Howard Yoder, “The National Ritual: Biblical Realism and the Elections,” *Sojourners* 5, No. 8 (October 1976), 29-30.

⁷⁹ Eells, “Jimmy Carter and the Public Trust,” 12.

⁸⁰ For moderately hopeful statements regarding Carter in the early years of his presidency, see two articles by Gordon College professors. William Harper, while critical of his stress on economic growth, lauded Carter for his “enthusiastic and comprehensive” reforms in energy policy. His proposals seemed rooted in faith, and his “instincts” are very good, suggested Harper. Jim Skillen, while wondering if we are “merely being impressed with flashes of novel rhetoric and a flurry of superficial activity that will add up to little in the way of substantial change,” lauded Carter’s recognition of international interdependence, his governing style of openness and humility, and his concern for human rights, democratic freedom, arms limitations, and international economic justice. All these concerns “appear to be genuinely rooted in, and bound together by, a Christian conscience that requires actual, concrete justice in the world.” See Harper, “Carter and the Homefront,” *Vanguard* 7, No. 4 (July-August 1977), 10-16; Skillen, “Carter and the World,” *Vanguard* 7, No. 4 (July-August 1977), 10-16; Rob Hromas, “Executive Morality,” *Wheaton Record* 101, No. 19 (March 28, 1977), 5; Osner Fevry, “A Carter Doctrine Is Born,” *Wheaton Record* 101, No. 22 (April 22, 1977), 5; David Apol, “Equivalent of War,” *Wheaton Record* 101, No. 24 (May 6, 1977), 4; Paul Marshall, “Before You Get Rid of Carter,” *Vanguard* 9, No. 5 (September-October 1979), 21.

freshly disillusioned by the disintegration of the progressive front. They revived their condemnation of Carter, citing fresh evidence of his capitulation to the constraints of mainstream politics. “Instead of the born-again populist peanut farmer we were promised,” complained Wallis, “it seems we have gotten yet another president who is both a creature and a captive of the not-so-born-again power structure that has been running America for a very long time.”⁸¹ Carter’s record, wrote Bernard Zylstra in *Vanguard*, “is marred by a lack of insight into major political issues, by an inability to give leadership, and by a moralistic application of his Christian commitment.”⁸²

Moderates, with whom Carter’s policies most resonated, grew increasingly dismayed by his tactical failures.⁸³ Joe Bayly, puzzled by Carter’s lack of concern for persecuted Christians in Taiwan, Russia, and Vietnam, wondered, “Does Jimmy Carter have a Christian world-and-life view, or is he one of those numerous ‘born-again’ evangelicals who sees life on this earth as a parenthesis between conversion and death (or the Second Coming)?”⁸⁴ Some worried that Carter’s preoccupation with efficiency might sabotage his attempts at compassion.⁸⁵ Others denounced Carter for

⁸¹ Wallis, “Outsider in the White House,” 5.

⁸² Bernard Zylstra, “Jimmy Carter Is the Issue,” *Vanguard* 10, No. 5 (September-October 1980), 4.

⁸³ On Carter’s political misjudgments, see a series of short essays on the 1980 election by young evangelicals. R. Lavelle, a vice-president of a bank specializing in loans to the poor at low interest rates, criticizes Carter’s economic policies. Bob Cleath calls Carter “politically inept.” Nancy Barcus, a former English professor at Houghton, worries over Carter’s presiding over the inflation rate and uneven success in world affairs. Russell Hitt, who had voted for Carter in 1976, explains his decision to vote for Reagan because of Carter’s lack of legislative success, even with a Democratic congress. See “How I Think I’ll Vote,” *Eternity* 31, No. 9 (October 1980), 29-33.

⁸⁴ Joe Bayly, “Grading Carter’s Mid-Term,” *Eternity* 30, No. 3 (March 1979), 59-60. Bayly continued, “President Carter is obviously a Christian person, a moral leader in those private areas of life most prized by evangelicals ... but he is a man without Christian leanings, perhaps even commitment, in the great areas of his responsibility as President.”

⁸⁵ Stanley W. Carlson, “A Sporting Election,” *Vanguard* (October 1976), 6-10.

failing to follow through in his human rights rhetoric⁸⁶; for increasing defense spending⁸⁷; for a passive approach to the energy crisis⁸⁸; for not lobbying hard enough to pass the Equal Rights Amendment⁸⁹; for inadequate educational funding⁹⁰; for increasing the nuclear threat⁹¹; and for a failure to help the poor.⁹² “At crucial points where the Bible shows what justice means,” explained Sider, “Carter doesn’t go far enough.”⁹³

While most in the evangelical left preferred Carter to Reagan, their lack of enthusiasm betrayed an undercurrent of hostility toward the incumbent. Carter, Zylstra lamented, “perhaps represents the best the US will get in 1980.”⁹⁴ Some, as in

⁸⁶ “Urge Immediate Carter Action,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 12 (November 1977), 6; Jim Wallis, “The ‘Outsider’ in the White House,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 1 (January 1978), 3-6; Jim Stentzel, “Praising Freedom, Blessing Dictatorship: President Carter’s Message in South Korea,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 8 (August 1979), 8-10; Theodore R. Malloch, “Jimmy Carter,” in “Special Election Report,” *Public Justice Newsletter* (May 1980), 1-2; John A. Bernbaum and Steve Moore, “Should the U.S. Boycott Ugandan Coffee,” *HIS* 39, No. 2 (November 1978), 6-10, 12; Eells, *Lonely Walk*, 159-160. “Open Letter to President Carter,” *Vanguard* 7, No. 3 (May-June 1977), 3; Phil M. Shenk, “Sermon Opposes Carter Aid Plan,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 4 (April 1980), 7; and Zylstra, “Jimmy Carter Is the Issue,” 4.

⁸⁷ Wallis, “‘Outsider’ in the White House,” 5; “Despite a Campaign Promise,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 5 (May 1978), 9.

⁸⁸ Wes Michaelson, “Carter’s Energy Plan: Conserving the American Way,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 7 (July 1977), 4-7; Christiane Carolson-Thies, “Moratorium on Justice: The Costs of a Pipeline for Alaska’s Natural Gas,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 8 (August 1977), 33-34; “President Carter and the Energy War,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 10 (August-September 1979), 1-3.

⁸⁹ Jim Stentzel, “Equal Rights for Women,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 9 (October 1977), 7; “Sidelines,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 3 (March 1978), 11.

⁹⁰ “President Carter Opposes Tuition Tax Credit Proposal,” *Public Justice Newsletter* (May 1978), 1.

⁹¹ Jim Wallis, “Hope and the Anti-Nuclear Movement,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 11 (November 1977), 3-6; Wes Michaelson, “Parable of Moral Paralysis,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 5 (May 1978), 5-7; “Out of the Mouths of Babes,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 9 (September 1978), 30-31; Eells, *Lonely Walk*, 171-172; Jim Wallis, “Rumors of Wars,” *Eternity* 31, No. 6 (June 1980), 17-18.

⁹² Wallis, “Outsider in the White House,” 5; Wes Michaelson, Jim Stentzel, and Jim Wallis, “The Sojourners Community: A Case Study in Committed Journalism,” paper submitted to Department of Communications committee meeting of the World Council of Churches in Gilon, Switzerland, March 1-10, 1978, in Box 4, Folder “Articles and Critiques about Sojourners,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

⁹³ Quoted in Patterson, “Evangelicals and the Presidential Elections,” 50.

⁹⁴ Zylstra, “Jimmy Carter Is the Issue,” 4. Also see James Skillen, “How I Think I’ll Vote,” *Eternity* 31, No. 9 (October 1980), 32-33. Skillen wrote, “Reagan’s inexperience and nostalgic rhetoric

1976, refused to vote entirely.⁹⁵ Some cast ballots for John Anderson.⁹⁶ Some pined for a Hatfield presidency.⁹⁷ Others cast a vote for Carter even as they leveled withering critiques at the Democratic candidate, who by 1980 was clearly out of sync with the rising evangelical impulse to tie faith closely to politics.

Conservative southern evangelicals, until recently preoccupied with promoting evangelical identity, also nurtured the impulse to fuse faith and politics. The sharp decline in ticket-splitting from 1976 to 1980—that is, voting for Carter at the top of the ticket and then for Republicans elsewhere on their ballots—suggested that support for Carter was an anomaly rooted in evangelical identity.⁹⁸ Carter may have delayed the long transition of southern evangelicals from the Democratic to Republican parties, but only briefly. Evangelicals’ commitment to the first born-again president in a generation faded when Carter, clearly comfortable speaking of his own spirituality in the 1976 campaign, failed, in the eyes of some conservative evangelicals, to carry through in his rhetoric.⁹⁹ Having enjoyed widespread

will do little to attract me unless Carter and Anderson become even worse prospects than they are now.”

⁹⁵ Some Anabaptist-oriented evangelicals reverted back to non-voting after their 1972 votes for McGovern, whom they voted for only because he would have ended the war immediately. See Danny Collum, “What’s at Stake ... And What Isn’t: A Readers’ Guide to the Presidential Election,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 8 (September 1984), 12-16; Art Gish, “Election Reflections,” *Post-American* 2, No. 1 (January-February 1973), 3.

⁹⁶ Kathryn Lindscoog, “How I Think I’ll Vote,” 34; Shirley Nelson, “How I Think I’ll Vote,” 35; Karin Granberg-Michaelson, “How I Think I’ll Vote,” 29-30. Of Anderson and the other candidates, Granberg-Michaelson wrote, “I’m afraid all the potential presidents are wearing grey. ... Washington seems to have a way of lulling each president into the ambiguous middle-ground conservatism that threatens no one.”

⁹⁷ Lindscoog, “How I Think I’ll Vote,” 34.

⁹⁸ On the predominance of ticket-splitting in 1976, see Kraakevik, “White Evangelical Populists,” 222-223.

⁹⁹ Evangelicals by now had enjoyed a short tradition of believing politicians—for example, Mark Hatfield and Harold Hughes—citing Scripture and of explicitly explaining how their faith informed their politics. In his autobiography, Hughes wrote, “More and more I found myself being led by

evangelical support in 1976 without having campaigned for it systematically, he failed to cultivate his religious constituency.¹⁰⁰ Evangelicals noted that Carter failed to hold religious services in the White House or appoint evangelicals to high office.¹⁰¹

Scripture in my work; there were passages applying to every problem. Two of them ‘Thou shalt not kill’ and ‘Vengeance is mine ... saith the Lord’ guided me in my fight against the death penalty as I stressed that capital punishment defeats the ultimate will of God that every man is redeemable, whether he is a murderer, rapist, or whatever.” See Harold Hughes, *The Man from Ida Grove* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1979), 210, 234. Conversely, Carter after his election, notes Smith “made fewer explicit references to either biblical passages or to his own faith in speeches and public statements than many other presidents, including Lincoln, FDR, Eisenhower, and Reagan.” Moreover, he avoided citing specific biblical passages to defend his political positions. See Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 296-298.

¹⁰⁰ Adviser Mark Siegel, noting the easy support of evangelicals despite cultivating few evangelical leaders, explained that “Carter represented a return to morality and ethics, but we did not exploit them in any way. We appealed to evangelicals on an individual basis, with the exception of Ruth, who did some work through her organizations.” Quoted in Nesmith, *New Republican Coalition*, 59, 62-65. Nesmith argues that Carter’s advisers, generally untaught about religious issues, tended to treat evangelical southerners more as southerners than evangelicals. When Southern Baptist minister Robert Maddox volunteered in 1977 to help Carter retrieve the evangelical vote, the president personally dismissed the suggestion. See Flint and Porter, “Faith-Based Politics,” 35. Carter regretted a visit by a Southern Baptist delegation early in his presidency. He was criticized primarily by Southern Baptists, one of whom sent a missive to Carter. Jack Harwell, editor of the *Christian Index*, warned of his “grave concern” that Carter would be “accused of establishing some kind of Baptist Vatican on the Potomac.” Southern Baptists had opposed Kennedy “because they thought he would do with the Roman Catholic hierarchy just this very thing.” Their denomination had long stood “as absolute champions of religious liberty and separation of church and state.” It was, in fact, “our greatest contribution to Christendom.” Carter heeded this advice, writing that “Baptists have no reason to be concerned about my actions in the future.” Quoted in Flint and Porter, “Faith-Based Politics,” 36.

¹⁰¹ For a striking contrast between the Ford and Carter White Houses, see the thick description of religious activities in James C. Hefley and Edward E. Plowman, *Washington: Christians in the Corridors of Power* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1975), 59-68. On religious services in the White House, see Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 308. On the few evangelicals working in the White House, see Weyrich in Freedman, “Carter and the Religious Right,” 238; Maddox, *Preacher at the White House*, 136-137; Marley, *Pat Robertson*, 49. In his exit interview from the Carter White House on December 8, 1980, religious liaison Bob Maddox reported, “Mr. Carter did not appoint any noted evangelical conservatives to high places, thus further spurning the born-again community even more. Some on his staff, in their efforts to help Mr. Carter be the President of all the people—not just the conservative Christians—did shunt some religious people aside. In shielding the President from some people and events, his staff seriously alienated him from many who might have stayed with him, had they received a bit more attention.” InterVarsity’s Joseph Bayly complained, “Are there no evangelical Christians, bright Democrats, to whom the President could turn for advice or choose for appointments?” See Bayly, “Grading Carter’s Mid-Term,” 60. Pat Robertson complained that Carter had surrounded himself with “backsliders” such as Hamilton Jordan and Andrew Young. See Flake, *Redemptorrama*, 6-7, 136. Many evangelicals felt that they had less access to the White House under Carter than they did under Johnson and Nixon. See Flint and Porter, “Faith-Based Politics,” 36. Not only were there few evangelicals in the White House, right-wing fundraiser Richard Viguerie told evangelicals that Carter had “surrounded himself with many people who routinely rejected Biblical principles regarding sexual behavior, family responsibility, abortion, and other key moral issues.” See Viguerie, *The New Right: We’re Ready to Lead*, rev. ed. (Falls Church, Va.: The Viguerie Co., 1981),

Most of all they resented how captive Carter seemed to the Democratic machine. They saw Carter reassure, usually by invoking church-state separation in regard to abortion and school prayer, an increasingly fragile New Deal Democratic coalition of labor, Catholics, women, and African-Americans suspicious of Carter's evangelical language.¹⁰² As the campaign matured, Carter moved, according to Aldrich, "ever closer to its mainstream, until at last, in his attempts to unify and solidify the Party around his banner, he sounded very like a typical Democratic nominee."¹⁰³ This pattern of deference to "secular humanists," as some conservative evangelicals termed the Democrats, persisted through Carter's presidency. Carter, they noted,

125. Robert Maddox, who took a job with the administration in 1978 as a speechwriter, remembered, "One leader, in particular, who had worked with other administrations, both Republican and Democratic, nearly exploded into the telephone about the difficulty he and others were having getting anything done with and in the Carter White House. Checking a bit further I found other leaders echoing his chagrin—no access, no correspondence, no phone calls returned, apparent insensitivity to the point of animosity on the part of the White House staff. This unsettled me terribly, given the high profile President Carter enjoyed as a religious leader." See Maddox, *Preacher at the White House*, 135.

¹⁰² See Andrew Greeley, "Catholics Should Be Fearful of Carter," *Catholic Review* 41, No. 25 (August 27, 1976), A5; Andrew Greeley, "How Come It Took So Long?" *Chicago Tribune*, August 3, 1976, A3; Greeley, "Jimmy Asked for Trouble," *Chicago Tribune*, August 5, 1976, A4. "Should Catholics be afraid of the Jimmy Carter-Walter Mondale ticket?" asked Greeley. "You bet your sweet life they should. Carter represents the old tradition of Southern populism, which was fundamentally and often viciously anti-Catholic." In October 1976 Carter wrote to the president of the American Humanist Association that "an important tenet of the Baptist faith is complete separation of church and state. I hold this view. And I have not found it to impose a strain either on my personal religious convictions or on my performance in public office. ... I've never used political office to force my religious convictions on someone else. ... So there would be no problem in my Presidency in keeping separate religion and government. I would be a strong defender of the First Amendment and interpret it very strictly." Quoted in "The 1976 Election," *Church and State* 29 (December 1976), 4. For more on church-state separation, see E. Brooks Holifield, "The Three Strands of Jimmy Carter's Religion," *The New Republic* 174 (June 5, 1976), 15-17. Carter repeatedly reassured critics that "no church leaders would determine his decisions." See Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 297. James Wooten wrote in the *New York Times Magazine* that "Carter does not seem to allow his deep religious convictions to impede the fulfillment of his public responsibilities." Quoted in Mark Hatfield, "Schizophrenia on the Campaign Trail," *Sojourners* (October 1976), 23. In 1982, Carter's religious liaison Robert Maddox took a job as the executive director for Americans United for Separation of Church and State. For other writings on the subject, see Maddox, *Preacher at the White House*, 186, 201-211; Maddox, *Separation of Church and State: Guarantor of Religious Freedom* (New York: Crossroad, 1987). On hostility to evangelicalism by Democratic elites, see Kucharsky, *Man from Plains*, 9-10.

¹⁰³ John H. Aldrich, *Before the Convention: Strategies and Choices in Presidential Nomination Campaigns* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 192, 197.

declined to meet with anti-abortion groups during his presidency, even though he was personally anti-abortion, or otherwise explicitly appeal to evangelicals for support.¹⁰⁴

Carter especially played to the party's base in 1979 and early 1980 as Edward Kennedy emerged as a threat to win the Democratic nomination in 1980.

That Carter seemed to be downplaying his evangelical identity, however, paled in comparison with conservative evangelicals' primary complaint—that the administration was failing to deliver policy results.¹⁰⁵ A shared theology and religious language, politically conservative evangelicals discovered during Carter's presidency, did not guarantee a shared political agenda. Increasing numbers of evangelicals discovered that Carter held different views on abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment, school busing, funding and taxation of private schools, and prayer in public schools.¹⁰⁶ Feeling more like insiders than ever before and needing Carter less to justify their own political relevance, conservative evangelicals increased their

¹⁰⁴ Nesmith, *New Republican Coalition*, 61-62, 68. "The blacks, the McGovern supporters, Ralph Nader and his follower, the environmentalists, all let President Carter know almost daily that they supported him in 1976 and that they wanted their just rewards," explained evangelical advocate Richard Vigurie. "But the born-again Christians asked for nothing but to be left alone. And what was Jimmy Carter's response to his biggest and most important single issue group of supporters? Not only did the Carter administration ignore the born-again Christians, it actively and aggressively sought to hurt the Christian movement in America." See Vigurie, *New Right*, 124.

¹⁰⁵ For perhaps the clearest example of the trajectory from exuberance over a born-again candidate to disillusionment over Carter's policy positions, see Ron Boehme and Rus Walton, *What About Jimmy Carter?* (Washington: Third Century Publishers, 1976), 35, 62-108, especially chapter five, "The Issues Are the Issue," 29-45. "The moral stances of Jimmy Carter, especially in the areas of abortion, the ERA, Gay Rights ... these were saddening to me" (35). For an extensive list of policy comparisons between Carter and Ford, see pp. 62-105. Boehme concluded, "*I cannot vote for Jimmy Carter. I embrace him as a brother in Christ. And I will pray for him ... but I will not vote for him to be president of this land that I love*" (108).

¹⁰⁶ For a more detailed discussion of these issues, see chapter entitled "The Emergence of Religiously Related Issues," in Nesmith, *New Republican Coalition*, 39-57. On Carter-conservative evangelical disputes over taxation and private schools, see Vigurie, *The New Right*, 124; Albert Menendez, *Evangelicals at the Ballot Box* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1996), 135; Ronald B. Flowers, "President Jimmy Carter, Evangelicalism, Church-State Relations, and Civil Religion," *Journal of Church and State* 25, No. 1 (Winter 1983), 118-119; Kraakevik, "White Evangelical Populists," 182.

criticisms in 1978 and 1979. The criticism finally came to a crescendo in the evangelical press during the 1980 election cycle.¹⁰⁷

The issue of abortion illuminated some of the salient elements of conservative evangelical political mobilization during Carter's presidency. Ambivalent toward abortion in the 1960s, evangelicals built a more strongly anti-abortion stance through the following decade.¹⁰⁸ Evangelical activism in the late 1970s grew largely through Catholic influence and the advocacy of C. Everett Koop and Francis Schaeffer.¹⁰⁹ Scenes of Koop standing along the shores of the Dead Sea surrounded by thousands

¹⁰⁷ Farley, "Politicalization of the American Evangelical Press," 79. On evangelicals as new insiders, see Stephen V. Monsma, "What Makes an Ideal President?" *Eternity* 31, No. 3 (March 1980), 19. (19-21). Monsma wrote, "Not many years ago evangelical Christians as a group were largely spectators in this presidential election process. ... All this has changed."

¹⁰⁸ The number of articles from 1966 to 1981 in *Christianity Today*, *Christian Life*, *Moody Monthly*, and *Decision* was 405, an astonishingly high number given how few were published in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Articles on prayer in public schools followed at 273, pornography at 152, homosexual rights at 150, and women's rights and ERA at 102. See Farley, "Politicalization of the American Evangelical Press," 231. Robert Johnston similarly notes that "in a period from 1972 to 1977, of the better than 700 editorials in the magazine, more than one-third involved public issues. *Christianity Today's* favorite topic during this period was its anti-abortion campaign." See Johnston, *Evangelicals at an Impasse*, 85. On ambivalence over abortion in the 1960s, see "Abortion: 'Holy Innocents?'" *Christianity Today* 14 No. 16 (May 8, 1970), 39-40; "Abortion—Is It Moral?" *Christian Life* 29, No. 5 (September 1967), 32-33, 50-53; "Evangelical Scholars Endorse Birth Control," *Christianity Today* 12, No. 25 (September 27, 1968), 33-34; Farley, "The Politicalization of the American Evangelical Press," 111-113; Scott Flipse, "Below-the-Belt Politics," 134-135. The 1968 "Protestant Affirmation on the Control of Human Reproduction," according to Flipse, was "carefully worded to affirm the gravity of abortion while placing evangelicals firmly within the political mainstream on 'the abortion question.'" In fact, the document committed evangelicals to support wider legal access to abortion for "individual, familial ... societal" and medical reasons. While it denounced abortion on demand, it did seek to recognize the "social good" in cases of complex family situations. The fetus was "developing life" that did not necessarily have "a soul at conception." The text met with general approval from diverse segments of evangelicalism including young evangelicals, Billy Graham, and more conservative evangelical leaders. For the text of "Protestant Affirmation," see *Christianity Today* 13, No. 3 (November 8, 1968), 18-19. For a sample of the increasing number of anti-abortion statements in the 1970s, see "The War on the Womb," *Christianity Today* 14 (June 5, 1970), 824-825; Harold Lindsell, "Abortion and the Court," *Christianity Today* 17 (February 16, 1973), 32-33; "Financing Murder," *Christianity Today* 15 (January 1971), 418.

¹⁰⁹ C. Everett Koop, Francis Schaeffer, Harold O.J. Brown, and Robert Holbrook joined the editorial board of *Human Life Review*. On the evangelical-Catholic coalition, see Flipse, "Below-the-Belt Politics," 139. For a description of the nationwide Whatever-Happened-to-the-Human-Race tour, see *Eternity* (September 1979), 5; *Eternity* (November 1979), 41. On Schaeffer's significant influence on Jerry Falwell regarding abortion, see Jerry Falwell, *Strength for the Journey: An Autobiography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 335

of baby dolls—representing fetuses—and magazine covers screaming “Abortion Exclusive!” bombarded evangelicals.¹¹⁰ *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* suggested that toleration of abortion, the “keystone” of the sanctity of life, would lead to abuse of the handicapped, genetic engineering, and widespread euthanasia.¹¹¹ The Schaeffers screened a film version of *Whatever Happened* before thousands in major cities across the nation in 1979.

Carter, like Koop, Schaeffer, and millions of evangelicals, personally opposed abortion. As abortion, however, gradually became a considerable evangelical political concern in the late 1970s, Carter failed to follow suit. While calling the practice “wrong,” explaining that *Roe v. Wade* was “one instance where my own beliefs were in conflict with the laws of this country,” and supporting a ban of Medicaid funding for abortions, Carter refused to work toward constitutionally banning abortion.¹¹² Many evangelicals denounced Carter’s “personally against, but pro-choice” stance.¹¹³ Franky Schaeffer remembers that abortion “became *the* evangelical issue. ... The anger we stirred up at the grass roots was not feigned but heartfelt. And at first it was not about partisan politics. It had everything to do with genuine horror at the

¹¹⁰ See advertisement for *Moody Monthly* in *Eternity* (May 1980), 5. For stories of botched abortion, see Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened*, 41-52.

¹¹¹ Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened*, 31. On infanticide, see Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened*, 55-87.

¹¹² Andrew R. Flint and Joy Porter, “Jimmy Carter: The Re-emergence of Faith-Based Politics and the Abortion Rights Issue,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 35, No. 1 (March 2005), 38. Carter’s middle ground was a fairly typical young evangelical position. *Sojourners* in 1976 proposed a compromise to the abortion impasse, proposing legal recognition for the fetus, but excluding criminal sanctions “as a way of protecting that humanity.” In essence, the federal government would have a clear mandate to protect the unborn through “positive alternatives to abortion” such as adoption, pregnancy counseling, ending discrimination against pregnant women, and increased maternal and infant health benefits. See “Compromise Approach Advocated to Ease Abortion Controversy,” released by Religious News Service, December 13, 1976, 11-12. Copy in Box 4, Folder “News Releases and Post-American,” *Sojourners Collection*, WCSC.

¹¹³ Marley, *Pat Robertson*, 42.

procedure of abortion.”¹¹⁴ Evangelical protesters—one at the 1976 Democratic National Convention carried a sign that declared “Carter is nothing but a 621-month fetus”—began to plague his presidency.¹¹⁵ Later in the administration “Abort Carter” pins proliferated. Michael Gerson, who as a high school student had so staunchly supported Carter, turned on the president while an undergraduate at Wheaton College. As abortion became singularly important, Gerson, who might have continued voting Democratic otherwise, turned to Reagan and the Republicans in 1980. “I suppose I was typical of evangelicals who’d supported Carter and were dismayed by the hardening of the parties on social issues,” he remembers.¹¹⁶ Likewise, Ed Dobson, a Baptist churchman and future colleague of Jerry Falwell, while continuing to consider Carter “personally upright,” increasingly felt “a gap between what Scripture taught—about unborn life, especially—and Carter’s political stand.”¹¹⁷ Gerson, Dobson, and other evangelical conservatives particularly opposed Carter’s hiring of Sarah Weddington, the attorney who argued in favor of abortion in the *Roe v. Wade* case, and the feisty Margaret Costanza, an outspoken feminist and pro-choice advocate.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Schaeffer, *Crazy for God*, 289.

¹¹⁵ On Carter’s difficulties in the Iowa caucuses and elsewhere with evangelicals and Catholics opposed to abortion, see Schram, *Running for President*, 11-12; Edward E. Plowman, “The Democrats: God in the Garden?” *Christianity Today* 20, No. 22 (August 6, 1976), 34-36; Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 307; “Flare-Up over Abortion,” *Time* (September 13, 1976), 21.

¹¹⁶ Quoted in Carl M. Cannon, “Soul of a Conservative,” *National Journal* 37, No. 20 (May 14, 2005), 1452-1461.

¹¹⁷ Edward Dobson, *Blinded by Might*, 17-18. In this confession for his errors in helping to lead the Moral Majority, Dobson wrote, “I had voted for Carter in 1976, believing him to be a serious churchman, a moral man, and a breath of fresh air following the disastrous Watergate years of the Nixon administration. When Carter had said, ‘I’ll never lie to you,’ some mocked, but I had believed him. As the Carter administration progressed, I realized not only that the president was in over his head, but that he stood for (or did not oppose) many of the things about which I felt great concern.”

¹¹⁸ Flint and Porter, “Faith-Based Politics,” 39; Freedman, “Religious Right and the Carter Administration,” 237.

Carter's equivocations on abortion equally infuriated feminists. Carter's pronouncement that "abortion is wrong" provoked a clash with pro-choice feminists at the 1976 Democratic National Convention.¹¹⁹ Then as president Carter supported the Hyde Amendment, which prohibited most Medicaid payments for abortion. Carter's Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Joseph A. Califano, a devout, pro-life Catholic, enforced these rules strictly. Presidential assistant Margaret Costanza fielded an "overwhelming number of phone calls from public interest groups, the public, and White House staff members "expressing concern and even anger" over Carter's position. Costanza urged Carter to reconsider. Carter wrote a stark "no" on her written request, adding that "My statement is actually more liberal than I feel personally." Costanza responded with a protest meeting on July 18, 1977, of nearly 40 high-level pro-choice female members of the administration. Carter, however, did not yield, and Costanza eventually resigned and was replaced by the pro-choice Weddington, a replacement no better in the eyes of alienated evangelicals.¹²⁰ Carter, at heart a non-interventionist, found himself in an untenable position regarding abortion. Applying the principle of church-state separation to abortion made sense constitutionally, even politically, but not in the context of overheated rhetoric, a rapidly diverging party system, and a religious tradition increasingly tying faith to politics.

The themes in this case study of Carter and abortion— left-wing concern over Carter's evangelical leanings and evangelical dismay over Carter's pro-choice

¹¹⁹ Flint and Porter, "Faith-Based Politics," 38; Susan M. Hartmann, "Feminism, Public Policy, and the Carter Administration," in Gary M. Fink and Hugh Davis Graham, eds., *The Carter Presidency: Policy Choices in the Post-New Deal Era* (Lawrence, Kan.: 1998), 235.

¹²⁰ Flint and Porter, "Faith-Based Politics," 39-40.

advisers and application of church-state separation—also emerged in battles over prayer in school, taxation of private schools, and the ERA. Many evangelical leaders bitterly rescinded their support of Carter. A “high official of the Southern Baptist Convention” who visited Carter in the Oval Office, told him, “We are praying, Mr. President, that you will abandon secular humanism as your religion.”¹²¹ Rick Scarborough, founder of the conservative Vision America, remembers, “The first time I voted was for Carter. The second time was for ‘anybody but Carter,’ because he had betrayed everything I hold dear.”¹²² After the White House Conference on the Family in 1979, Jerry Falwell accused Carter of not being willing to stand up for the “traditional family,” of being among the “godless, spineless leaders” who were leaving “America depraved, decadent, and demoralized.”¹²³ Pat Robertson, who had interviewed Carter on the 700 Club television show and sought to track “the progress of world events under the presidency of a Christian,” likewise turned on Carter. The evangelical media titan complained of broken promises, too few evangelicals in the White House, a weak foreign policy, energy policy, tax reform, and the new Department of Education. Robertson, who threw his support behind Reagan in 1980, came to the conclusion that right politics mattered more than a politician’s faith.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Jimmy Carter, *Living Faith* (New York: Times Books, 1996), 35.

¹²² David D. Kirkpatrick, “The Evangelical Crack Up,” *New York Times*, October 28, 2007. On Louis Sheldon, a 1976 Carter supporter who went on to chair the Traditional Values Coalition, see Laurence I. Barrett, “Pulpit Politics,” *Time* (August 31, 1992).

¹²³ Jerry Falwell, “Introduction,” in Vigurie, *New Right*. For more on clashes between Falwell and Carter, see Patterson, “Evangelicals and the Presidential 1972, 1976, and 1980,” 55; Flake, *Redemptorama*, 213.

¹²⁴ “In the early 1970s, Robertson had no dealings with Mormon politicians like Utah’s senator Orrin Hatch, yet by 1980 the senator’s conservative political pedigree was all that mattered. Meanwhile on the 700 Club Mormons were still portrayed as a dangerous cult.” See Marley, *Pat Robertson*, 39-53. For a similar statement from a young evangelical on the faith-policy issue, see

Robertson and Falwell represented a louder, wealthier set of evangelical leaders who easily drowned out the remaining muted evangelical support of Carter. The new religious right mobilized in 1980 against the sitting president. Richard Viguerie compiled lists of conservative donors. Paul Weyrich, Howard Phillips, and Jerry Falwell founded the Moral Majority, teaming up with Catholics and Mormons, groups that evangelicals in past decades had derided as heretical, to vote against a born-again candidate. The Christian Voice Moral Government Fund placed newspaper advertisements declaring, “In 1976 millions of Christians provided Jimmy Carter with his edge of victory. This time things will be different. Jimmy Carter has betrayed the Christian community on prayer in the schools, the ERA, abortion, ‘gay’ rights, and on Christian schools. Governor Reagan will win the majority of the newly awakened Christian vote in 1980 (we will help see to that), and in so doing, win the election. We believe that he is the only candidate who can do so.”¹²⁵ Falwell purchased anti-Carter advertisements on tiny radio stations in the Midwest and South.¹²⁶ As the campaign sizzled, Bob Billings left his job with Moral Majority, which had enjoyed stunning growth from 300,000 members in mid-1980 to over 2 million by Election Day, to serve as the religious adviser to Reagan.¹²⁷ Conservative evangelicalism seemed to be merging with Reagan and the Republican Party.

Wesley Pippert, *Memo for 1976: Some Political Options* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1974), 21-25.

¹²⁵ Perry Deane Young, *God’s Bullies: Native Reflections on Preachers and Politics* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1982), 34; Freedman, “The Religious Right and the Carter Administration,” 245.

¹²⁶ Michael Duffy, “Jerry Falwell, Political Innovator,” *Time* (May 15, 2007).

¹²⁷ Jorstad, *Evangelicals in the White House*, 150; Freedman, “The Religious Right and the Carter Administration,” 251-252. Moral Majority claimed a membership of 4-8 million. On Bright and Reagan, see Turner, “Selling Jesus to Modern America,” 456-457.

Carter responded to the evangelical insurgency only late in the election, and then only hesitantly.¹²⁸ Maddox sent a campaign brochure to 250,000 ministers late in the campaign, invited seven conservative evangelical leaders to the White House, and addressed the National Religious Broadcasters convention in 1980. These overtures, appreciated by conservative evangelicals who said that they felt welcomed for the first time in Carter's presidency, still fell short of the massive campaign launched by his competitor.¹²⁹ Reagan, who enticed evangelicals with conservative policy stances on abortion, school prayer, and tuition tax credits, told the National Religious Broadcasters convention, "I know you can't endorse me, but I endorse you," a sentiment that Carter seemed unwilling to articulate during his four years as president. While pockets of Carter support remained, many evangelicals who voted for Carter out of evangelical solidarity in 1976 defected to John Anderson and Reagan.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Maddox remembers, "President Carter and most of us in the White House were loath to talk about a religious strategy for the election. In fact, only rarely did we persuade President Carter to make any direct political overture to the religious community, so sensitive was he to the cherished Baptist principle of separation of church and state." Late in the campaign Maddox and fellow adviser Tom Laney devised "a rather elaborate religious strategy, but Carter and his staff never followed through. See Maddox, *Preacher at the White House*, 157-158.

¹²⁹ Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 318; "Carter Tells Evangelists That He Is Born Again," *New York Times*, January 22, 1980, p. A17; Maddox, *Preacher in the White House*, 158, 164; Freedman, "The Religious Right and the Carter Administration," 247. For original sources on Carter's tardy efforts to reach evangelical conservatives, see "Religious Matters" files in the White House central files and in the Robert Maddox religious liaison files in the Jimmy Carter Library in Atlanta, Ga.

¹³⁰ On the substantial support for Anderson at Wheaton, despite his pro-choice stance, see Donna Reifsnnyder, "Anderson Addresses Vocal Crowd," *Wheaton Record* 104, No. 17 (March 14, 1980), 1; Craig Swanson, "Anderson Alternative," *Wheaton Record* 105, No. 7 (October 31, 1980), 5. For examples of remaining support for Carter, including Southern Baptists such as Jimmy Allen; Pentecostals such as Jim Bakker, Oral Roberts, and R. Douglas Wead; and a minority of evangelical college students and faculty, see Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 318; Freedman, "Religious Right and the Carter Administration," 250. On campaign support and a list of "Academics for Carter" at Wheaton College, see Mark Eastburg, "Academic Connotation," *Wheaton Record* (November 7, 1980), 5; Denise Hayworth, "Delegate for the President Outlines Carter's Strengths," *Wheaton Record* 104, No. 17 (March 14, 1980), 3; Tim Rumberger, "Lindblade Questions Carter in Backyard Town Gathering," *Wheaton Record* 105, No. 4 (October 10, 1980), 2; Maribeth Vander Weele, "Mondale

When the votes were counted on the night of November 4, 1980, Reagan won a decisive victory, earning 51% of the votes to Carter's 41% and Anderson's 11%. While recession, inflation, the energy crisis, the Iran hostage situation, and an unprecedented 28% approval rating contributed to Carter's defeat, many evangelicals agreed with columnist Michael Novak that the incumbent was "inept, incompetent, and amateurish" and would "bring piety into disrepute."¹³¹ Scholars estimate that a mobilized evangelicalism registered about 2 million new voters. 60% of them voted for Reagan in 1980.¹³² That translated into a shift of between 5 to 7.5 million evangelical voters from Carter to Reagan.¹³³ Though not large enough to single-handedly give Reagan the win, the shift was nonetheless impressive.¹³⁴

Discusses International Policy," *Wheaton Record* 105, No. 6 (October 24, 1980), 1; "Thanks, Jimmy," *Wheaton Record* 105, No. 12 (January 23, 1981), 5. Much of this support among evangelical progressives was driven by Carter's new emphasis on political limits and cultural crisis. Skillen applauded Carter's recognition of the "depth of the contemporary crisis" that featured unemployment, inflation, stagflation, recession rooted in faith in progress and consumption-oriented way of life; growing apathy among citizens, multiplication of competitive special interest groups, decline of political parties; failure to protect public health, environment, or just wages for third world. See Skillen, *Christians Organizing for Political Service* (Washington: Center for Public Justice, 1980), 4-6. Still, Carter's rhetoric came too little, too late for support from the evangelical left, who had already pegged Carter as too mainstream. Reagan in 1980 clearly fit the triumphalistic tone of the Moral Majority better than Carter.

¹³¹ Quoted in Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 320.

¹³² James Reichley, "Religion and the Future of American Politics," *Political Science Quarterly* 101, No. 1 (January 1986), 26. For similar statistics, see Kraakevik, "White Evangelical Populists," 291. Kraakevik confirms that Carter got more than half the evangelical vote in 1976; but got only 34% in 1980.

¹³³ Vigurie, *The New Right*, 123; Menendez, *Evangelicals at the Ballot Box*, 137, 139. Menendez writes, "In 1976 he carried 58 of 100 heavily evangelical counties in 12 states. This time he won just 16 of them." A CBS exit poll singled out "born again white Protestants" (17 percent of all voters), and found that Reagan beat Carter in this demographic 61% to 34%. In 1976 they were evenly divided. Carter especially declined among Southern Baptists, his own denomination, from 58% in 1976 to 40% in 1980. Reagan surprisingly wins in Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas, and the Carolinas. Overall, Menendez estimates that Carter lost a sixth of his born-again supporters from 1976 to 1980. Among one quasi-young evangelical/Jesus movement group, the "didn't cares" and no responses dropped to just 9% with Reagan swamping Carter by 65%, compared to an 83% Carter margin over Ford in 1976. See Peterson, "Christ, Communes and the Counterculture," 110.

¹³⁴ Stephen D. Johnson and Joseph B. Tamney, "The Christian Right and the 1980 Presidential Election," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 21, No. 2 (1982), 123-131. "In the 1980 presidential election, then, the Christian Right had virtually no influence at all. The only clear-cut

The results, then, given Carter's deep unpopularity in the general electorate and the wide margin of Reagan's victory in the election, reveal more about shifts within evangelicalism than about the role of evangelicalism in the 1980 election. When Carter again failed to adequately court evangelicals, he did it at his own peril, not recognizing a dramatic shift in the intervening four years. Policy advocacy now trumped religious identification, a shift shown in no starker relief than an election in which a divorced Hollywood actor who gave less than one percent of his earnings to charitable causes trounced a born-again Southerner with the help of a theologically diverse coalition. Having in the 1960s dismissed Catholic positions on human reproduction as "antiquated," "intolerable," even "dangerous," evangelicals by the late 1970s joined Catholics in the leadership of the National Right to Life organization, along with Mormons and Jewish rabbis.¹³⁵ Dissatisfied with the sense of religious identity offered by Carter, evangelicals opted for political resonance. Reagan promised them not greater piety, but greater spoils.

II.

Since the 1980 election of Reagan, a burgeoning historiography has examined the roots of modern conservatism and the emergence of the religious right. The earliest assessments positioned conservative evangelicals as yet another group in a long line of groups frustrated with social status and the complexities of American politics. Afflicted with a "paranoid style," the argument went, conservative

effect involved the religious political involvement dimension, and that was the opposite of the effect predicted by the media, i.e., those who wanted more political activism on the part of the church were more likely to vote for *Carter*, not Reagan." For a helpful historiographical survey on the question of whether evangelicals gave Reagan the win, see Flint and Porter, "Faith-Based Politics," 47.

¹³⁵ Flipse, "Below-the-Belt Politics," 139.

evangelicals refused to engage in political and social compromise.¹³⁶ As empirical studies on the religious right failed to discern a link between individual pathologies and the movement, however, explanations emphasizing interest-based politics emerged.¹³⁷ Scott Flipse contended that abortion was a key catalyst for evangelical political involvement.¹³⁸ Donald Matthews and Jane Sherron De Hart emphasized the ERA.¹³⁹ Others, including many religious right actors themselves, identified unfriendly public school systems and government attempts to regulate Christian schools.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (New York: Knopf, 1965); Ira Rohter, "Social Psychological Determinants of Radical Rightism," 193-237, Alan Elms, "Psychological Factors in Right-Wing Extremism," 143-163, and Mark Chesler and Richard Schmuck, "Social Psychological Characteristics of Super-Patriots," 164-192, in ed. Robert A. Schoenberger, *The American Right Wing: Readings in Political Behavior* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969); James McEvoy, *Radicals or Conservatives? The Contemporary American Right* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1971); Gary Rush, "Status Consistency and Right Wing Extremism," *American Sociological Review* 32, No. 1 (February 1967), 86-92.

¹³⁷ Louis J. Lorentzen, "Evangelical Life Style Concerns Expressed in Political Action," *Sociological Analysis* 41 (1980), 152; Pamela Conover, "The Mobilization of the New Right: A Test of Various Explanations," *Western Political Quarterly* 36 (1983), Michael Wood and Michael Hughes, "The Moral Basis of Moral Reform: Status Discontent vs. Culture and Socialization as Explanations of Anti-Pornography Social Movement Adherence," *American Sociological Review* 49 (1984), 86-99; Clyde Wilcox, "Popular Support for the New Christian Right," *Social Science Journal* 26 (1989), 55-63; Clyde Wilcox, Ted G. Jelen, and Sharon Linzey, "Rethinking the Reasonableness of the Religious Right," *Review of Religious Research* 36, No. 3 (March 1995), 271.

¹³⁸ See Flipse, "Below-the-Belt Politics: Protestant Evangelicals, Abortion, and the Foundation of the New Religious Right," in Farber and Roche, eds., *The Conservative Sixties* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), 127-141. Flipse notes that although *Roe v. Wade* was a major event in this process, it took several years for many evangelical leaders to develop an ardent opposition to the decision and to consistently oppose abortion rights.

¹³⁹ Donald G. Matthews and Jane Sherron De Hart, *Sex, Gender, and the Politics of the ERA: A State and a Nation* (New York: Oxford, 1990).

¹⁴⁰ On prayer and sex education in public schools, see Freedman, "Religious Right and the Carter Administration," 236, 239-240. On regulation of private schools, see Cromartie, Michael, ed., *No Longer Exiles: The Religious New Right in American Politics* (Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1992), 26, 52. Former Vice President of the Moral Majority Ed Dobson, as well as Paul Weyrich contend that the threat of government regulation of Christian schools in the late 1970s, not abortion, primarily pushed evangelicals and fundamentalists toward political mobilization and the formation of the Moral Majority. Dobson recalls, "I sat in the non-smoke-filled back room with the Moral Majority, and I frankly do not remember abortion ever being mentioned as a reason why we ought to do something."

Other scholars have focused on sociological trends. James Guth argued that forces of modernization and secularization moved evangelicals into the middle class, thus “raising their public consciousness and ire and equipping them with the cultural resources to mobilize.”¹⁴¹ The most recent historiography emphasizes regional sources of the religious right, specifically that the majority of leaders within the religious right come from the South: Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson from Virginia; Bill Bright from Oklahoma; and James Dobson from Louisiana. Historian Darren Dochuk traced the southern California religious right from Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas.¹⁴² Bruce Schulman and Bruce Nesmith argued that evangelicals helped transform the Sunbelt from a Democratic to Republican stronghold.¹⁴³ The strength of the religious right, recent literature suggests, lay not in the now-staid “new evangelicalism” centered in the NAE, Wheaton, and Fuller, but instead in Southern Baptism and Pentecostalism.¹⁴⁴ To be sure, many new evangelicals supported religious right initiatives, but southern fundamentalist sources primarily animated these mobilization efforts.

¹⁴¹ James L. Guth, “The Politics of the Evangelical Right: An Interpretive Essay. Paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, New York City, September 1981. For more on evangelicals’ rising economic status, see Turner, “Selling Jesus to Modern America,” 345-346; Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 187. Wuthnow notes that the self-perception of evangelicals followed suit. While in 1960, only 13 percent of the members of evangelical sects thought of themselves as part of the middle class, by 1972, 37 percent did. This trajectory reflected evangelicals’ corporate sense that they were responsible to fulfill a social, even political, mandate.

¹⁴² Darren Dochuk, “From Bible Belt to Sun Belt: Plain Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Southernization of Southern California” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 2005).

¹⁴³ See chapter entitled “White Evangelicals in the South” in Nesmith, *New Republican Coalition*, 98-100; Bruce Schulman, *The Seventies* (New York: Free Press, 2001).

¹⁴⁴ On Pentecostalism’s coming of age, see Turner, “Selling God to Modern America,” 374; Edith Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

Obscured in these important efforts to explain the religious right in terms of demography and interest politics has been discussion of the very modest, but potentially intriguing role of the political and cultural left. While several scholars have suggested that the Democratic Party, held captive by the secular left after the civil rights movement, channeled religious conservatives into the Republican Party, few have described the religious right as other than a reactionary movement to progressive and leftist politics.¹⁴⁵ This chapter explores the counterintuitive notion that the secular and evangelical left helped catalyze the religious right. Specifically, did progressive evangelicals, in offering a structural mode of thought, a dualistic application of moralism, a precedent of co-belligerency, and an activist approach to social change, encourage the rise of the religious right?

The evangelical left, for instance, preceded the religious right in its use of politics to structurally implement moral concerns.¹⁴⁶ Mark Hatfield, Jimmy Carter, Jim Wallis, and many others rejected Carl F. H. Henry's suggestion that individual conversion was the most effective catalyst for social change, that evangelicals should convert voters and leaders and then put them into positions of power. The evangelical left, in its anti-segregation and antiwar fervor, circumvented this process by seeking

¹⁴⁵ Amy Sullivan, *The Party Faithful: How and Why Democrats Are Closing the God Gap* (New York: Scribner, 2008); Kristen Luker, *Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Alan Wolfe, "The Culture War that Never Came," 41-73, in *Is There a Culture War? A Dialogue on Values and Public Life*, James Davison Hunter and Alan Wolfe, eds. (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2006).

¹⁴⁶ The evangelical left taught the religious right to think structurally not so much in its policy positions, but rather in using politics to structurally implement moral concerns. The political planks of the religious right such as opposition to forced busing, social welfare, and school prayer were more individual-oriented than attentive to social structures. For example, Moral Majority leader Tim LaHaye said in the early 1980s, "[Alleviating world hunger] is an individual issue. The real question is, Are you helping people most by giving them bread to eat? Or by leading them to a vital life-changing experience with Jesus Christ and then showing them how to become self-sufficient?" Quoted in Adeney, *God's Foreign Policy*, 130.

alliances with non-religious activists and movements to implement moral policies. They tied faith to policy, not politician. They studied and practiced the art of politicking *as* evangelicals.¹⁴⁷ They were, noted journalist Wesley Pippert in the mid-1970s, “redirecting the nation’s forty million evangelicals to a new concern for the world around them.”¹⁴⁸

If progressive evangelicals pioneered this new way of tying of faith to politics, the religious right carried on this new trajectory. Conservative evangelicals’ mobilization behind Reagan’s policies indicated a new faith in government and politics to shape the world. Despite cries for more limited government, the religious right nonetheless pushed for increased defense expenditures and heightened moral guardianship enforced by federal and state law. Moreover, voting and grass-roots activism became obligatory in a rejection of several preceding generations of evangelical apoliticism.¹⁴⁹ Finally, politics trumped the faith commitment of politicians. When Jimmy Carter, a born-again president, failed to deliver special powers or insight to the dilemmas of his office, many evangelicals decided to support a divorced Hollywood actor whose politics lined up better with their own.¹⁵⁰ This

¹⁴⁷ See materials on Evangelicals for McGovern in chapter eight.

¹⁴⁸ Pippert, *Memo for 1976*, 13.

¹⁴⁹ “I sincerely believe that NOT VOTING is a sin,” declared Bill Bright in 2003. See Turner, “Selling God to Modern America,” 461. Randall Terry, founder of Operation Rescue, similarly opined, “So what is the average Christian doing to stem the tide of moral insanity? Have you written to your congressman, voted intelligently, examined your child’s school curriculum, picketed an adult bookstore, or fought for the rights of the unborn? Are you even informed on these crucial issues? Many Christians, spiritualizing their walk with God, don’t feel called to ‘social issues.’” See Randall Terry, *Operation Rescue* (Binghamton, N.Y.: Operation Rescue, 1988), 36. This rhetoric condemning evangelicals for ignoring social structures was nearly identical to that of young evangelicals in the early 1970s. Also see p. 51-52 for his borrowing of Rebecca Pippert’s use of the phrase “out of the saltshaker.” See Pippert, *Out of the Saltshaker and into the World: Evangelism as a Way of Life* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1979).

¹⁵⁰ “One of the chief reasons for the apathy of so many Christians today, particularly ministers, is a misunderstanding of an important concept: separation of church and state. By no stretch of the

progression brought to a close the Henry era of evangelicalism, marked primarily by social regeneration rooted in individual regeneration.¹⁵¹

The religious right followed evangelical left precedents not only into partisan politics but into the use of absolutist moral rhetoric in politics. Like the evangelical left, whose ire against the incrementalist approach of consensus liberalism sparked condemnation of segregation and the Vietnam War in Manichean terms, the religious right began to use inflammatory dualistic language in regard to abortion and school prayer.¹⁵² Previously characterized by moderation—calling, for instance, the views of their political opposition “mistakes” instead of “evil”—the new rhetoric was cast in terms of right and wrong, good and evil, God’s side or Satan’s. The language of spiritual warfare, previously applied only to the atheistic Soviet Union, extended to domestic affairs. “The heated dispute over values in Western nations is simply a continuation of the age-old struggle between the principles of righteousness and the kingdom of darkness,” explained James Dobson, an early religious right leader and founder of Focus on the Family, in a prolonged defense of spiritual warfare language. “Thus when we oppose hardcore and violent pornography, the killing of unborn babies, the provision of immoral advice to teenagers, the threat of euthanasia, and so

imagination was that doctrine ever meant to separate government from God. But if the church withdraws from all government involvement, that is exactly what will result.” See Tim LaHaye, *The Battle for the Mind* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1980), 207-215.

¹⁵¹ By the mid-1980s even Henry himself confessed to the limits of this method he had articulated forty years earlier in *The Uneasy Conscience of Fundamentalism*. In a speech at Fuller Theological Seminary, Henry explained, “There was ... a notable weakness in my concentration on regeneration as the guarantee of a better world. For *Uneasy Conscience* failed to focus sharply on the indispensable role of government in preserving justice in a fallen society. Essential as regenerative forces are to transform the human will, civil government remains nonetheless a necessary instrument to constrain human beings—whatever their religious predilections—to act justly, whether they desire to do so or not.” See Henry, *Twilight of a Great Civilization: The Drift toward Neo-Paganism* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1988), 167.

¹⁵² On the Manichean language of the evangelical new leftists, see chapter six.

on, we are engage in a battle—not primarily with our philosophical opponents—but against Satan, who leads the whole world astray.”¹⁵³ To be sure, much of this dualistic rhetoric was rooted in evangelical theology. Historian Mark Noll has observed, “Conservative Protestants had grown accustomed ... to preaching in apocalyptic terms about the battle between God and Satan for the souls of human beings. It was, then, only second nature to enter politics with a similar vocabulary in which apocalyptic rhetoric was applied to the struggle between godliness and the evil forces of big government, secular humanism, the Supreme Court, the National Education Association, or the Democratic Party.”¹⁵⁴ This apocalyptic rhetoric, however, was rather new in the context of the irenic “new evangelicalism,” and the evangelical left offered a fresh precedent for the religious right in the use of this vocabulary.

Francis Schaeffer, countercultural founder of L’Abri, offers the clearest bridge between evangelical left and the religious right. Though Schaeffer, a resident of Switzerland, never mixed closely with evangelical left leaders, his critiques of affluence, segregation, the nuclear arms race, and environmental degradation resonated with the their constituency, especially progressive college students.¹⁵⁵ In

¹⁵³ James Dobson, “Why I Use ‘Fighting Words,’” *Christianity Today* (June 19, 1995), 28.

¹⁵⁴ Mark Noll, *American Evangelical Christianity: An Introduction* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 190.

¹⁵⁵ On Schaeffer’s progressive, countercultural views, see Hamilton, “The Dissatisfaction of Francis Schaeffer,” 27. Hamilton writes, “Francis scorned postwar materialism, insisting that most Americans had no higher philosophy of life than ‘personal peace and affluence.’ Though strongly opposed to communism, he refused to condone the arms race: ‘In the race of fission versus fusion, fusion versus fusion, missile versus missile, what reason is there to think that those conceiving and engineering these things on ‘our side’ believe anything basically different ... from those on the ‘other side,’ the Communists?’ He urged respect for nature in a society that had fouled its own nest. He preached against racism, and at L’Abri he practiced what he preached. He sympathized with dropouts and drug users ‘because they are smart enough to know that they have been given no answers, and they are opting out. ... The older generation hasn’t given them anything to care about.’” On deteriorating

1970, for instance, Schaeffer declared, “One of the greatest injustices we do to our young people is to ask them to be conservative.” Yet, just ten years later Schaeffer sounded a radically different tone, asserting that with “the conservative swing in the United States in the election of 1980 ... there is a unique window open.” As Schaeffer took a hard right in the late 1970s, Schaeffer began to apply his dualistic cultural critiques to abortion, euthanasia, and toleration of a totalitarian and expansionist Soviet Union—all signs of spreading “secular humanism.”¹⁵⁶ By the 1980s he had more clearly aligned himself with Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and the broader religious right, all of whom cited Schaeffer as their inspiration.¹⁵⁷ Many of his surprised disciples, by now in their thirties, followed Schaeffer, who through Jack Kemp helped link evangelical activists to the Republican Party, into the thick of Reagan conservatism.¹⁵⁸ Abortion became the new civil rights crusade for lapsed

connections with young evangelicals, see “John Alexander—Response Sheet,” in Folder “1974 Chicago Aftermath,” ESA Archives; Tim Stafford, “Ron Sider’s Unsettling Crusade,” *Christianity Today* 36 (April 27, 1992): 18-23; Clark Pinnock, “Schaefferism as a World View,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 7 (July 1977), 32-35. In 1975 John Alexander and Evangelicals for Social Action tried to draw Schaeffer into the institutional evangelical left. This apparently met with little success, likely because Schaeffer had already turned his attention elsewhere. In the 1980s Sider left a meeting at L’Abri in exasperation over their changing politics, declaring, “Francis Schaeffer—I’m so close to him!” On Schaeffer’s vitriolic repudiation of young evangelical centers with which he had previously resonated, see Schaeffer, *The Great Evangelical Disaster* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1984), 111-140. Remnants of Schaeffer’s former countercultural impulses, however, remained. On his anti-technology impulse, see Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened*, 22-23, 27.

¹⁵⁶ Francis A. Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Revell Co., 1976); Koop and Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race*; Schaeffer.

¹⁵⁷ On Schaeffer’s inspiration of John W. Whitehead and the Rutherford Institute, see Whitehead, “Truth and Oppression,” in *Francis A. Schaeffer: Portraits of the Man and His Work*, ed. Lane T. Dennis (Westchester: Crossway Books, 1986), 177; Whitehead, *The Second American Revolution* (Elgin, Ill.: David C. Cook Publishing, 1982), 11-14, 21, 30, 133-134, 165.

¹⁵⁸ On growing ties between the Schaeffers, Kemp, and a widening circle of conservative politicians, see Schaeffer, *Crazy for God*, 284-287. Kemp’s wife Joanne started a book club called the “Schaeffer Group” in which 20 congressmen’s wives met weekly to read and discuss Schaeffer’s books. Franky showed the Kemps, then the Republican Club (where more than 50 congressmen and 20 senators, including Bob Dole and Henry Hyde viewed the film), a private screening of *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* From then on, according to Franky Schaeffer, “Jack would give Koop,

members of the evangelical left and newly stirred fundamentalists alike, and they used the same Manichean rhetoric in their advocacy for fetuses as they did on behalf of African-Americans.¹⁵⁹

Schaeffer's methods of political advocacy of human life also point toward the religious right's embrace of activism. Schaeffer, accustomed to violating middle-class norms, was never far from civil disobedience, even as a celebrity in an evangelical culture in which "picketing, demonstration, and boycott" by Christians "forsakes the spirit of Christ."¹⁶⁰ Schaeffer in fact built L'Abri to affirm certain aspects of sixties' dissent. His chief lieutenant Os Guinness, like Schaeffer clearly inspired by the counterculture's style of dissent and protest, unapologetically sounded sixties-style

Dad, and myself access to everyone in the Republican Party." *Whatever Happened* was also shown on ABC's Channel 7 in Washington, D.C. Schaeffer, while appreciating Kemp's new concern for the unborn, however, did not like the Republican's embrace of supply-side economics. Richard Pierard declared that the "co-opting" of Schaeffer by religious right activists was "the Right's biggest coup by far." See Richard V. Pierard, *Religion and State: Essays in Honor of Leo Pfeffer* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 1985), 400-401. "Those of us on the evangelical Left who parted with Schaeffer in the end lamented the turning ... I was concerned that works like *Christian Manifesto* were not only out of place with the earlier work, but also that they might incite to precipitous action some of the wild folk of the evangelical Right." See Ronald Wells, "Letters to the Editor," 41, No. 5 *Christianity Today* (April 28, 1997), 6.

¹⁵⁹ The literature of the 1980s reflected this oppositional logic and symbolism. A book entitled *Abortion: The American Holocaust* by a pastor of Calvary Memorial Church in Southern Pines, North Carolina, contained typical evangelical arguments against abortion. It also cited leading evangelical authorities such as C. Everett Koop. Each time the word "holocaust" was printed, the letter "o" was drawn into a swastika. The stark cover featured a swastika superimposed on a blood-red map of the United States. The image in many respects resembled the anti-American imagery in the *Post-American*. For more examples of Manichean rhetoric and martial language, see Terry, *Operation Rescue*, 181-190. For more comparisons to the Jewish Holocaust, see Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened*, 16, 102-110. On similarities between slavery and abortion, see Schaeffer, *Whatever Happened*, 35, 82-83, 199. For use of martial language by Terry, see Marian Faux, *Crusaders: Voices from the Abortion Front* (New York: Birch Lane Press, 1990), 128, 171. Terry kept a book called *The Art of War* by Chinese scholar-soldier Sun Tzu on his bookshelf. "I'm reading him to learn how to make war. He was at war, and I'm at war," explained Terry. By 1990 the Operation Rescue hotline spoke against a government that "has aligned itself with the children of Satan."

¹⁶⁰ On Schaeffer's critique of middle-class norms, see "Two Contents, Two Realities," a position paper written for the International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne in July 1974. See text in Volume 3 of *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1982), 410. On the new evangelical view of protesting, see "Equality by Boycott," *Christianity Today* 11, No. 12 (March 17, 1967), 27.

rhetoric in the first edition of *The Dust of Death*. While the straightforward critiques of militarism, environmental degradation, and racism in the first edition morphed ten years later into a morality tale about the bankruptcy of secular humanism in the second edition, the approach remained the same. In each case Guinness and others from L'Abri urged evangelicals to confront a dark civilization with social and intellectual activism.¹⁶¹

Schaeffer turned more strident in the early 1980s, when he suggested a willingness to use civil disobedience, even violence, to trip up government tyranny. Citing the example of nineteenth-century evangelical reformers such as Blanchard and Finney—a tactic borrowed directly from the repertoire of the evangelical left—Schaeffer thundered from a Fort Lauderdale pulpit in the early 1980s that true revival always brings social change.¹⁶² Evangelicals had labored under “a truncated view of spirituality that doesn't see true spirituality touching all of life.” For a case in point, argued Schaeffer, consider the political revolt in the eighteenth century sparked by evangelical revival in the Great Awakening. “Acts of the state which contradict God's Law were illegitimate and acts of tyranny. Tyranny was defined as ruling without the sanction of God,” explained Schaeffer in his important 1981 *A Christian Manifesto*. “That is exactly what we are facing today. The whole structure of our society is being

¹⁶¹ The first edition, published by InterVarsity Press, a leading young evangelical publisher, spoke of the sixties as an authentic “organic protest against humanism’s myopic cultural inheritance.” The second edition, published by Crossway Books, a principal press of the religious right, spoke of the civil rights movement as a “moral spasm” lacking “any genuine philosophical and ethical rigor.” See Marsh, *Beloved Community*, 142-143.

¹⁶² Sermon delivered at Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla, 1982. Transcript in author’s possession. For other religious right citations of evangelicalism’s nineteenth-century heritage of social activism, see chapter 4, “Robbed of our Heritage: Rediscovering the Church’s Legacy of Christian Activism,” in Terry, *Operation Rescue*, 63-76. “Their social activism is quietly ignored. Granted, their evangelistic endeavors were great, but the expression of their Christianity went far beyond saving lost souls. *They were activists.*”

attacked and destroyed. It is being given an entirely opposite base which gives exactly the opposite results.” In such cases as the American Revolution, the Christian must disobey civil law, even to the point in which “force, even physical force, is appropriate. The Christian is not to take the law into his own hands and become a law unto himself. But when all avenues of flight and protest have closed, force in the defensive posture is appropriate.”¹⁶³ Wesley Pippert, citing the biblical prophets, the radical Berrigan brothers, Students for a Democratic Society, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, also suggested that evangelicals might have to take up similar activist tactics.¹⁶⁴ Advocacy on behalf of the unborn and elderly was for Schaeffer reason enough to launch a campaign of evangelical activism.¹⁶⁵

Schaeffer left the boundaries relatively open. Some interpreted Schaeffer’s entreaties as implying standard political lobbying.¹⁶⁶ Wheaton students, after Schaeffer’s co-author C. Everett Koop told the college to “get off its duff” to stop

¹⁶³ Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1981), 100-102, 117. The book sold two hundred and ninety thousand copies in its first year. *Newsweek* reported that Schaeffer spoke to an audience consisting of Sen. Paul Laxalt, Rep. Jack Kemp, and various other government officials in the winter of 1981 about the book and its contents. Conservative columnist Cal Thomas praised the book as a “a battle plan for the rest of the century.” Bill Bright of Campus Crusade praised Schaeffer as “one of the greatest men of our times.” See Hamilton, “Dissatisfaction of Francis Schaeffer,” 29; Marley, *Pat Robertson*, 42-43; Woodward, “Guru of Fundamentalism,” 88.

¹⁶⁴ See chapter entitled “Dropouts and Revolutionaries: Working Outside the System,” in Pippert, *Memo for 1976*, 46-48, 59-84.

¹⁶⁵ Schaeffer’s son Franky describes how he goaded his father toward a more activist stance and deeper ties with the religious right. He now regrets this, writing that the Schaeffers’ “multimillion dollar backing from the Amway Corporation and its far-right founder-capitalist guru, Rich DeVos, was about as slick and worldly and far away from the L’Abri way as anyone could get.” See Schaeffer, *Crazy for God*, 259; Schaeffer and Koop, *Whatever Happened*, 194-195. On Franky’s activist tendencies, see Frank Schaeffer, *Bad News for Modern Man: An Agenda for Christian Activism* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1984), 96. Franky advised evangelicals to “be an aggressive, feisty, dig-in-your-heels, kick-and-scream bunch; we must work twice as hard because there are fewer of us.”

¹⁶⁶ On Schaeffer’s inspiration of religious right leaders, see LaHaye, *Battle for the Mind*, 5. LaHaye writes, “This book is dedicated to Dr. Francis Schaeffer, the renowned philosopher-prophet of the twentieth century. Also see Hamilton, “Dissatisfaction,” 29.

infanticide and euthanasia, formed a political action committee and planned a precinct-by-precinct voter identification survey.¹⁶⁷ Others, compelled by Schaeffer's suggestion to use "civil disobedience to restore Biblical morality," began to block abortion clinics.¹⁶⁸ Students at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, deeply influenced by the film *Whatever Happened*, joined Catholics at abortion clinic sit-ins.¹⁶⁹ Randall Terry, a student at the unaccredited Elim Bible Institute, first encountered Schaeffer in a course on apologetics. In the class Terry watched Schaeffer's film, which awakened him to the abortion "holocaust." Terry's professor remembers that Terry wept and declared to God that he would "fight this evil." Schaeffer's *A Christian Manifesto* then armed him with a logic and strategy to act on this conviction. No longer "entrenched in a separatist, just-preach-the-Gospel theology ... shaped by escapists," Terry proceeded with Schaeffer's mandate to reclaim culture and politics from the secular humanists.¹⁷⁰ Terry would go on to establish the pro-life organization Operation Rescue, noted for its activism against abortion. He would later state that "if you want to understand Operation Rescue, you

¹⁶⁷ Larry Reed, "Schaeffer Film Decries Abortion; Film Calls Christians to Action," *Wheaton Record* 104, No. 3 (September 28, 1979), 2; Mary Ellen Griffin, "Schaeffer Seminar Sparks Interest," *Wheaton Record* 104, No. 4 (October 5, 1979), 3.

¹⁶⁸ On the influence of Francis Schaeffer on other anti-abortion activists such as Michael Bray, see James Risen and Judy Thomas, *Wrath of Angels: The American Abortion War* (Basic Books, 1998), 80-82, 120-128, 219, 264, 319, 347. Risen and Thomas write, "Michael Bray—and every other young born-again Christian who joined the anti-abortion movement in the early 1980s—was first mobilized by reading the works of Francis Schaeffer." Randall Terry told Risen and Thomas, "Jerry Falwell provided the political cover; Francis Schaeffer provided the theological cover; but it was Operation Rescue that brought the two together in the street. There was never a huge street movement of Protestants before that."

¹⁶⁹ Risen and Thomas, *Wrath of Angels*, 142-143. Schaeffer praised the seminarians in his 1981 book *A Christian Manifesto*.

¹⁷⁰ Risen and Thomas, *Wrath of Angels*, 231-232.

have to read Schaeffer's *A Christian Manifesto*.”¹⁷¹ Operation Rescue would account for many of the 70,000 arrests from 1987 to 1994 for anti-abortion-related civil disobedience.¹⁷² If Schaeffer, who died of a brain tumor in 1985, rarely engaged in civil disobedience himself, many others—first in the evangelical left, then in the religious right—did in his stead.¹⁷³

A final contribution by Schaeffer to the burgeoning of evangelical politics was his suggestion that evangelical activists ally with non-evangelicals, a strategy with precedents in the evangelical left. Schaeffer termed the new ecumenism “co-belligerency,” asserting that “there is no Biblical mandate against evangelical Christians joining hands for political and social causes as long as there was no compromise of theological integrity.”¹⁷⁴ Concerned that evangelicals were “too small

¹⁷¹ Garry Wills, *Under God: Religion and American Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 324. In the foreword to Randall Terry's book *Operation Rescue*, Pat Robertson wrote, “The great philosopher Francis Schaeffer, before his death, urged that it was time for Christians to become involved more than ever before in the course of affairs in our nation” (7). On *A Christian Manifesto*'s influence on Pat Robertson, see Hamilton, “Dissatisfaction,” 29. On Terry's use of Schaeffer's “higher laws” argument, see chapter 5, “Higher Laws,” in Terry, *Operation Rescue*, 79-95, 102-104, 115.

¹⁷² By comparison, authorities arrested civil rights activists only 7,000 times from 1958 to 1968. See Randall Terry, “A Walk Through History,” 2002.

¹⁷³ To be sure, many conservative evangelicals disapproved of Schaeffer's push toward political activism and civil disobedience. His writings, however, did provoke an energetic debate over activist methods. K.B. Kraakevik discusses the debate among the religious right, the evangelical left, and apolitical evangelicals. This debate exposed evangelicals of all stripes to young evangelical views on faith and politics besides Francis Schaeffer. Rodney Clapp, “Should Christians Ever Break the Law?” *Christianity Today* 27, No. 5 (March 4, 1983), 26-31. See Kraakevik, “White Evangelical Populists,” 80-103. On Schaeffer's only protest (against Mayo Clinic doctors in Minneapolis), see Louis G. Parkhurst, Jr., *Francis and Edith Schaeffer* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1996), 124-125.

¹⁷⁴ Schaeffer, who chafed against the ethos of culturally conservative evangelicalism, considered his own work with the religious right to be an act of co-belligerency. His son Franky remembers, “Dad and I were mixing with a new set of people who had not know much, if anything, about my father. If they had even heard of Dad before he came on the pro-life scene in the mid-to-late seventies, they probably hadn't liked the sound of him. These people included Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, James Dobson, James Kennedy, and all the rest of the televangelists, radio hosts, and other self-appointed ‘Christian leaders’ who were bursting on the scene in the 1970s and early ‘80s. Compared to Dad, these slick media figures were upstarts. They were ‘not our sort of people,’ Dad often said. What people like Robertson and Falwell got from Dad was some respectability.” But “Dad got sick of ‘these idiots,’ as he often called people like Dobson in private. They were ‘plastic,’ Dad said, and ‘power-hungry.’ They were ‘Way too right-wing, really nuts!’ and ‘They’re using our issue to build their

a group” to stem American immorality, Schaeffer advised religious right leaders to “use pagans” in its political mobilization. The concept of co-belligerency, one of the enduring precedents of Schaeffer and the evangelical left, so inspired Jerry Falwell that he began to include Jews, Mormons, and Catholics in the Moral Majority.¹⁷⁵

The new rhetoric and activism offended traditionalist evangelicals and bewildered those in evangelical left, who were by now old hands at political protest.¹⁷⁶ When Franky Schaeffer picketed InterVarsity Press at the Christian Booksellers Association in 1984 for not being pro-life enough, Eastern College’s Tony Campolo had Schaeffer’s handwriting analyzed by an expert, who concluded that he was “close to being paranoid.”¹⁷⁷ Ron Sider quipped that “we called for social

empires. To our lasting discredit, Dad and I didn’t go public without real opinions of the religious-right leaders we were in bed with. We believed that there was too much at stake, both personally, as we caught the power-trip disease, and politically, as we got carried away by the needs of the pro-life movement.” “The influence of the right-wing fundamentalists we were working with,” remembers Franky, “were rubbing off on us. I wrote several more liberal-bashing books about American ‘decline.’ Dad also moved to the right, or should I say back to his fundamentalist roots. His new, harsher persona even bled back into L’Abri and the heart of our family. The Schaeffers thought that Gary North and Rousas Rushdoony were “clinically insane.” By the end of his life “Dad seemed lost in a depressed daze. He had recently been saying privately that the evangelical world was more or less being led by lunatics, psychopaths, and extremists, and agreeing with me that if ‘our side’ ever won, America would be in deep trouble. But by then Dad was dying and knew he had very little time left. There was no time to change his life or his new ‘friends.’ All I could do was to bitterly regret what I’d gotten him into. I still do.” Schaeffer, *Crazy for God*, 297, 300, 308, 333-335. Os Guinness sharply disputes this account in “Fathers and Sons: On Francis Schaeffer, Frank Schaeffer, and *Crazy for God*,” *Books and Culture* 14, No. 2 (March-April 2008), 32.

¹⁷⁵ Michael S. Hamilton, “The Dissatisfaction of Francis Schaeffer,” *Christianity Today* 41, No. 3 (March 3, 1997), 29. Falwell also purchased 62,000 copies of *A Christian Manifesto* to distribute through his television show “The Old-Time Gospel Hour,” which increasingly turned into a forum advocating political activism. See Falwell, *Strength for the Journey: An Autobiography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 359-362; Mel White interview, “A Thorn in Their Side,” *Intelligence Report* 117 (Spring 2005); Kenneth Woodward, “Guru of Fundamentalism,” *Newsweek* 100 (November 1, 1982), 88; Martin 197.

¹⁷⁶ Carl Henry complained that Randall Terry “reflects an excessive recoil from fundamentalist social indifference.” See “Persuasion vs. Coercion,” *Policy Review* 48 (Spring 1980), 94-95.

¹⁷⁷ Tony Campolo to Ron Sider, August 23, 1984, in Folder “1984,” ESA Archives. Also see “An Open Letter to InterVarsity Press,” in Folder “1984,” ESA Archives.

and political action, [and] we got eight years of Ronald Reagan.”¹⁷⁸ After Pat Robertson declared at the NAE’s fortieth annual convention that “we must be prepared for radical action against the government,” Ron Sider wondered, “How is it that respectable Evangelicals can be flirting with radical activism?”¹⁷⁹

It is worth considering whether the answer lay in part in the example of Sider himself, in his precedent of ecumenism and rhetoric that applied faith to politics. Did sixties-style mobilization and protest shape the religious right, as Terry’s appeals to Martin Luther King, Jr., suggest? A few key players (though not necessarily the evangelical left, strictly defined) even bridged the movements themselves. Dan Berrigan, a Catholic civil rights activist, protested abortion in the 1970s. Juli Loesch, an antiwar activist at Antioch College and a labor activist for Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers, became media coordinator for Operation Rescue in the 1980s.¹⁸⁰ Many countercultural evangelicals funneled directly into the religious right.¹⁸¹ More formative connections came from a longer distance, from the model of civil rights activism. Terry, who considered Martin Luther King, Jr. “a tremendous

¹⁷⁸ Quoted in Michael Cromartie, “Fixing the World: From Nonplayers to Radicals to New Right Conservatives: The Saga of Evangelicals and Social Action,” *Christianity Today* 36, No. 5 (April 27, 1992), 25. A chart entitled “Evangelicals on the March” lists a chronology of growing political involvement: 1947—Henry’s *Uneasy Conscience*; 1957—Smith’s *Revivalism and Social Reform*; 1965—*The Other Side*; 1965—Gaebelein marches with King; 1971—*Post-American*; 1973—Roe v. Wade; 1973—Chicago Declaration; 1974—Lausanne Covenant; 1976—Carter wins the presidency; 1977—Sider’s *Rich Christians*; 1979—birth of Moral Majority ... The list clearly gives the impression that the evangelical left anteceded the religious right.

¹⁷⁹ Ron Sider, “Resist but Don’t Rebel: Sometimes We Must Disobey the Government to Obey God,” *Light and Life* (February 1983), 9-10. Copy of article in Folder “1983,” ESA Archives.

¹⁸⁰ Risen and Thomas, *Wrath of Angels*, 63-65; oral interview with Juli Loesch Wiley, February 27, 2008. Between her two careers, Loesch founded a Catholic peace feminist community in Erie, Pa., worked for the anti-nuclear war coalition Mobilization for Survival and Pro-Lifers for Survival, two groups with close ties with *Sojourners*, *The Other Side*, and other young evangelical groups.

¹⁸¹ Preston Shires, *Hippies of the Religious Right* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007).

source of inspiration,” advocated non-violent intervention.¹⁸² Like the civil rights movement, anti-abortion activists held prayer meetings, “field training” seminars, and rallies before demonstrations. Terry, who wrote “A Letter from Fulton County Jail,” told a reporter that he was at heart a 1960s radical “born out of time.”¹⁸³

If the left helped to foster ripe conditions, Jimmy Carter, another progressive evangelical, provided the spark that launched the religious right surge. Carter’s presidency, a terrible disappointment to evangelical conservatives such as Falwell and Robertson, jolted them out of an apolitical torpor. At first thrilled to support a born-again candidate—“Carter was the one who activated me and a lot of others. We had great hopes,” remembers Robertson. “[He was] like our champion”—Falwell and Robertson quickly grew incensed over his policy stances.¹⁸⁴ Reagan may have taken evangelicals seriously and won their votes in 1980, but it was Carter that awakened many evangelicals to the possibility of an evangelical in high politics in the first place.¹⁸⁵ Wheaton student Suellen Johnson noted that “Carter has made politics O.K. again.”¹⁸⁶ Robertson’s ministry took a political turn precisely in 1976 in order to “track the progress of world events under the presidency of a Christian.” Mere

¹⁸² Randall A. Terry, “Operation Rescue: The Civil-Rights Movement of the Nineties,” *Policy Review* 47 (Winter 1989), 82-83. Operation Rescue has, for instance, poured glue in the keyholes of clinic doors and formed a human wall to prevent women from entering an abortion clinic. Robertson wrote, “Randy Terry has begun the same dramatic nonviolent protest against the slaughter of innocent babies in our nation that brought racial justice and equality in the 1960s. See p. 7 in *Operation Rescue*. On the civil rights movement as a model for creating social tension and “winning with non-violence,” see Terry, *Operation Rescue*, 195-197.

¹⁸³ Faux, *Crusaders*, 129, 131, 136, 140-141, 171; Terry, *Operation Rescue*, 227-230.

¹⁸⁴ Quoted in Lindsay, *Faith in the Halls of Power*, 17. Like young evangelicals, politically conservative evangelicals denounced Carter’s use of church-state separation. See for example Boehme and Walton, *What about Jimmy Carter?* 51.

¹⁸⁵ The slightly more than half of white evangelicals who voted in 1976 represented a significant increase from previous elections. See Kraakevik, “White Evangelical Populists,” 80.

¹⁸⁶ Quoted in Denise Hayworth, “Delegate for the President Outlines President’s Strengths,” *Wheaton Record* 104, No. 18 (March 21, 1980), 3.

observation of end-times events soon turned prescriptive as Robertson criticized Carter's lack of evangelicals in the White House and his ambivalence toward Israel. This censure soon overflowed into domestic policy regarding energy policy, tax reform, and education. Robertson, until Carter's presidency unwilling to ally with politically conservative Mormons such as Orrin Hatch, came to value conservative political orthodoxy over the personal faith of politicians or theological exactness.¹⁸⁷

Given the counterintuitive role of Carter and the helpful precedents of the evangelical left, it is tempting to claim that the religious left was a significant force in creating the religious right. Yet other, more significant trends better explain the rise of the religious right. Southern migration, for example, as well as real and perceived threats from the secular political left to the traditional family—in the form of feminism, gay rights, and abortion—mobilized the religious right.¹⁸⁸ If one asks the counter-factual question of whether there would have been a religious right without

¹⁸⁷ On the 700 Club, however, Robertson still portrayed Mormonism as a dangerous cult. See Marley, *Pat Robertson*, 39-53.

¹⁸⁸ Frank Schaeffer describes the how opposition from the secular left to the Schaeffer's anti-abortion tour helped mobilize conservative evangelicals: "The pro-choice forces were so hubristically aggressive when belittling their opponents that they alienated everyone who even mildly questioned their position. They drove people to us. If Planned Parenthood, NOW, and NARAL had sat down to figure out the best way to energize the evangelical subculture, they couldn't have done a better job. With their absolutist stand, they might as well have been working to help the Republicans take Congress and the White House. They branded all who even questioned *Roe* as backward women-hating rubes. *Roe* was the law! There was no need for further debate! There could be no compromise! Shut up! Go away! All that was at stake was 'fetal tissue'! People who didn't agree could just be ignored, mocked, or sued into silence. Besides, the 'progressives' had history on their side. We were entering a new secular and enlightened age! ... This dismissive attitude backfired. For instance, after Planned Parenthood and NOW sent people to a few of our seminar venues to challenge us, the latter part of the tour began to pull a bigger evangelical crowd in an 'us against them' spirit. Our small audiences listened to Dad, Koop, and myself try to debate in-your-face (and often off-the-wall) NOW and Planned Parenthood plants sent by those pro-choice organizations to protest the fact that we even wanted to discuss 'their' issue. And our audiences also sometimes reacted to an exhibition of pro-choice self-righteousness that made our fundamentalism seem nuanced. We could not have scripted it better. A screamed chant of 'My body! My choice!' isn't much of an argument. Sometimes our events were picketed. Our rather quiet and timid evangelical audiences had to run a gauntlet of angry 'Keep Your Hands Off My Body!' sign-waving pro-choice protestors. See Schaeffer, *Crazy for God*, 291-293.

an evangelical left, the answer is clearly yes. Mobilization over school prayer, government regulation of private schools, and abortion would have flourished in the early 1980s without the evangelical left. The rise of both can be best explained by the impact of the culture-wars mentality that emerged in the late 1960s. The evangelical left rose first because it was closest to the immediate political precedents of the secular left.

And yet while the emergence the religious right was inevitable, the evangelical left, broadly defined, in several intriguing ways contributed to the intensity and shape of that emergence. Carter not only lured evangelicals to the polls in 1976, but his failed presidency encouraged evangelical mobilization toward the Republican Party. The structural approach to politics, activism, polarizing rhetoric, and co-belligerency of progressive evangelicalism moreover created the conditions for the religious right's emergence, hastened its arrival, and encouraged its intensity. The religious right's co-opting of characteristic countercultural traits likely accelerated a tighter and more synergistic bond between white evangelicalism and modern conservatism.¹⁸⁹

On the eve of the presidential election, the religious right held its coming-out party. At the "Washington for Jesus" rally on National Mall in April 1980, over 500,000 evangelicals gathered in an attempt to "save" America from its "sinful path."

¹⁸⁹ It also suggests that the periodization of evangelical politicization needs to shift. Evangelical periodicals offer empirical evidence for a surge in political awareness in 1976 and 1977. In nearly all measures of evangelical politicization—feature stories, political advertisements, articles on politics, cover stories, explicit calls for evangelicals to participate in politics—spiked in the mid-1970s to a level that would outpace political rhetoric even in 1980. See Farley, "Politicalization of the American Evangelical Press," 162-226.

Participants bought copies of the official Washington for Jesus poster, which depicted Jesus kneeling in prayer, his head pressed against a cracked Liberty Bell, a copy of the Constitution at his feet, and a dove landing on his shoulder.¹⁹⁰ In 100 sermons over two days, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, Bill Bright, and dozens of other speakers railed against sexual perversion, military weakness, abortion, the women's liberation movement, and drugs. Ronald Reagan, speakers explained, would deliver the nation from these vices. Over the next six months over four million Americans would join the Moral Majority and help carry Reagan to victory.

The media understandably failed to report on evangelical dissenters absent from the rally and critical of the Moral Majority.¹⁹¹ Such dissenters included Billy Graham and millions of still-apolitical evangelicals. By 1980, however, apolitical evangelicals no longer carried the energy of the movement. The vitality of evangelicalism now lay with those, both on the left and the right, who saw Christianity *as* politics rather than Christians *in* politics. One progressive evangelical, failing to see the irony, condemned the religious right as those “who plan political action under any guise of religious evangelism, worship, or revivalism—or in the ‘name of Jesus.’”¹⁹² Others, more self-aware, recognized the resonance in approach,

¹⁹⁰ Flake, *Redemptorama*, 213.

¹⁹¹ Perry Recker, “Washington for Jesus: Reclaiming the Land?” *Vanguard* 10, No. 4 (July-August 1980), 20-22. Sojourners condemned the rally for obsessing about military weakness, economic disintegration, and the destruction of the family. Only once, in passing during a prayer, did a speaker mention “the sins of war, poverty, injustice, and bigotry.” See Phil M. Shenk, “Washington for Jesus: Understanding the Message of the Rally,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 6 (June 1980), 10-11. Tony Campolo attributes the success of the religious right to their aptitude with the media. “They very effectively raised the money to go on talk radio and to almost monopolize religious television. In short, they held the microphone and were able to speak out on their views and rally Christians from all across the nation to their cause. You cannot underestimate the effectiveness of religious radio and religious television. See Tony Campolo interview, March 24, 2008.

¹⁹² Quoted in Shenk, “Understanding the Message of the Rally,” 11.

even as they denounced the Moral Majority's political planks. The religious right, wrote a *Sojourners* editor, had succeeded in "changing the atmosphere in which political discussion is conducted. ... The New Right forces have a comprehensive vision of America and its place in the world and articulate sweeping long-term goals. They unashamedly cast that social vision in the language of moral values and even religious faith."¹⁹³ The Association for Public Justice's James Skillen, despite his regular censures of the Moral Majority, similarly effused, "Happily, at this moment in the U.S. and in many parts of the world, Christians are reconsidering the meaning of their public responsibilities *as Christians*. The old myth about a neutral and secular politics is largely discredited, and many Christians are seeking new ways to live integral lives reflecting their commitment to Christ in all areas of life."¹⁹⁴ Through the 1980s progressive evangelicals would maintain the approach they had introduced to the religious right a decade earlier in hopes that their voice might be heard again. Their efforts to be heard amidst the clamor of the religious right, however, would merely add to the din.

¹⁹³ Danny Collum, "The Big Picture: Where We Are and How We Got Here," *Sojourners* 15, No. 5 (May 1986), 19. (14-19)

¹⁹⁴ "Board Votes to Hire Full-Time Executive," *Public Justice Report* 4, No. 5 (February 1981), 1.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE LIMITS OF EVANGELICAL POLITICS: THE EVANGELICAL LEFT IN THE 1980s

*“Under the umbrella of Scripture, Christians have paraded the centuries with a spectrum of political banners ranging from the red of anarchistic radicalism to the purple of entrenched conservatism. ... Within our own memory we have been confronted with evangelicals for Hitler, evangelicals for Ho Chi Minh, evangelicals for Strom Thurmond, and evangelicals for McGovern. ... We believe that Jesus Christ is the only answer ... but we’re not always sure what the questions are.”*¹ —Sherwood Wirt, associate of Billy Graham and participant in the Thanksgiving Workshops

Several outbursts by conservative activists marked the gathering of 1,700 evangelicals on the campus of Fuller Theological Seminary at a May 1983 conference on peacemaking in the nuclear age. One protester interrupted a workshop on Central America, shouting his objection to evangelical accommodation with Communist totalitarianism until delegates ushered him out of the room. Another harangued delegates from a balcony during a plenary session. When the disruption brought the proceedings to a halt, the audience sang “Amazing Grace” to drown him out. A display table manned by the Institute for Religion and Democracy urged delegates to sign a “research report” that maintained that Mark Hatfield and Sojourners’ Jim Wallis, arriving late to the conference

¹ Wirt, quoted in Gordon Spykman, “The Tower of Babel Revisited: The Calvin Conference on Christianity and Politics,” *Vanguard* (July-August 1975), 25.

after spending time in jail for protesting nuclear arms in the U.S. Capitol building, were advocates of Soviet-style communism.²

These scenes and what they represented—an activist right-wing coalition of Christians—horrified the evangelical left. As the prominence and size of the religious right became apparent, John Alexander asked, “Did we blow it? The evangelical right mobilized for Reagan, but Carter wasn’t good enough for the left; were we crazy?”³ Leaders of the evangelical left leveled unrelenting criticism at Reagan for his right-wing extremism, lack of experience, and “one-sentence remedies for complex problems.”⁴ Equally incensed at the evangelical role in his victory, they also confronted the religious right.⁵ Even prominent evangelical moderates such as Billy Graham and representatives

² David A. Hoekema, “Evangelicals Confront the Arms Race,” *Reformed Journal* 33, No. 8 (August 1983), 10-13.

³ John F. Alexander, “Did We Blow It,” *The Other Side* 17, No. 2 (February 1981), 10-15.

⁴ Bernard Zylstra, “Jimmy Carter Is the Issue,” *Vanguard* 10, No. 5 (September-October 1980), 4. For a small sample of the extensive criticism of Reagan by the evangelical left, see William A. Harper, “Ronald Reagan,” in a “Special Election Report” of *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 7 (April 1980), 1-2; Jeffrey McClain Jones, “Ronald Sider and Radical Evangelical Political Theology” (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1990), 428; Nancy Post, “Profs Analyze US Economy,” *Wheaton Record* 105, No. 22 (April 24, 1981), 3; Jim Wallis, “The President’s Pulpit: A Look at Ronald Reagan’s Theology,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 8 (September 1984), 17-21; James Skillen, “Ronald Reagan: The Pragmatic Nationalist,” *Public Justice Report* 7, No. 10 (August-September 1984), 3-4.

⁵ “Minutes of ESA Executive Committee,” October 5, 1979, in Folder “1979,” ESA Archives; Megan Rosenfeld, “The New Moral America and the War of the Religicos: Born Again Political Forces Not Singing the Same Hymn,” *Washington Post*, August 24, 1980 p. H1; Colman McCarthy, “How Some of the Evangelicals Feel about Moral Majority,” *Washington Post*, February 15, 1981, M2; David Neff, “Who’s Afraid of the Secular Humanists?” *HIS* 43, No. 6 (March 1983), 4-7, 31; Donna L. Wessel, *HIS* 43, No. 6 (March 1983), 19-21; James Skillen, “APJ and the Moral Majority,” *Public Justice Report* 4, No. 4 (January 1981), 4-6; Gary Govert, “Notebook,” *Vanguard* 11, No. 3 (May-June 1981), 17-18; Robert E. Webber, *Moral Majority: Right or Wrong?* (Westchester, Ill.: Cornerstone Books, 1981); Jay Kesler in Box 46, Folder 1, “Evangelicals for Social Action; 1979-1982,” Youth for Christ Collection, BGCA; Jim Rice and Dennis Marker, “Baptist Fundamentalism ’84,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 6 (June-July 1984), 27; Jim Wallis, “A Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing: The Political Right Invades the Evangelical Fold,” *Sojourners* 15, No. 5 (May 1986), 20-23; James Skillen, “Moral Majority Name Change No Improvement,” *Public Justice Report* 9, No. 6 (March 1986), 7; Don Bonker, “The House Is His Home,” *Eternity* 31, No. 1 (January 1980), 60; Jim Wallis, “Falwell’s Foreign Policy,” *Sojourners* 15, No. 2 (February 1986), 5-6; Russ Williams, “Pat Robertson, The 700 Club, and Right-Wing Politics,” *Sojourners* 8, No. 9 (September 1979), 17-20; Foy Valentine, “SBC Executive Warns of ‘New Right’ Dangers,” *Christian Index* 159 (October 2, 1980), 7; Stephen Board, “Jerry’s Liberties and Liabilities,” *Eternity* 31 (July-August 1980), 21; Jim Skillen, “The Post-Reagan Era,” *Public Justice Report* 11, No. 3 (December 1987), 4-5. On the L.O.

of the NAE, attentive to the debate, felt compelled to explain that they were “not part of the New Christian Right.”⁶

The religious right fought back.⁷ David Chilton’s 1981 *Productive Christians in an Age of Guilt Manipulators* attacked the economic positions of Ron Sider.⁸ Francis Schaeffer in *The Great Evangelical Disaster* condemned Evangelicals for Social Action, Wheaton College, the Evangelical Women’s Caucus, and many other luminaries of the evangelical left for succumbing to secular humanism.⁹ The highly publicized book sparked an epistolary battle between many of the principals of the book.¹⁰ If the

Society that emerged in the fall of 1980 at Asbury Theological Seminary in opposition to the Moral Majority and western culture’s “pre-occupation with success, efficiency, marketing, power and achievement,” see Robert W. Lyon, “Abandoning Power: The L.O. Society at Asbury Theological Seminary,” *Transformation* 3, No. 4 (October 1986), 10-14; Paul B. Henry, “A First-Term Congressman Looks at Faith and Politics,” *Christianity Today* 29, No. 5 (March 15, 1985), 40-41.

⁶ Richard Cizik, “Not Tilting Right” *Sojourners* (May 1981), 39. On Billy Graham, see Turner, “Selling Jesus to Modern America,” 365; Kenneth L. Woodward, “The Split-Up Evangelicals,” *Newsweek* (April 26, 1982), 88-91.

⁷ Harold Lindsell, *Free Enterprise: A Judeo-Christian Defense* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1982); Joan Harris, *The Sojourners File* (Washington, D.C.: New Century Foundation Press, 1983); Ronald H. Nash, *Social Justice and the Christian Church* (Milford, Mich.: Mott Media, 1984); John Bernbaum, ed., *Economic Justice and the State: A Debate Between Ronald H. Nash and Eric Berversluis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986). Lloyd Billingsley, “First Church of Christ Socialist,” *National Review* 36 (October 18, 1983), 1339; Billingsley, *The Generation That Knew Not Joseph* (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1985); Billingsley, *Religion’s Rebellious Son* (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1986); Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1983). Gary North and Ronald Nash, a professor of religion and philosophy at the University of Western Kentucky, all attacked and debated Ron Sider multiple times in the 1980s. See Francis Schaeffer to Ron Sider, January 14, 1983; Francis Schaeffer to Ron Sider, March 24, 1983, in Folder “1983,” ESA Archives. For more attacks by Franky Schaeffer on *Christianity Today*, Wheaton College, InterVarsity, Jim Wallis, Ron Sider, and others on the 700 Club, see transcript of the June 12, 1984, show in Folder “1984,” ESA Archives. For more on being “discovered by the New Right” and Accuracy in Media, see Dennis Marker, “Under Attack,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 3 (March 1985), 5-6.

⁸ David Chilton, *Productive Christians in an Age of Guilt Manipulators: A Biblical Response to Ronald Sider* (Tyler, Tex.: Institute for Christian Economics, 1981), 69, 86. Chilton wrote, “In Sider’s social theory, everyone is miserable: if you’re poor, the rich oppress you, and if you’re rich, God overthrows you. Sort of like Cosmic Hot-Potato—up, down, up, down, up, down; the last one with the money goes to hell.” Chilton satirically recommended that we “construct a new economics, an economics of ‘compassion for the poor,’ and economics of the Tender-Hearted Elimination of Free Trade (THEFT).”

⁹ See especially chapter five, “Forms of the World Spirit,” in Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Great Evangelical Disaster* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1984), 111-140.

¹⁰ For a long series of correspondence between Schaeffer, Sider, George Marsden, Mark Noll, Thomas Howard, Lane Dennis, and Richard Lovelace, see Folders “1984” and “1985” in ESA Archives. For a helpful analysis of the debate between Schaeffer and the evangelical left in the 1980s, see Barry Hankins,

Washington for Jesus rally in April 1980 revealed a rising religious right, these intriguing exchanges between evangelical right, center, and left suggested that the political soul of evangelicalism was not uncontested.

That the religious right felt threatened; that Sider and Wallis continued to gain a hearing in evangelical circles; that the titans of evangelicalism such as Graham distanced themselves from the religious right all point to the persistence and the active agenda of the evangelical left. Evangelicals for Social Action, Association for Public Justice, Sojourners, and many other non-rightist evangelical organizations in the 1980s carried on determined, if ultimately unsuccessful, campaigns on questions of nuclear defense, global interventionism, and domestic policy. APJ member Cor Bronson, stumping for human rights in a totalitarian Guatemala, still saw hope in the midst of a fragmented evangelical presence. “One can see streaks of light among the shadows of a mixed and confused witness of the Body of Christ.” But too many evangelicals, Bronson complained, considered the world of politics to be “wholly in the devil’s hands.” Others were leaving the church entirely, rarely “relating their political or professional work for justice to their Christian confession.”¹¹

For Bronson and other progressive evangelicals, hope never seemed to turn into reality. Efforts to broaden constituencies in ecumenical spheres sparked questions of how evangelical the evangelical left really was. Moreover, continuing fragmentation wrought by identity politics plagued the movement. Failing to build substantial constituencies, the evangelical left remained overshadowed by the religious right, which became identified

“‘I’m Just Making a Point’: Francis Schaeffer and the Irony of Faithful Christian Scholarship,” *Fides et Historia* 39, No. 1 (Winter-Spring 2007), 15-34.

¹¹ Cor Bronson, “Christmas in Guatemala,” *Public Justice Report* 5, No. 3 (December 1981), 4-5.

in the popular mind as “evangelical.” A final effort in the mid-1980s to build a “consistent pro-life” coalition failed to reconcile competing identities and shifting constituencies amidst an unforgiving electoral system that fit poorly with the movement’s concerns. The evangelical left failed to coalesce into a coherent movement.

I.

Despite a common antipathy toward the religious right, questions of identity continued to plague the evangelical left. Divided by race and gender as the National Black Evangelical Association and the Evangelical Women’s Caucus enjoyed increasing vitality, the movement fragmented even more as divisions deepened between Anabaptist and Reformed evangelicals. In the late 1970s more Reformed evangelicals disengaged from the Evangelicals for Social Action (ESA), the organization with direct roots in the Thanksgiving Workshops. The formation of the Association for Public Justice (APJ) in August 1977 by Reformed evangelicals signaled that their brief flirtation with broader coalition of progressive evangelicals had ended.¹² The sudden exodus in turn left Anabaptists fully in control of ESA. The two organizations’ divergent approaches toward issues of social justice prevented the evangelical left from speaking out with a coherent voice.

¹² The Association for Public Justice was the new name given to the National Association for Christian Political Action. Along with a new name, the group launched a new constitution and a new push for growth. Dutch immigrants to Canada committed to Kuyperian ideals dominated the membership of NACPA. In the Netherlands, Kuyperian Calvinists participated in a revival movement that moved significantly into public life. Members intentionally participated in politics, labor unions, universities, newspapers, and business *as Christians*. When they immigrated to North America, they found churches that too often reflected apolitical, dualistic tendencies. During the political upheaval of the Vietnam War in the late 1960s, these immigrants formed NACPA, which launched a program of political literature and annual meetings. A few card-carrying evangelicals, such as C.T. McIntire and Paul Henry, made their way into APJ in the 1970s. See Jim Skillen, “APJ’s Vision Continues to Unfold,” *Public Justice Report* 9, No. 6 (March 1986), 3-5; Morris Greidanus interview, January 20, 2008.

APJ, still firmly ensconced in the Dutch Calvinist tradition, continued an implicit critique of ESA's political and social perspective, albeit from greater distance. It emphasized an idiosyncratic set of issues that clearly reflected its interests as a religious and political minority. With deep roots in agriculture, APJ lobbied for farm reform.¹³ Concerned about effects of secular public education on their children, Dutch Reformed parents nurtured a long-standing commitment to Christian education. Preferring not to "pay twice," APJ advocated tuition tax credits and educational vouchers. Private education, APJ posited, could protect minority interests better than public education, which too often flattened diversity.¹⁴

This argument in favor of educational tax credits and vouchers points to the most distinctive aspect of APJ's political theory: "principled pluralism." Affirming the varied cultures and social bonds of the world "crafted by the Creator," APJ argued that the state, whether through education or other means, should not obliterate this diversity in the name of a single homogenous community. The "special, irreducible" character of minority populations should be protected in the face of majoritarian tyranny.¹⁵ APJ, advocating for minorities of all stripes—ethnics, religious people, children, refugees, conscientious objectors, and prisoners—sought to articulate a "public philosophy" that would transcend civil religion and pragmatic calculations designed to advance individual or group

¹³ For an example of the dozens of articles in APJ publications on farm reform, see "Save the Farmers and the Soil," *Public Justice Report* 6, No. 7 (April 1983), 5.

¹⁴ Morris Greidanus interview, January 20, 2008; William A. Harper, Rockne M. McCarthy, and James W. Skillen, *Disestablishment a Second Time: Genuine Pluralism for American Schools* (Grand Rapids: Christian University Press, 1982); Rockne McCarthy, Oppewal, Walfred Peterson, and Gordon Spykman, *Society, State, and Schools: A Case for Structural and Confessional Pluralism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981); Richard John Neuhaus, ed., *Democracy and the Renewal of Public Education* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987). Four of the five essays were contributed by APJ members.

¹⁵ Stephen Monmsa in Gordon Spykman, "The Tower of Babel Revisited," *Vanguard* (July-August 1975), 24

interest.¹⁶ APJ's task was to nurture conditions in which people of different faiths could enter into genuine dialogue to seek the best for the common public trust.¹⁷ APJ, while acknowledging the role of government in ordering a complex and differentiated society, sought to encourage the growth of civil structures besides government. Like Richard John Neuhaus, with whom the organization nurtured friendly ties in the 1980s, APJ suggested that localism and mediating structures such as schools, churches, family, neighborhood, and small civic societies offered the best context for such a dialogue.¹⁸ APJ, however, broke with conservatives on issues such as the environment, international policy, and evaluations of capitalism. APJ's politics of Christian realism thus balanced issues on the left and right, denying both individualistic and collectivistic visions of government.¹⁹

¹⁶ "Government therefore has no authority to direct society by attempting to gain control of the internal life of non-political communities, institutions, and organizations," argued APJ. "Rather, it should restrict itself, in accord with the principles of public justice, to encouraging, protecting, and making room for the development of the groups on aspects of human culture which may from time to time be oppressed or in danger of losing their freedom to develop." See "Public Justice and Cultural Freedom," *Public Justice Newsletter* (March 1978), 7; Skillen, "Public Justice and True Tolerance," 56, in *Confessing Christ and Doing Politics* (Washington, D.C.: APJ Education Fund, 1982). On conscientious objectors, see "Public Justice and Freedom of Conscience," *Public Justice Newsletter* (April 1978), 3-4. On protection of political minorities, see "Political Representation: What Are the Problems?" *Public Justice Newsletter* (November 1978), 4-6; "Political Representation: What Should Be Done?" *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 4 (January 1979), 1-4; James W. Skillen, *Justice for Representation: A Proposal for Revitalizing our System of Political Participation* (Washington, D.C.: Association for Public Justice, 1979); . On prisoners, see "APJ Supports Crime Sentencing Act," *Public Justice Report* 6, No. 10 (August-September 1983), 1; Donald Smarto, *Justice and Mercy: A Christian Solution to America's Correctional Crisis* (Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1987). On African-American representation in Chicago, see James Skillen, "The Chicago Election," *Public Justice Report* 6, No. 8 (May 1983), 1-3. On Native Americans, see Robert Martin, "Indian Tribes and the Federal Government: Land, Water, Energy, and Authority" *Public Justice Report* 6, No. 8 (May 1983), 3-5.

¹⁷ Kenneth W. Hermann, "The APJ Quest: Authentic Christianity Contributing to a Just Public Order," *Public Justice Report* 10, No. 10 (September 1987), 6-7.

¹⁸ See Jim Skillen, "The Post-Reagan Era: What Will the Future Bring?" *Public Justice Report* 11, No. 3 (December 1987), 4-5.

¹⁹ "Public Justice and the State," *Public Justice Newsletter* 1, No. 3 (December 1977), 4-5. Republican Paul Henry, for example, took heat for voting for income tax increases, wetlands protection legislation, and aid to the city of Detroit as a state senator. In Congress he spoke out against a constitutional amendment punishing flag burning, deployment of the MX missile system, and U.S. aid to the Nicaraguan contras. See Paul C. Hillegonds, "Servant Leader in a Political World," 228, in Douglas Koopman, ed., *Serving the Claims of Justice* (Grand Rapids: Calvin College, 2001).

In keeping with its reformist bent, APJ sought to promote principled pluralism through traditional politicking, consensus, and education. The organization recruited bright graduate students to research policy and write briefs.²⁰ Functioning as the brain of evangelicalism, APJ organized conferences for evangelical leaders and scholars at Wheaton, Calvin, and Washington. It organized policy and educational panels with top government officials, diligently cultivating intellectual rigor and decrying cults of personality and strident political rhetoric. Though not splashy, their sudden entrée into the political worlds of Washington and Ottawa in the early 1980s was heady.²¹ Several of its members won seats in state and local legislatures.²² The national organization released election kits and voter guides, and Iowa chapters vetted presidential candidates during a busy caucus season.²³ APJ associates testified before the U.S. Senate Finance Committee and the House Committee on Ways and Means in support of the Tuition Tax Credit Act and on numerous other issues.²⁴ They participated in a United Nations Special Session on

²⁰ See, for example, contributions from Boston University graduate student in political science Karen Hosler Kispert, Carnegie Mellow graduate student in political science Frederick Jones, Northwestern Law School student Jeffrey K. Hoelzel, and graduate student in political science Stanley W. Carlson-Thies in *Public Justice Report* 11, No. 4 (January 1988).

²¹ Even before APJ opened an office in Washington in 1983, APJ had already made contacts with congressional staffers, cabinet members, and the president. See “APJ Opens Washington Office,” *Public Justice Report* 7, No. 1 (October 1983), 7; “Skillen Meets Reagan,” *Public Justice Report* 7, No. 2 (November 1983), 1-2.

²² The chair of the Siouxland Chapter of APJ, for example, won a seat in the Iowa Legislature as a Republican, but with planks on agriculture, softer criminal punishment, more parental involvement in educational policy, higher taxes for high income earners, and federal subsidies of health care. See “Plasier Will Go to Iowa Legislature,” *Public Justice Report* 9, No. 10 (August-September 1986), 7.

²³ *Preparing to Vote* (Washington, D.C.: APJ Education Fund, 1984); James W. Skillen, ed., *1988 Candidate Profiles: A Look at the Leading Presidential Contenders* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988). On the Public Justice Voters’ Club, see “McWhertor to Join APJ Staff in Washington,” *Public Justice Report* 9, No. 7 (April 1986), 4. On APJ’s hosting of five presidential candidates in forums which drew up to 2,000 people, see “Will the Iowa Caucuses Name That President?” *Public Justice Report* 11, No. 6 (March 1988), 6.

²⁴ “McCarthy Testifies before Senate Finance Committee,” *Public Justice Newsletter* (February 1978), 1-3; “Public Justice Testifies before House Committee,” *Public Justice Newsletter* (March 1978), 1-3; “Public Justice Testifies in Support of Solar Energy,” *Public Justice Newsletter* (August-September 1979),

Disarmament and filed briefs with the U.S. Supreme Court.²⁵ They lobbied numerous state legislatures and testified before state Supreme Courts.²⁶ The organization enjoyed slow but steady growth through the 1980s, with ten active regional chapters, well over 2,000 dues-paying members, and an active Washington office.²⁷ APJ's influence, however, loomed considerably larger than its relatively small constituency, few legislative successes, and limited media exposure.

The wonkish, gradualist inclinations of APJ contrasted starkly with the symbolic, activist, bottom-up political approach of Anabaptist-oriented evangelicals. Sojourners, for instance, engaged the political realm through protests and by issuing strident manifestos and lengthy lists of signatures. With the exception of a continuing close relationship with Senator Mark Hatfield, Sojourners nurtured very few contacts with high-level politicians, instead cultivating relationships with editors of important national newspapers such as the *New York Times*, *Newsweek*, and the *Washington Post*, which could publicize their protests to the masses.²⁸ Arrested by police hundreds of times in the 1980s, Wallis and his compatriots garnered substantial publicity from editors for protests at high visibility sites such as the White House, the Supreme Court, and Congress.

3-4; "APJ before the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs," *Public Justice Report* 5, No. 3 (December 1981), 1-2; "APJ Goes after Land Protection Policy," *Public Justice Report* 6, No. 9 (June-July 1983), 2; "APJ Contends for New Farm Policy," *Public Justice Report* 8, No. 3 (December 1984), 1; "APJ Goes Before House and Senate Committees on Farm Bill," *Public Justice Report* 8, No. 8 (May 1985), 1-3.

²⁵ "U.N. Special Session on Disarmament," *Public Justice Newsletter* (June-July 1978), 1-4; "APJ Joins in Brief to Supreme Court on Education Brief," *Public Justice Report* 8, No. 4 (January 1985), 1, 5; "Transcript of Oral Arguments before Court on Abortion Case," *New York Times*, April 27, 1989, A1.

²⁶ "APJ Joins in Supreme Court Plea," *Public Justice Report* 6, No. 5 (February 1983), 1-2; "APJ Addresses Farmland Control in Illinois," *Public Justice Report* 4, No. 9 (June-July 1981), 5-6.

²⁷ For an evangelical political action group with a similar perspective to APJ, see Concerned Christian Citizens of Lynden, Washington. The Coalition for Christian Outreach based in Pittsburgh, while primarily a campus ministry group, had a political side similar to APJ.

²⁸ On editors, see Jim Stentzel, "The Good News with the Bad: Covering Religion in the Secular Press," *Sojourners* 8, No. 4 (April 1979), 19-24.

ESA in the late 1970s, although affirming APJ's intent to reform structures, primarily sought to spark a groundswell of progressive evangelicals from within the evangelical subculture. By the early 1980s ESA had conducted over 60 two-day Discipleship Workshops in colleges and congregations. Funded initially by a Lilly Foundation grant, ESA sought to promote a new "more biblical understanding of evangelism" that included all forms of sin including structural evil; and to increase "an understanding of the biblical imperative for social action."²⁹ Workshop attendees participated in interactive activities—games, role playing, videos, discussions, prayer, and singing.³⁰ During two workshops at Gordon College and Gordon-Conwell Seminary in 1978, for instance, ESA blitzed the campus on the heels of Hunger Week, during which most students had participated in voluntary fasts. Sider spoke at a faculty symposium, gave lectures to nine classes, and delivered chapel addresses on "God and the Poor" and "Structural Evil" to crowds of 300 students. Other ESA representatives gave lectures on topics such as militarism, civil religion, living simply, non-violence, and the politics of Jubilee. Nearly 50 students participated in a series of workshops in the evenings, and wives of seminarians attended a "biblical feminism" seminar that featured calls for gender inclusive language and chips and dip made from recipes out of the *More with Less* cookbook. ESA's blitz ended with a meeting of evangelical ministers in Boston, including Paul Toms, pastor of the venerable Park St. Church and president of the NAE.³¹

²⁹ "15 Discipleship Workshops on Evangelism and Justice," in Folder "Discipleship Workshops," ESA Archives.

³⁰ See, for example, Mike Cromartie, "A Brief Report on the Discipleship Workshop at Mission Church of God in Atlanta," June 3, 1978, in Folder "Discipleship Workshops," ESA Archives.

³¹ Ron Sider, "A Brief Report on the Discipleship Workshop at Gordon-Conwell," March 1, 1978; Elaine Amerson, "A Sensitivity to Language"; Amerson, "Report on Discipleship Workshop, Gordon

ESA continued the Discipleship Workshop's bottom-up approach in the 1980s with a new emphasis on education and grass-roots mobilization. "Empowering Christians to work for change in their own communities is what ESA is all about," explained the organization in 1985 as it announced new emphases on education and "peace parishes."³² Sojourners likewise enjoyed modest growth, moving into a 7,000-square-foot floor of a Washington, D.C. office building, which housed the magazine, a book service, a peace ministry staff of 17, and a stable of interns and volunteers.³³ ESA, like APJ, labored through the 1980s with only modest growth and stability. Its resources divided and its identity fragmented over strategies for political transformation, the evangelical left failed to approach the spectacular, if short-lived, mobilization of Moral Majority.

II.

Plagued by a fragmented constituency, the evangelical left in the 1980s sought to extend its reach more broadly. The following case study of the evangelical left's opposition to Reagan interventionism in Nicaragua traces this ecumenical effort, which ultimately only served to reinforce the movement's inability to coalesce around a coherent identity.

Reagan's military interventions in Central America, designed to roll back communist gains, provoked kaleidoscopic reaction among evangelicals.³⁴ While the

College," December 3, 1977; Amerson, "Wow! What Serendipity!" in Folder "Discipleship Workshops," ESA Archives.

³² "ESA Sets Goals for 1985," *ESA Update* 6, No. 6 (November-December 1984), 1.

³³ Joe Roos, "Just Around the Corner," *Sojourners* 8, No. 4 (April 1979), 6.

³⁴ For helpful background on Central American intervention in the 1980s, see Christian Smith, *Resisting Reagan: The U.S. Central America Peace Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 3-58.

religious right steadfastly supported American intervention in Nicaragua and elsewhere, progressive evangelicals conversely denounced the Reagan Doctrine.³⁵ Robert Zwier, chair of the Northwest Iowa chapter of APJ, declared that the U.S. was trying to “throw its weight around the world like a bully.”³⁶ Both sides sought to sway a large swath of evangelicals in the middle, uneasy about Reagan’s quick use of the military but hopeful that intervention could promote global justice and instill democracy in a socialist-dominated Central America.

Progressive evangelicals thus cast their rhetoric against American interventionism in terms that would appeal to a broad swath of evangelicals.³⁷ Instead of raging against American imperialism as they had in the 1970s, the evangelical left began to frame their opposition to conservative politics in terms of religious freedom and human rights.³⁸

“The projection of American power to protect American interests,” wrote Jim Wallis,

³⁵ See, for example, Humberto Belli, *Breaking Faith: The Sandinista Revolution and Its Impact on Freedom and Christian Faith in Nicaragua* (Westchester: Crossway Books, 1985).

³⁶ Robert Zwier, “Defense: What Kind and How Much,” *Public Justice Report* 7, No. 10 (August-September 1984), 1-2. Also see Spykman, *Let My People Live*, 31, 33, 109, 110-11, 141, 152-157.

³⁷ On viewing religious freedom as a way of reaching out to the same constituency as Institute on Religion and Democracy, see Kerry Ptacek, “International Religious Liberty and the Great Commission,” 81-99, in Richard Cizik, ed., *The High Cost of Indifference* (Ventura, Cal.: Regal Books, 1984).

³⁸ “Invitation to Washington,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 3 (March 1977), 6; James Skillen, *International Politics and the Demand for Global Justice* (Sioux Center, Iowa: Dordt College Press, 1981), 107; Wes Michaelson, “Human Rights: A Surer Standard,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 4 (April 1977), 3-5; Wes Michaelson, “Jimmy Carter, Jacques Ellul and Human Rights,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 6 (June 1977), 3-4. “The North American Coalition for Human Rights in Korea,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 7 (July 1977), 17; “Seeds,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 1 (January 1978), 27; “Human Rights Theme of Maritain Conference,” *Public Justice Newsletter* (June-July 1978), 5; “The Continuing Significance of Human Rights,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 6 (March 1979), 1-3; “South Africa’s First Human Rights Conference,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 7 (April 1979), 1-2; “Scholars Address Reagan on Latin American Policy,” *Public Justice Report* 5, No. 1 (October 1981), 3-4; “Introductory Human Rights Bibliography,” *Public Justice Report* 12, No. 5 (February 1989), 5; “Human Rights, Human Righteousness” *Vanguard* 11, No. 1 (January-February 1981). Skillen, *International Politics*, 99-109; Paul G. Schrottenboer, “Testimony on Human Rights: The Reformed Ecumenical Synod,” *Transformation* 1, No. 3 (July/September 1984), 11-16; Gordon Spykman, “Human Rights: A Selective Bibliography,” *Transformation* 1, No. 3 (July-September 1984), 16-18; Jimmy Carter, “Human Rights: Dilemmas and Directions,” *Transformation* 1, No. 4 (October-December 1984), 2-5; Paul Marshall, *Human Rights Theories in Christian Perspective* (Toronto: Institute for Christian Studies, 1983).

“has completely superseded any concern for human rights in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy.”³⁹ Periodicals printed story after story on third-world dictators, propped up by the United States, inflicting travesties on citizens.⁴⁰ The Sandinista government, argued

³⁹ Jim Wallis, “The Rise of Christian Conscience,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 1 (January 1985), 12-16.

⁴⁰ On Asia, see Gene Stoltzfus and Dorothy Friesen, “A Shaky Triumph for Injustice: The Sixth Year of Philippine Martial Law,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 2 (February 1978), 20-23; Earl Martin, “Debasing the Philippines,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 7 (August 1983), 7; Jim Stentzel, “Park’s Predatory Reign in South Korea,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 4 (April 1977), 6-11; Jim Stentzel, “The Anti-Communist Captivity of the Church,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 4 (April 1977), 15-19; Vinoth Ramachandra, Chua Wee Hian, and Koichi Ohtawa, “Different Peoples, Same Purpose,” *HIS* 44, No. 6 (March 1984), 26-28; Ladwin C. Hadasa, “The Philippines: Shadows of a Hardening Authoritarianism,” *Transformation* 2, No. 3 (August 1985), 16-20. On Africa, see F. Kefa Sempangi, “The Solidarity of Evil: Western Economic Support for Idi Amin,” *Sojourners* (May 1978), 22-24; Danny Collum, “A Tottering Structure of Lies,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 11 (December 1983), 4-5; Wes Michaelson, “Rushing to Whose Rescue in Zaire?” *Sojourners* 7, No. 7 (July 1978), 3-4; Philemon F. Quaye [director of World Vision-Ghana], “How I Wish North American Evangelicals Would Influence U.S. Foreign Policy in Africa,” *Transformation* 2, No. 3 (August 1985), 23.

On the Middle East, see James Skillen, “God’s Will for Israel?” *Public Justice Report* 6, No. 1 (October 1982), 1-3; Danny Collum, “The Muddle with Middle East Policy,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 2 (February 1983), 4-5; Charles Kimball, “Convoluting Conflict,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 10 (November 1983), 4-5; Jonathan Kuttab [an evangelical Arab Christian lawyer in Israel, a Messiah College graduate and director of human rights organization The Service of Man], “How I Wish North American Evangelicals Would Influence U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East,” *Transformation* 2, No. 3 (August 1985), 15-16; “LaGrange Declaration,” *Sojourners* 8, No. 7 (July 1979), 24-25; Don Luce, “Proud Persians Under a Dictator,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 8 (August 1978), 9-12; James Skillen, “The U.S. in a Fractured Middle East,” *Public Justice Report* 5, No. 7 (April 1982), 1-3. On South America, see Sarah Ban Breathnach, “The Face of Juan Mendez,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 1 (January 1983), 24-28; *Seeds of the Kingdom: A Reader on Discipleship and the Shape of the Church* (Washington, D.C.: Peoples Christian Coalition, 1977), 81-84; Virginia G. Bouvier, “Chile: Now Hope 10 Years after the Coup,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 8 (September 1983), 10-12; Robert Maurer, “With Style, but No Grace: The Quiet, Systematic Suppression of Human Rights in Paraguay,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 12 (December 1977), 9. On Central America, see Joseph Eldridge, “Whose Intrusion? A Portrait of U.S. Territorial Imperative,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 1 (January 1983), 34-36; Danny Collum, “Replaying the Tragedy,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 7 (August 1983), 5-6; Joyce Hollyday, “The Bleak Landscape of El Salvador,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 3 (March 1984), 35-36; Joe Eldridge and Cressida McKean, “Uncivil Strife in El Salvador,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 7 (July 1977), 26-28; Bruce Buursma, “Opposition Broadens to Salvador Policy,” *Chicago Tribune*, April 18, 1981, A7; “An Evangelical Response to El Salvador,” *Vanguard* 11, No. 3 (May-June 1981), 20; James Skillen, “Reagan’s Mistake on El Salvador,” *Public Justice Report* 4, No. 6 (March 1981), 8; Louis Lugo, “An Analysis of U.S. Policy Towards El Salvador,” *Public Justice Report* 4, No. 9 (June-July 1981), 1-3; Wes Michaelson, “U.S. Imperial Instincts in Panama,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 11 (November 1977), 8-9; James Dekker, “Government Stability and Human Rights in Latin America,” *Public Justice Report* 6, No. 9 (June-July 1983), 5-7; Chris Moss, “Faulty Deductions,” *The Other Side* 19, No. 1 (November 1983), 24-25; Yvonne Dilling, *In Search of Refuge* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1984), 272; Vicki Kemper, “The Only Land We Have: Planned U.S. Base Threatens Honduran Farmers,” *Sojourners* 15, No. 2 (February 1986), 8-9. The many articles on Central America were printed in *Crucible of Hope: A Study Guide for the Churches on Central America* (Washington, D.C.: Sojourners 1984). The 148-page study guide for churches meant to expose “the creation of a U.S. military infrastructure on foreign soil, deployment of U.S. military advisers and troops, massive covert CIA support of right-wing brutality, administration lies to the public, and the abuse of American power causing vast suffering for millions of innocent people.” Noel Paul Stookey wrote the

Sojourners, offered a better environment for the growth of the evangelical church in Nicaragua.⁴¹

In addition to emphasizing human rights and religious freedom, efforts to appeal to the evangelical middle also led the evangelical left to more forthrightly denounce communist regimes.⁴² The Sandinista regime might be preferable to the U.S.-backed Nicaraguan Contras, Ron Sider contended, but this reality should not allow evangelicals' "extremely important condemnation of past and present injustices committed by Western powers to dull their sensitivity to the ghastly history of Marxist-Leninist totalitarianism in this century." Marxism, progressive evangelicals increasingly pointed out, promoted atheism, suppressed dissidents, and nurtured an imperialistic impulse.⁴³ Prone in the 1970s to criticize the United States almost exclusively, the evangelical left began to more vigorously attack Marxist totalitarianism.

popular "El Salvador" after reading the report. See "El Salvador," *Sojourners* 15, No. 2 (February 1986), 49

⁴¹ Thelma Pereira, Antonio Videira, and Ron Sider, quoted in "Nicaragua: Hearts and Bellies," *Sojourners* 12, No. 3 (March 1983), 20-21. Also see Karen King and Chris Moss, "Human Rights in Nicaragua," *The Other Side* 20, No. 5 (May 1984), 24-27.

⁴² Wes Michaelson, for instance, framed his criticism of David Truong's 15-year prison sentence and U.S. support for regimes--Philippines, Iran, Indonesia, Argentina--that were violating human rights only in the context of Soviet abuses. On the same day that Truong was sentenced, Michaelson pointed out, the Soviet Union announced that Shcharansky and Ginzburg would be put on trial. See Wes Michaelson "The Plank in our Eye," *Sojourners* 7, No. 8 (August 1978), 3-4; Julian Emergy, "Miscarriages of Justice," *Sojourners* 8, No. 2 (February 1979), 12-13; "What About the Russians?" *Sojourners* (November 1982); Reese, "Hope and Resistance," 257-270; Boyd Reese, "Christ and Capitalism," *Sojourners* 13, No. 5 (May 1984), 36; Thomas Finger, "Christians and Marxists ... The Debate Goes On," *Sojourners* 6, No. 4 (April 1977), 33-36; Bert Witvoet, "The Strength of our War Horses," *Vanguard* (March-April 1979), 12-14; Bud Bultman, "Say No to Marx ... and Adam Smith Too," *HIS* 44, No. 7 (April 1984), 32.

⁴³ Ronald J. Sider, "A Plea for More Radical Conservatives and More Conserving Radicals," *Transformation* 4, No. 1 (January 1987), 11-16; Sider and Richard K. Taylor, *Nuclear Holocaust and Christian Hope: A Book for Christian Peacemakers* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1982), 233. In *Christianity Today*, Sider denounced Soviet totalitarianism as a "ghastly evil" and acknowledges that the Soviet Union would certainly invade the United States if it would disarm. See Randy Frame, "Is the Road to Peace Paved with Might or with Meekness," *Christianity Today* 27, No. 11 (July 15, 1983), 39-42.

And yet, if progressive evangelicals increasingly sought, as Sider put it, to “praise what is good and beautiful in America; champion the American tradition of democratic process and religious and political liberty; and refuse to allow their valid critique of Western colonialism and current U.S. policy to blind them to the evils of Marxism,” they nonetheless refused to ignore Reagan’s support of contras in Nicaragua.⁴⁴ In the early 1980s several delegations of evangelicals traveled to Nicaragua at the invitation of the Evangelical Committee for Aid and Development (CEPAD), a Nicaraguan relief agency formed after the devastating 1972 earthquake.⁴⁵ CEPAD’s president Gustavo Parajón, an evangelical Baptist with a doctorate in medicine from Harvard, took representatives of the NAE, ESA, Sojourners, InterVarsity, *Christianity Today*, and a dozen professors and administrators of evangelical colleges on tours of Contra-devastated regions of Nicaragua. Parajón, seeking to expose “a covert effort by the United States government to destabilize the new government,” also showed off areas rejuvenated by Sandinista reform. The majority of Nicaraguan evangelicals, he explained to the delegations, lauded the reforms, believing that the United States resented the Sandinista’s independence and

⁴⁴ Sider, “A Plea,” 12; Beth Spring, “Evangelical Groups with Differing Views Consider Joint Trip to Nicaragua,” *Christianity Today* 29, No. 7 (April 19, 1985), 64. James Skillen wrote, “I do hope that U.S. citizens and my government have learned enough from Vietnam, Iran, and Central America to know that defense against communist insurgencies and against Soviet aggression cannot be secured by supporting unjust regimes in other countries.” See Skillen, “Is the U.S. Responsible for the Philippines?” *Public Justice Report* 8, No. 9 (June-July 1985), 5-7.

⁴⁵ CEPAD was the largest nongovernmental relief agency in the country, with projects in 400 Nicaraguan communities. Represents 80% of the 400,000 Protestants in the 2.8 million Nicaragua. The delegation included Vernon Grounds, president of Denver’s Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary; Tom Minnery of *Christianity Today*; David Howard of World Evangelical Fellowship; Ron Sider of ESA; Linda Doll from InterVarsity; and two representatives from *Sojourners*. For more on CEPAD, see “When Relief Work Leads to Revolution,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 3 (December 1979), 1-4.

refusal to take “orders from Washington.” Evangelicals, he concluded, enjoyed unfettered religious freedom and better economic prospects under the new government.⁴⁶

With the exception of Latin American Mission’s David Howard, who complained mostly of Sandinista abuses, the American delegates carried Parajón’s message back home to their constituents.⁴⁷ *Sojourners* asserted that while Sandinistas had made “serious errors in judgment,” Reagan, the Contras, and religious right leaders such as Pat Robertson were the true oppressors. Contra “counterrevolutionaries,” Wallis and Joyce Hollyday said, were “virtually mercenary soldiers for the CIA.”⁴⁸ Delegates from InterVarsity chided American evangelicals for looking at Nicaragua “through made-in-U.S.A. glasses” and for believing that “the U.S. is a bunch of good guys who always

⁴⁶ The Sandinistas even met with CEPAD monthly to listen to evangelicals’ concerns. See a copy of an April 15, 1983, open letter sent from CEPAD to Christians in the United States in *HIS* 44, No. 4 (January 1984), 21; Ronald G. Frase, “Believers Ask Yankees to Remove Cold War Blinders,” *Christianity Today* 25, No. 6 (March 27, 1981), 61-63; Gustavo Parajón, “Nicaragua: Evangelicals, Sandinistas and the Elections,” *Transformation* 2, No. 1 (January 1985), 4-6; Gustavo Parajón, “So That We Might Have Tomorrow: An Evangelical Leader Reflects on Nicaragua’s Past and Future,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 2 (March 1983), 29-30; Spykman, *Let My People Live*, 143.

⁴⁷ David Howard, “Two Views of the New Nicaragua,” *HIS* 44, No. 4 (January 1984), 16-17; Michael McConnell, “Journey to Jalapa,” *The Other Side* 19, No. 10 (October 1983), 48-50; Henri Nouwen, “The Suffering Christ: Calling the Christian Community to Peacemaking in Latin America,” *The Other Side* 19, No. 12 (December 1983), 16-19.

⁴⁸ Wallis and Hollyday, “A Plea from the Heart,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 3 (March 1983), 3-5. “Although I was uncomfortable with some of the political tendencies and policies of the Sandinista government, I came away deeply impressed by the achievements of the revolution including massive land reform, extension of medical care throughout the country, attempts to assure adequate nutrition for all, reduction of illiteracy from 58 per cent to 12 per cent, and respect for religion and freedom of worship. The death penalty has been abolished, human rights are respected, the terror and torture of the Somoza days has been eliminated, and the prison system has receive commendations from Amnesty International, the Red Cross, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.” See Richard Taylor, “For Penance and Peace,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 8 (September 1983), 13-15. Also see Joyce Hollyday and Jim Wallis, “Nicaragua: A Fragile Experiment,” 8-13; Miguel D’Escoto, “Nicaragua: An Unfinished Canvas,” 14-18; and “Nicaragua: Hearts and Bellies,” 20-21 in *Sojourners* 12, No. 3 (March 1983); Hollyday, “Misleading the Nation,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 6 (June-July 1983), 3-4; Hollyday, “His Speech Was Smoother than Butter,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 8 (September 1983), 3-5; Richard J. Barnet and Peter Kornbluh, “Contradictions in Nicaragua: The U.S. Policy of Punishment against the Sandinistas,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 5 (May 1984), 8-10. For a point by point refutation of U.S. charges of the Sandinistas, see Phillip Berryman, “Illusions of Villany,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 7 (August 1984), 13-17; Vicki Kemper, “Reagan Renews Contra Aid Drive,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 5 (May 1985), 9-10. For an investigative report of Pat Robertson and CBN, see “In the Name of Relief: A Look at Private U.S. Aid in Contra Territory,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 9 (October 1985), 13-20.

pursue justice.”⁴⁹ A Reformed evangelical traveling in Nicaragua with the Christian Medical Society blasted Reagan for trying to destabilize the nation through the CIA and for “lying about the situation there.” In the end, he declared, Reagan’s hostility was “driving the Sandinistas into the arms of the Cubans and Soviets.”⁵⁰ The Jubilee community in Georgia collected thousands of pages of testimony from Nicaraguan refugees that “refuted the administration’s version of the situation.”⁵¹ A group of evangelical college professors and administrators, according to *Christianity Today*, reported “amazing strides” in literacy, education, health, and humanitarianism as well as religious freedom for evangelicals. They “strongly condemned” U.S. efforts to weaken Sandinista governance.⁵² *Christianity Today*’s Tom Minnery, noting the dynamic growth of Nicaraguan evangelicalism, wrote that Nicaragua was “testing some cherished convictions” about Western capitalism.⁵³ Another group noted the religious themes that swathed the countryside: “Christ lives, and is coming soon!” “We are all the Revolution!—Social Christian Party,” “Young Christian Revolutionaries Celebrate the Fourth Anniversary of the Revolution.”⁵⁴ The Sandinistas, far from limiting religious

⁴⁹ Linda Doll, “Central America: Where to Start Reading,” *HIS* 44, No. 3 (December 1983), 28; Richard Millett, “Through U.S. Glasses: Common Distortions of Nicaragua,” *HIS* 44, No. 4 (January 1984), 14-16; Richard Pierard, “Do Something!” *HIS* 44, No. 4 (January 1984), 19-20; Wayne Bragg, “Another Cuba?” *HIS* 44, No. 4 (January 1984), 17-18; December 1983, January 1984.

⁵⁰ Richard V. Pierard, “Rethinking Nicaragua,” *Reformed Journal* 33, No. 6 (June 1983), 2-3

⁵¹ Don Mosley and Joyce Hollyday, *With our Own Eyes* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1996), 146.

⁵² The colleges included Bethel, King’s, Gordon, Goshen, Wheaton, Whitworth, and Seattle Pacific. See “Evangelicals Praise Nicaragua, Criticize U.S.,” *Christianity Today* 27, No. 14 (September 16, 1983), 36.

⁵³ Tom Minnery, “Why the Gospel Grows in Socialist Nicaragua,” *Christianity Today* 27, No. 7 (April 8, 1983), 34-42. For other reports of Sandinista support of evangelicalism in Nicaragua, see John Maust, “Latin Leaders Are Influenced by Behind-the-Scenes Witness Thrust,” *Christianity Today* 25, No. 10 (May 29, 1981), 34.

⁵⁴ Ed Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace: A Story of Resistance* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 32. Joyce Hollyday, “The Long Road to Jalapa,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 2 (February 1984), 26-30.

freedom, according to an increasingly strong coalition of evangelical leaders, promoted evangelical faith.⁵⁵

Sojourners' Wallis and Hollyday, observing that Contra forces did not attack towns where Americans were present, helped lead the coalition into a campaign of direct action against the U.S.-backed Contras. The pattern suggested not only CIA intelligence aid to the Contras but also a possible avenue of intervention. In cooperation with CEPAD, Baptist church leaders, and Sandinista leaders including Daniel Ortega, Sojourners coordinated "Witness for Peace," an operation in which American evangelicals strategically placed themselves in towns under attack by Contra forces with hopes that their presence would stop more attacks. NBC's *Today* show broadcasted one of the first interventions—in Ocotal in December 1983—on live television. Every major national newspaper carried stories of the innovative "shield of love."⁵⁶ Witness for Peace quickly expanded to dozens of towns throughout Nicaragua, often at the request of Nicaraguan evangelicals disturbed by growing and well-equipped Contra forces patrolling the northern mountains near the Honduran border.⁵⁷

Witness for Peace thereafter grew exponentially. Activists—attracted by an advertisement which read "Wanted: Non-violent Christian women and men, immoderate

⁵⁵ Spykman, *Let My People Live*, 172-174.

⁵⁶ Smith, *Resisting Reagan*, 77. On the role of Jubilee and Witness for Peace in sparking *People* magazine's coverage of a 1988 Witness for Peace campaign called "Walk in Peace," see Mosley, *With our Own Eyes*, 183. The article, entitled "Agonies of the Innocents," brought the biggest response in the history of the magazine. On the impressive media coverage and grass-roots publicity in congregations across the United States, see Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 44. On the media's reliance on Witness for Peace for material on developments in Nicaragua, see Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 165.

⁵⁷ For detailed descriptions of these interventions, see "Churchgoers Opposed to U.S. Policy Hold 'Peace Vigils' in Nicaragua," *Christianity Today* 28, No. 1 (January 13, 1984), 64-65; Mosley, *With our Own Eyes*, 149-152; Rebecca Gordon, *Letters from Nicaragua* (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987). On the significant role of CEPAD, see Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 28-29, 78, 123, 177. Nicaraguan Sixto Ulloa, a teetotaling Baptist pastor, for example, worked closely with Sandinista leaders to coordinate Witness for Peace interventions.

in opposition to militarism and foreign intervention, for peace mission to Nicaragua-Honduras border. Must speak fluent Spanish, have previous rural living experience in Third World, be of sound mind and body, and be prepared spiritually to stand and if necessary risk death alongside a people threatened with armed invasion by forces trained and outfitted in the U.S.”—flooded Sojourners’ main office with offers to pay their own travel expenses to help establish “a permanent, nonviolent, prayerful presence on the border between Nicaragua and Honduras.”⁵⁸ Sojourners required participants to attend a one-week training program on nonviolent reactions to mortar attacks, kidnappings, and rapes from Contra incursions. Despite the rigorous costs in time and money, there were soon enough volunteers that Sojourners organized rotating teams—four a month—that maintained a constant presence in Nicaragua.⁵⁹ In the first six months of 1984, 260 Americans traveled to Nicaragua in 13 Witness for Peace delegations. By the end of the 1980s, more than 4,000 activists had participated in Witness for Peace.⁶⁰

The evangelical fact-finding mission in Nicaragua also prompted a second major campaign, this one in a direct response to the U.S. invasion of Grenada. CEPAD’s Parajón pled, “We are anticipating an invasion at any time now. For God’s sake, please try to help us!”⁶¹ Drawn up by Sojourners’ Jim Wallis and Jim Rice in November 1983 in the aftermath of the U.S. invasion of Grenada, the “Pledge of Resistance” promised action if Nicaragua was invaded. “We will assemble as many North American Christians

⁵⁸ On the role of Sojourners in Witness for Peace—its organizational and public relations leadership—see Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 46-50, 68, 76.

⁵⁹ Marjorie Hyer, “21 Leave Here for Nicaragua to Be ‘Human Shields,’” *Washington Post*, December 1, 1983, p. A34; Joyce Hollyday, “A Shield of Love,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 10 (November 1983), 10-13.

⁶⁰ Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 20-23, 111. On the unsuccessful efforts of Jimmy Carter, Millard Fuller, and Habitat for Humanity to arrange a ceasefire between the Sandinistas and Contras in 1986, see Mosley, *With our Own Eyes*, 158-164.

⁶¹ Mosley, *With our Own Eyes*, 148.

as we can to join us and go immediately to Nicaragua to stand unarmed as a loving barrier in the path of any attempted invasion,” read the Pledge, “sharing the danger posed to the Nicaraguan people.”⁶² Within six months, Sojourners had organized a network of regional offices to spread the word if such an invasion began. Upon a signal for action, thousands would launch nonviolent vigils at every congressional field office in the nation, engage in civil disobedience at the White House, and plant activists in Nicaragua itself as deterrents to U.S. bombs. Sojourners sent these elaborate plans—and lists of over 40,000 signatures—to every member of Congress, the Departments of State and Defense, the CIA, and the White House.⁶³ Wallis drew widespread media attention as he introduced the campaign at a news conference in front of the State Department. “Now, if Reagan invades Nicaragua,” Wallis declared, “he’s going to have to put thousands of U.S. Christians in jail around the country.”⁶⁴

Subsequent events proved that Wallis’ words were not idle threats. After the Reagan administration imposed a full trade embargo on Nicaragua and after Congress passed \$27 million in aid to the Contras in June 1985, Pledge signers demonstrated in 200 cities across 42 states after organizers activated a signal. Police arrested more than 1,200 activists for civil disobedience. As Congress debated eight Contra aid votes in 1986, tens of thousands of Pledge activists occupied congressional offices for day, blocked gates at military bases, staged funeral processions and “die-ins, blocked traffic in major cities,

⁶² “A Promise of Resistance,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 11 (December 1983), 6.

⁶³ “A Pledge of Resistance: A Contingency Plan in the Event of a U.S. Invasion of Nicaragua,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 7 (August 1984), 10-11; Vicki Kemper, “‘We Will Do What We Promise’: Resistance Pledge Delivered to State Department,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 2 (February 1985), 7-8.

⁶⁴ “Nicaragua Policy Protested,” *Washington Post*, January 1985, G11; Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 104.

and rented airplanes to fly “U.S. Out of Nicaragua Now!” signs over sporting events.⁶⁵

By mid-1986 organizers had gathered 80,000 signatures. Boston-area organizer Anne Shumway remembered, “In fifteen years of activism, I never saw anything explode the way the Pledge did. It just took off. At public signings, people were just lining up to sign on.” The campaign, one scholar contends, very well may have helped avert a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua.⁶⁶

The Pledge of Resistance and Witness for Peace, for all their influence, point to several weaknesses within the evangelical left. First, a close look at the constituencies of the Pledge and Witness reveals how little support each campaign actually enjoyed from evangelicals. Sojourners may have instigated these two ventures and much of the theoretical weight may have come from evangelical sources, but both campaigns veered sharply in an ecumenical direction.⁶⁷ Within several years of their inception, most of the ground troops were being supplied by the mainline, Catholics, peace denominations, and non-religious sources. Torn between the political potential of a larger, ecumenical approach and a more evangelical approach, Sojourners took a middle road in struggling to carve out a broadly Christian identity. In a memo Wallis urged organizers of Witness for Peace to keep its religious identity, even as secular hangers-on began to offer support and resources. “The stronger the religious identity, the stronger will be the Witness.”

⁶⁵ Smith, *Resisting Reagan*, 81-84. On Baptist activism, see Daniel L. Buttry, “My Journey to Peacemaking,” *ESA Update* 10, No. 5 (July-August 1988), 6.

⁶⁶ The Reagan administration paid close attention to the “formidable” protest. An assistant secretary of state for Inter-American affairs told a *Washington Post* reporter, “We don’t normally think of them as political opponents, and we don’t know how to handle them.” Quoted in Mary McGrory, “Following Conscience’s Lead,” *Washington Post*, May 28, 1985, p. A2.

⁶⁷ On the evangelical origins of Witness for Peace, see “Churchgoers Opposed to U.S. Policy Hold ‘Peace Vigils’ in Nicaragua,” *Christianity Today* 28, No. 1 (January 13, 1984), 64-65. Vernon Grounds, president emeritus of Denver Conservative Baptist Seminary, and Ron Sider both served on the initial advisory committee.

Wallis stressed that a “prayerful, biblical approach” would keep the press, the government, and critics from writing off the movement as Marxist and un-American. Yvonne Dilling, a Witness veteran, added, “The last thing you want to be doing when people you love are getting killed is worrying about whether your prayer is going to offend someone.” Leaders resolved early debates by describing Witness for Peace as a “prayerful, biblically based community” that accepted people “comfortable” with this approach.⁶⁸ Just years later, however, Witness for Peace bogged down in debates over the roles of non-Christians on trips to Nicaragua. “Hours and hours of conference calls we would have,” remembers Bob Van Denend, “thirty people on a conference call arguing endlessly about how to be more inclusive.”⁶⁹ Ecumenical participants overwhelmed evangelical participants by the late 1980s.

The much-larger Pledge of Resistance, which depended on tens of thousands of grass-roots activists, moved beyond its evangelical roots even more quickly. In the early years, most protests “tended to be very religious,” but as the movement mushroomed and came under coalition authority, Sojourners lost organizational control. Organizers from twenty-one organizations debated over whether outspoken, practicing gays and lesbians could participate. Would they remove crosses and references to Christ in their literature

⁶⁸ Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 59-61.

⁶⁹ Quoted in Smith, *Resisting Reagan*, 408. For the story of Phyllis Taylor, a Jew participating in Witness for Peace, see Liane Rozzell, “An Affirmation of Life,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 6 (June 1985), 34-37. “I’ve really appreciated the sensitivity of Christians on the Witness for Peace steering committee, where I’m the only Jew. They often close a prayer by saying, ‘and so we pray, and I in the name of Jesus pray.’ They can affirm their own Christianity while not making me feel excluded as a Jew. It’s a very gracious thing for me; it doesn’t force me to pray in the name of Jesus. I might be fully part of the prayer, but if the closing is ‘and we pray in the Jesus’ name,’ then it’s blown for me. It’s kind of like a slap in the face. ... I don’t like being swallowed up’ in predominately Christian groups, but I rejoice that the Christian groups with which I’m working are really trying to translate out the issues.”

and activism to avoid offense to Jewish participants?⁷⁰ By 1986, gatherings for worship and prayer before protests had faded. Bitter fights broke out between secular and religious activists. Evangelicals of all stripes eyed these developments with suspicion, if they saw them at all. Witness and the Pledge never crossed the radar of many conservative evangelicals concerned with theological orthodoxy and still taken with doing politics as evangelicals. Even *The Other Side* and ESA, both of which provided cursory affirmation and initial labor, failed to join the Pledge and Witness as readily as non-evangelicals.⁷¹ Catholics, mainliners, and the Carolina Interfaith Task Force dominated religious activism in Nicaragua, despite the movement's evangelical roots.⁷²

In addition to the ecumenical trajectory of opposition to American intervention in Nicaragua, a debate over methods of dissent revealed the increasing incoherence of the evangelical left. Sojourners' Dennis Marker remembers the public relations nightmare that resulted from out-of-control protest: "These hardcore activists showed up saying, 'Straight to civil disobedience! Forget this church, man. We're going to meet at the civic

⁷⁰ Smith, *Resisting Reagan*, 222-223. Dick Taylor, a Catholic member of The Other Side and ESA, would "just sit there and argue, 'I really think we need to preserve the religious character of the Pledge with religious symbols, crosses, stars of David, etc.'" And others would reply, 'Forget it. We're not going to accept it.' There were hours and hours of disputes like that. I mean, it was torture." See Smith, *Resisting Reagan*, 332.

⁷¹ Neither, for instance, attended the Kirkridge retreat that launched the Pledge. Luminaries of the ecumenical peace movement comprised the bulk of the 33 activists who signed the Pledge were luminaries of the ecumenical peace movement. They represented groups such as Fellowship of Reconciliation, the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, Lutheran Peace Fellowship, Pax Christi USA, Church of the Brethren, World Peacemakers, Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, Center on Law and Pacifism, Kirkridge Peace Ministry, Detroit Peace Community, Resource Center for Nonviolence, UCC Office for Church in Society, New Call to Peacemaking, Jubilee Partners, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Bartimaeus Community, Thomas Merton Center, New York Catholic Worker, Clergy and Laity Concerned, and Reformed Church in America.

⁷² On the role of the Carolina Interfaith Task Force, see Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 20s. On Catholics, see for example, Ernesto Cardenal, "A Priest in the Ministry," *Sojourners* 12, No. 2 (March 1983), 22-23; Miguel D'Escoto, "Nicaragua: An Unfinished Canvas," *Sojourners* 12, No. 2 (March 1983), 14-18. See the diverse list of signatories opposing Reagan's aid to Contras in "Contra Atrocities," *Washington Post*, March 18, 1986, p. A17.

center. And forget the prayer services. We're going to yell and scream and bang pots and dance.' And the church people said, 'Well, that's not really what we intended.'" News reports of Pledge protesters urinating in a plant pot in a congressman's office in Washington and throwing rocks through windows of buildings in Chicago, horrified evangelical activists. Marker remembers, "A person of faith would never do that. ... They were hurting people! They're throwing rocks and I'm telling the press, 'We're totally non-violent, you know, life?' I had to do serious damage control."⁷³ Some in Sojourners worried that the desperate protests were "often detrimental to the longer-term educational work that needs doing." On the other hand, explained Jim Rice, "Reagan was about to invade Nicaragua and Congress was always about to send millions of dollars to the Contras and El Salvador. So the imperative, the urgency of the moment took over. It had to."⁷⁴

Moderate as well as Reformed evangelicals decried even Sojourners' comparatively irenic protests as unhelpful publicity stunts.⁷⁵ While APJ also deplored

⁷³ Quoted in Smith, *Resisting Reagan*, 334-336. On Witness for Peace members occupying the offices of Senator Robert Stafford, a Republican supporter of the Contras, see Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 88.

⁷⁴ Quoted in Smith, *Resisting Reagan*, 218-219.

⁷⁵ On Sojourners' gift of a "tractor for peace" covered in flowers and surrounded by bags of flour to Nicaraguan Ambassador Antonio Jarquin, request for forgiveness, and declaration that "Ronald Reagan and Jeane Kirkpatrick and the CIA are not our representatives in Central America," see Joyce Hollyday, "Tanks into Tractors," *Sojourners* 12, No. 10 (November 1983), 31. On the detention of a Witness for Peace delegation on a "peace flotilla" on the Rio San Juan by Contras and the resulting publicity, see Douglas Jehl, "Christian Group Deplores Support for Contras," *Los Angeles Times*, August 15, 1985, A8; Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 137-157. Mennonite and Brethren churches—inspired by a 1984 Ron Sider speech in France—formed the Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), which practiced nearly identical approaches to active peacemaking as Witness for Peace. On CPT, see Joseph S. Miller, "A History of the Mennonite Conciliation Service, International Conciliation Service, and Christian Peacemaker Teams," 3-29, in Cynthia Sampson and John Paul Lederach, eds., *From the Ground Up: Mennonite Contributions to International Peacebuilding* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, *The Anabaptists Are Back!* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1991); Leo Driedger and Donald B. Kraybill, *Mennonite Peacemaking: From Quietism to Activism* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1994), 140; Keith Graber Miller, *Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves: American Mennonites Engage Washington* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1996), 257.

Reagan's foreign policy, it took a more measured tone, disinclined toward activism and ritualistic symbolism.⁷⁶ Reformed scholars, less convinced than Sojourners of Reagan's diabolical intent and deceit, instead argued that U.S. policy towards Nicaragua was one of "aimless confusion" and sought to develop a long-range plan that centered on legislative solutions, local development, and education.⁷⁷ Calvin College's Center for Christian Scholarship, for instance, gathered nearly ten scholars for full-time research and writing for one year on the topic of "Toward a Reformed Response to the Conflicts in Central America," a step indicating their judgment that Sojourners' approach was inadequate.⁷⁸

ESA forged a middle course. Individual members of ESA participated in Witness and Pledge, but as an organization it focused more on education and prayer than protest.⁷⁹ ESA, for example, organized "Intercessors for Peace and Freedom," a prayer network of Christians concerned about Central America. It also flew eleven CEPAD members to the

⁷⁶ For nearly identical critiques from Reformed and Anabaptist scholars on "low intensity conflict," see Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 161-163; Spykman, *Let My People Live*, 155-156.

⁷⁷ For a concise statement of Witness for Peace's interventionist, rather than legislative approach, see Griffin-Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, 99, 170. Witness for Peace decided not to hire a Capitol Hill lobbyist, preferring a grass-roots approach. On the Reformed perspective that U.S. diplomacy was merely misguided and could be corrected by paying attention to diplomatic precedent, investing in local Nicaraguan development, and lobbying (but not protesting) the Reagan administration, see Jim Skillen, "Nicaraguan Policy: Foreign Policy at Its Worst," *Public Justice Report* 8, No. 4 (January 1985), 2, 4; Spykman, *Let My People Live*, 31, 99, 190-192. . APJ particularly deplored Reagan's "America-first" tendencies, arguing that Christian global concerns ought to transcend the interests of the nation. Skillen, *International Politics*, 20, 25, 28, 127-129. On Clark Pinnock's repudiation of his association with Sojourners, in part because of diverging views of Nicaragua, see Pinnock, "A Political Pilgrimage," *Eternity* (October 1984), 26-29; "A Sojourner Returns: An Interview with Clark Pinnock," *Religion & Democracy* (January 1985), 3-7.

⁷⁸ "Central American Conflicts Call Forth Growing Evangelical Response," *Public Justice Report* 8, No. 8 (May 1985), 3. The year-long project of "rigorous and creative scholarship," which involved 16 scholars, 170 interviews, a two-month trip to Central America, and a 270-page book. See Gordon Spykman, ed., *Let My People Live: Faith and Struggle in Central America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), xiii, 245.

⁷⁹ On Sider's trip to Nicaragua with a Witness for Peace team, see Sider, "Why Me Lord? Reluctant Reflections on the Trip to Nicaragua I Didn't Want to Take," *The Other Side* (April-May 1985), 20-25. Beth Spring, "Does the Sandinista Regime Promote Religious Freedom?" *Christianity Today* 28, No. 17 (November 23, 1984), 43-44. On ESA's national staff attending a commissioning service for ESA members traveling with Witness for Peace, see "ESA News Briefs," *ESA Update* 6, No. 1 (January-February 1984), 1.

United States to speak at evangelical congregations, the State Department, Congress, and the White House. In keeping with its focus on education and dialogue, ESA also planned a fact-finding trip to Nicaragua with its right-wing opponent Institute for Religion and Democracy, though it was cancelled by IRD to protest Sandinista atrocities.⁸⁰ ESA itself quickly backpedaled from its lenience toward the Sandinista government as it learned of more abuses of power. When the government declared a state of emergency in 1985, ESA called for a “quick end.” By late 1985, when Eric Olson, editor of the ESA newsletter, went to a public meeting with Daniel Ortega only to find repressive hisses and boos over any criticism of Nicaragua, ESA had begun to publicly condemn Sandinista violations of religious freedom.⁸¹

Evangelical activism in Nicaragua reveals the incoherent nature of evangelical left globalism in the 1980s. Rooting their opposition to Reagan initially in New Left scholarship that framed American intervention as imperialism, the evangelical left increasingly sought to cast their opposition in ways that might appeal to broader evangelicalism. Witness for Peace, for example, highlighted Sandinista support of evangelical missionary work and the CIA’s complicity in human rights abuses. At the same time, Sojourners continued to indict the United States for bloodlust in global dominance and economic hegemony. By the mid-1980s, it became clear that the

⁸⁰ “Two U.S. Groups Cancel Joint Trip to Nicaragua,” *Christianity Today* 29, No. 12 (September 6, 1985), 73.

⁸¹ Beth Spring, “The Government’s Heavy Hand Falls on Believers,” *Christianity Today* 29, No. 18 (December 13, 1985), 51-52; Sider, “Why Me Lord?” 25. On diverging views of the Sandinistas by Nicaraguan evangelicals and a split within CEPAD by the CNPEN (National Council of Evangelical pastors), see Beth Spring, “Evangelical Leaders Try to Reconcile Reports of Thriving Churches with Accounts of Repression,” *Christianity Today* 29, No. 12 (September 6, 1985), 54-57. On the NAE’s growing distance from CEPAD in 1985, see Beth Spring, “Evangelical Leaders Plan to Visit Pastors in Nicaragua,” *Christianity Today* 29, No. 6 (April 5, 1985), 38-39. *Christianity Today* also began to criticize the Sandinistas after 1985. See, for example, Beth Spring, “Campus Crusade Director Describes Harassment of Evangelicals,” *Christianity Today* 30, No. 2 (February 7, 1986), 52-53; Beth Spring, “Contras vs. Sandinistas: What Should the U.S. Do?” *Christianity Today* 30, No. 7 (April 18, 1986), 36-40.

evangelical left had misstepped in trying to straddle the evangelical-ecumenical divide. The activist and ecumenical trajectory of Witness for Peace and the Pledge of Resistance aggravated Reformed evangelicals, who preferred methods of education and political lobbying. The campaigns also concerned mainstream evangelicals, who wondered if the evangelical left was still evangelical. For their part, ecumenicals objected to the exclusive religious claims of orthodoxy. Despite a unified objection to Reagan interventionism, failed attempts to mobilize around Nicaragua highlighted the difficulties in mobilizing a broad swath of progressive and moderate evangelicals. As APJ, ESA, and Sojourners pioneered a new approach to evangelical globalism, its most defining characteristic was its diversity.⁸²

The same phenomena also undercut the evangelical left's concern about nuclear weapons. Despite a common opposition to arms build-up, internal divisions in method and evangelical-ecumenical friction hampered attempts for a coherent response to the nuclear arms race. On one hand, the evangelical left opposed Reagan's arms build-up in terms that might appeal to evangelical moderates and conservatives. The "Christian Declaration of Nuclear Resistance" in particular captured the salient themes of evangelical opposition to nuclear weapons in the post-Vietnam era: that the Soviet threat was exaggerated;⁸³ that nuclear weaponry posed serious health risks;⁸⁴ that protection of

⁸² A journal called *Transformation*, published by the World Evangelical Fellowship starting in the mid-1980s, captured the diversity within evangelicalism over international politics. Subtitled "An International Dialogue on Evangelical Social Ethics" and placing itself in the stream of the Chicago Declaration and the Lausanne Covenant, *Transformation* recruited contributors from both Anabaptist and Reformed perspectives including Charles Malik, Michael Novak, Jeane Kirkpatrick, René Padilla, John Howard Yoder, John Bernbaum, and James Dekker.

⁸³ Richard Barnet, "Lies Clearer Than Truth," *Sojourners* 8, No. 8 (August 1979), 16-18; Sider and Taylor, *Nuclear Holocaust*, 232-233.

⁸⁴ Jim Stentzel, "Uranium Traffic Halted at O'Hare," *Sojourners* 7, No. 1 (January 1978), 9; Helen Caldicott, "A Doctor's Prognosis for Nuclear Power," *Sojourners* 7, No. 4 (April 1978), 23-24; Jim

nuclear weapons threatened civil liberties;⁸⁵ that the costs of nuclear weapons were inevitably borne by underfunded social programs for poverty;⁸⁶ that nuclear power was an affront to God's creation and the mandate for creation stewardship;⁸⁷ that the use of nuclear weapons inherently violated tenets of just-war theory;⁸⁸ and that nuclear weapons had become idols of security that had replaced trust in God.⁸⁹ They also employed a newly concerned Billy Graham, Youth for Christ, Young Life, and World Vision to reach out to evangelical moderates.⁹⁰

Stentzel, "3 Nuclear Plants Hit by Accidents," *Sojourners* 7 (August 1978), 9; J. Charles Kraybill, "Conceit and Folly: The Record of the Nuclear Waste Industry," *Sojourners* 9, No. 4 (April 1980), 8-10; Richard Barnet, "Playing with Fire," *Sojourners* 12, No. 4 (April 1983), 36-37; Steven Henderson, "Routine Death: The U.S. Government's Neglect of Radiation Victims," *Sojourners* 12, No. 4 (April 1983), 37-38; Sider and Taylor, *Nuclear Holocaust*, 12-58. For several fictional scenarios of nuclear disaster, nuclear war in the Middle East, sabotage at a nuclear power plants, and holocaust by accidents, see Michael P. Hamilton, ed., *To Avoid Catastrophe: A Study in Future Nuclear Weapons Policy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977).

⁸⁵ "Jim Cubie, "The Unacceptable Risks of Nuclear Energy," *Sojourners* 7, No. 3 March 1978, p. 16-19; Mark Hayes, "Let Them Eat Yellow Cake," *Sojourners* 7, No. 4 (April 1978), 25-27.

⁸⁶ J.S., "The Peace Tax Alternative," *Church Herald* (April 1, 1977), 8-9, copy in Box IV1, "Articles and Critiques about Sojourners," Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

⁸⁷ "A Call to Faithfulness," *Sojourners* 7, No. 6 (June 1978), 19-22; Larry L. Rasmussen, "Care for the Earth," *Sojourners* 14, No. 6 (June 1985), 42-43; Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, *A Worldly Spirituality: The Call to Take Care of the Earth* (New York, Harper & Row, 1984); Wes Michaelson, "A Change of Heart in Energy," *Sojourners* 7, No. 6 (June 1978), 13-18; Joan Orgon, "Chernobyl Accident Heightens Awareness of World's Fragile Ecosystem," *Public Justice Report* 9, No. 9 (June-July 1986), 1-2.

⁸⁸ On how nuclear weapons violate noncombatant immunity, proportionality, and defense-only tenets of just-war theory, see Sider and Taylor, *Nuclear Holocaust*, 61-92; John R. W. Stott, "Calling for Peacemakers in a Nuclear Age, Part I," *Christianity Today* 24, No. 3 (February 8, 1980), 44-45; "Just Defense and Nuclear Weapons," *Public Justice Report* 8, No. 5 (February 1985), 3-4.

⁸⁹ Richard Barnet, "Of Cables and Crises: A Policy Analyst Connects His Faith with U.S. Nuclear Policy," *Sojourners* 12, No. 2 (February 1983), 16-18; Gordon Cosby, "Resting on Golgotha's Cross: Security in a Nuclear World," *Sojourners* 7, No. 9 (September 1978), 24-26; Pat Hostetler Martin, *The Basis of Our Fears*, quoted in "Seeds," *Sojourners* 12, No. 7 (August 1983), 34.

⁹⁰ On Billy Graham's outspoken change of heart over nuclear weapons, see Marjorie Hyer, "Support for Arms Treaty Urged by Billy Graham," *Washington Post*, August 1, 1979, A12; "A Change of Heart: Billy Graham on the Nuclear Arms Race," *Sojourners* 8, No. 8 (August 1979), 12-14; William North, "Graham Comes Home, Speaks Out on Hot Topics," *Wheaton Record* 110, No. 7 (October 25, 1985), 2. On a statement of "non-cooperation with our country's preparation for nuclear war," see "Christian Leaders Oppose Arms Race," in Box IV3, Folder "News Releases and Post-American," Sojourners Collection, WCSC. The statement read, "On all levels—research, development, testing, production, deployment, and actual use of nuclear weapons—we commit ourselves to resist in the name of Jesus Christ."

Frustration with the slow movement of its own tradition, however, pulled the evangelical left in an ecumenical direction, particularly as support for Sojourners' anti-nuclear weapons campaign burgeoned in non-evangelical quarters. "Theologically, evangelicals have abandoned the biblical hope that the kingdom of God breaks into our history," wrote Wes Michaelson. "Evangelicalism on its own has lacked the resources that are necessary to build and sustain a life of faithful discipleship." In its place, Michaelson continued, Sojourners was drawing from ecumenical traditions and engaging social activists of all stripes.⁹¹ A Sojourners-authored moratorium proposal that eventually became an amendment to the SALT II treaty in 1979—and then the prototype for the nuclear freeze proposals of the early 1980s—won the day among national peace groups as the preferred strategy for reaching nuclear disarmament. Randy Kehler, a community organizer in Massachusetts, cited the influence of Jim Wallis and Richard Barnet as he spearheaded a local initiative movement to place nuclear freeze referendums on ballots in New England.⁹² The referendum movement rapidly expanded past the several state senatorial districts in western Massachusetts to California and Vermont. By 1983 the movement enjoyed active campaigns to pass referendums in every state and two-thirds of the nation's congressional districts, adding to the national stature already achieved when in 1982 when Mark Hatfield and Edward Kennedy introduced a nuclear freeze resolution in the United States Senate.⁹³

⁹¹ Wes Michaelson, "What Nurtures Us," *Sojourners* 7, No. 5 (May 1978), 16-19.

⁹² Kaiser's stories also named Randall Forsberg of the Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies as an important source of the movement. See Robert G. Kaiser, "Movement against Nuclear Arms Is Mushrooming," *Washington Post*, April 11, 1982, p. A1; Robert G. Kaiser, "Weapons Freeze Has Caught Fire in Heartlands," *Washington Post*, March 31, 1982, p. A1; Boyd T. Reese, "Resistance and Hope" (Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1991), 285-287.

⁹³ On Hatfield's campaign to reduce defense spending and to appropriate money for a national peace academy as chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, see Colman McCarthy, "Doing Battle for

The resolution, which urged immediate and substantive negotiations toward a verifiable freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear warheads and missiles, carried electoral ramifications. It sparked heated debate in the Senate and a sharp rebuke from the Reagan administration, which rejected the notion of freeze proponents that the Soviets and Americans held a nuclear parity. The Democratic Party endorsed the nuclear freeze at its 1982 convention, and the resolution appeared on 28 state and local ballots, winning 25 of them. Scholars estimate that freeze supporters claimed a net gain of 20-30 seats in the House based on the resolution's impact on congressional races.⁹⁴ Though an amended freeze resolution bogged down in complex parliamentary maneuvers in the House, the prominence of the movement spoke to the significant anti-Reagan sentiment in the 1980s and the resonance of the work of Sojourners and other progressive evangelicals in certain sectors of American politics.

Sojourners' leadership in the nuclear freeze movement introduced them to political co-belligerents with a more radical proposal. Groups such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation, World Peacemakers, Clergy and Laity Concerned, New Call to Peacemaking, and Prolifers for Survival led Sojourners in the early 1980s to back unilateral nuclear disarmament.⁹⁵ "For many of us this has become a spiritual issue,"

Peace," *Washington Post*, June 15, 1980, p. H6; Richard L. Lyons, "Hatfield Plots Moderate Course Through Conservative Senate Sea," *Washington Post*, November 14, 1980, p. A3; Mary McGrory, "Mark Hatfield, Newly Armed, Zeroes In on Defense Spending," *Washington Post*, November 3, 1981, p. A3; Paul W. Valentine, "Thousands Head Here for Antidraft Rally," *Washington Post*, March 21, 1980, p. C3. One observer pointed out, "It must be awfully galling to the Republicans to finally get control of the Senate and have Hatfield be the one to get appropriations." See Walter Shapiro, "The New, Republican Senate: Still Moderate in Spite of Itself," *Washington Post*, January 20, 1981, p. Z21.

⁹⁴ On the political debate over a nuclear freeze, see Committee on International Security and Arms Control, National Academy of Sciences, *Nuclear Arms Control: Background and Issues* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1985), 81-90.

⁹⁵ On collaboration, for instance, with Mobilization for Survival in the late 1970s, see Dana Powell, "Report from New York," *Sojourners* 7, No. 7 (July 1978), 7; Jim Wallis, "Crisis of Faith," *Sojourners* 7, No. 3 (March 1978), 3-4. The Other Side similarly called for unilateral disarmament. See Tom Snavey,

wrote Wallis. “For us, nuclear weapons are an intolerable evil, and as Christians we cannot cooperate with their production or use. We are not just demanding the reduction of nuclear weapons, we are calling for their elimination. We are the new abolitionists.”⁹⁶ For Sojourners a nuclear freeze now did not go far enough, and some in the evangelical left protested in Manichean terms toward that end. “The limits of electoral action alone,” wrote Wallis after the Hatfield-Kennedy resolution died, “are painfully clear.”

Sojourners’ conclusion led them to commit acts of civil disobedience.⁹⁷ After drawing national television coverage while picketing in the congressional rotunda as the Senate debated funding for the MX missile system, Wallis wrote “We are now entering a new phase of building a movement of conscience and nonviolent direct action—a mass movement of public refusal, non-cooperation, and civil disobedience on a scale as never before.”⁹⁸ Many in the Sojourners and The Other Side communities refused to pay war taxes, contributed to the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, and helped mobilize

“Clashing Empires,” *The Other Side* 20, No. 9 (September 1984), 10-11; Phil Harnden, “How Shall We then Survive? Mobilization for Survival and What It Is Doing to Keep Us from Being Blown to Smithereens,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 5 (May 1978), 46-52.

⁹⁶ Jim Wallis, “Nuclear War by 1999?” *Sojourners* 6, No. 2 (February 1977), 3-4; Wes Michaelson, “Curiouser and Curiouser Bomb Logic,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 2 (February 1977), 4-5; Dick McSorley, “It Is a Sin to Build a Nuclear Weapon,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 2 (February 1977), 15-16; Jim Cubie, “Bitter Fruit,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 2 (February 1977), 19-21; Jim Wallis, “Crossroads for the Freeze,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 1 (January 1983), 4-5.

⁹⁷ For a rationale for civil disobedience, see Jim Wallis, “The Way of Nonviolent Resistance,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 4 (April 1983), 3-4; Richard Taylor and Ronald Sider, “Fighting Fire with Water: A Call for Assertive Nonviolent Resistance,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 4 (April 1983), 14-17; Ched Myers, “By What Authority? The Bible and Civil Disobedience,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 5 (May 1983), 10-14; Richard Taylor, “With All Due Respect: An Historical Perspective on Civil Disobedience,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 5 (May 1983), 15-18; and “Mom and Dad Are in Jail,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 5 (May 1983), 33.

⁹⁸ Jim Wallis, “Beyond the Watchman’s Warning,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 7 (August 1983), 4-5. On the Peace Pentecost ’83 gathering at the National Cathedral and the protest at the Capitol building, see Joyce Hollyday, “Bathed in the Spirit: The Story of Peace Pentecost,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 7 (August 1983), 24-28; “Arms Bazaar,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 8 (September 1983), 6; “Peace Pentecost,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 6 (June-July 1984), 5; Joyce Hollyday, “Wayfare,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 5 (May 1985), 34.

resistance to the “White Train” that carried nuclear warheads across the nation.⁹⁹

Protesters held vigils in 300 towns along the train tracks, and at Fort Collins and Bangor, they sat on the tracks to stop the train’s progress.¹⁰⁰

Sojourners’ news conferences and coordination of nationwide protests, as in the case of resistance to American intervention in Nicaragua, mobilized more non-evangelicals than evangelicals.¹⁰¹ The Sojourners community began to host non-religious nuclear freeze advocates and conferences nearly as much as evangelical guests, and *Sojourners* magazine featured more advertisements and contributors from non-evangelicals than evangelicals.¹⁰² A group of mainline pastors in Milwaukee, for instance, referred to themselves as “Sojourner Christians,” and startling numbers of Catholics began to identify with the evangelical left.¹⁰³ A 1981 issue of the *Catholic*

⁹⁹ On tax resistance, see John Howard Yoder, “Why I Don’t Pay All My Income Tax,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 3 (March 1977), 11-12; Dale W. Brown, “The Bible on Tax Resistance,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 3 (March 1977), 13-15; Donald Kaufman, “Paying for War,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 3 (March 1977), 16-19; Mark Olson, “How to Rechanel Your Taxes for Peace,” *The Other Side* 20, No. 1 (January 1984), 29. On ritual protest in general, see the satirical “The Sojourners Guide to the Nation’s Capitol,” *Sojourners* 15, No. 6 (June 1986), 39. The guide claimed that the “best demonstration sites” were the South African Embassy and the White House. It also offered “a critical tip to all tourists”: “Don’t come expecting to see the cherry blossoms or democracy at work. Both are rare, momentary, and totally unpredictable events—although once a year, for a little while, the cherry blossoms bloom at some point.”

¹⁰⁰ Barbara Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 202-203; Jim Douglass, “Tracking the White Train”; Don Mosley, “This Train Is Bound for ...?”; “Route of Resistance: Stories of Vigil and Prayer”; and “Map of the White Train” in *Sojourners* 13, No. 2 (February 1984); Mosley, *With our Own Eyes*, 233-239; Colman McCarthy, “The White Train of Death Is No Secret,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 17, 1984, C7.

¹⁰¹ Other evangelical leftists also found this to be the case. Mitties McDonald, an assistant professor at Azusa Pacific University, becomes a speaker for the Interfaith Center to Reverse the Arms Race. See “Workshop Speakers” in “The Church and Peacemaking in the Nuclear Age Provisional Program Schedule,” p. 26, in Folder “Peacemaking Conference, 5/25-28/83,” Fuller Archives.

¹⁰² “Sojourners Fellowship Update,” February 7, 1983, p. 1. Copy in Box VII, Folder “Update 1983,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC. On Sojourner’s sponsorship of a national conference on “Christian Conscience and civil disobedience,” see Mary McGrory, “Following Conscience’s Lead,” *Washington Post*, May 28, 1985, p. A2. On connections with the War Resister’s League, see “Connections,” *The Other Side* (September 1978), 13.

¹⁰³ Richard L. Kenyon, “The Mainliners: Magazine Shook Ranks of Sleeping Protestantism,” copy in Box IV3, “News Releases and Post-American,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC. Mainline interest in the

Reporter noted that of three pictures hanging over Jim Wallis' desk—St. Francis, Dorothy Day, and Groucho Marx—two were Catholic.¹⁰⁴ Paulist Press reprinted Ron Sider's *Rich Christians*.¹⁰⁵ The Sojourners intentional community itself experienced a flowering of diversity. "We have broadened beyond our evangelical beginnings," explained a member, "as those of diverse Christian backgrounds, including mainline Protestants, Anabaptists, and Catholics, have joined us and shaped our community's life."¹⁰⁶ By 1985, national news reporters were calling Sojourners "ecumenical," when five years earlier nearly all descriptions and self-descriptions referred to the community as evangelical.¹⁰⁷

evangelical left—first expressed in the National Council of Church's "deep feeling of kinship" with the Chicago Declaration and the *Post-American*—grew steadily into the 1980s. See Roger Ridgway, "The Post-Americans," *Toledo Area Council of Churches Newsletter* (April 1972), 7. Copy in IV3—News Releases and Post-American," Sojourners Collection, WCSC; "A Response to 'A Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern,'" approved October 11, 1974, by the Division of Church and Society of the NCC, in Box 3, Folder 6, "Thanksgiving Workshop: Evangelicals for Social Action: Miscellaneous Materials," ESA Collection, BGCA; George Telford, "Personal Identification"; Ira Gallaway, "Personal Identification"; and J. Alan McLean, "Personal Identification," in Folder "1977," ESA Archives. On Wallis' consultation with Episcopalians, see Marjorie Hyer, "Episcopal Panel Eyes Nuclear War Issue," *Washington Post*, February 25, 1984, p. C10; Doug Bailey, "A Jolting Letter from Jail," *Calvary Church Chronicle* (January 24, 1982), 1, in Box VIII, "Articles about Jim Wallis," Sojourners Collection, WCSC. On the very few connections between the mainline and evangelicalism before the mid-1970s, see Ron Sider, "ESA's History," copy in author's possession.

¹⁰⁴ Jim McManus, "Sojourners: Magazine, Community—and More," *National Catholic Reporter* (October 23, 1981), 2; James Bradley Burke, "The Second Day of Christmas without the Turtle Doves," *Chicago Catholic* (December 5, 1980), 25, copy in Folder, "Clippings," Box IV3, "News Releases and Post-American," Sojourners Collection, WCSC; "Yes There Are Prophets," *Good Newsletter* 7, No. 9 (September 1980), 3, copy in Folder, "Critiques about Magazine," Box IV1, "Articles and Critiques about Sojourners," Sojourners Collection, WCSC. On evangelical left appreciation of Catholicism, see Wes Michaelson, "What Nurtures Us," *Sojourners* 7, No. 5 (May 1978), 16-19; Wallis, *Revive Us Again*, 162; Danny Collum, "Thank God for the Catholic Worker," *Sojourners* 12, No. 5 (May 1983), 7; "The Bishops' Moral Capital," *Sojourners* 14, No. 1 (January 1985), 5-6; "APJ Director Contributes to Two New Books," *Public Justice Report* 11, No. 2 (November 1987), 7; "Richard John Neuhaus Launches New Venture Following Raid," *Public Justice Report* 12, No. 10 (September 1989), 6-7.

¹⁰⁵ Also see Ron Sider, "Property and Stewardship: A Biblical Perspective," *New Catholic World* (September-October 1977).

¹⁰⁶ Lindsay McLaughlin, "A Brief Glimpse," *Sojourners* 14, No. 1 (January 1985), 37.

¹⁰⁷ Mary McGrory, "Following Conscience's Lead," *Washington Post*, May 28, 1985, p. A2.

As the evangelical left collaborated with other traditions, it lost large numbers of evangelicals. Ecumenical connections limited the evangelical left's attention to and jeopardized connections with broader evangelicalism. A leader of the Shiloh community in Oregon, for example, sent to prison during the Vietnam War for conscientiously objecting, turned "staunchly conservative" in the 1980s.¹⁰⁸ Michael Cromartie, in the 1970s ensconced in the evangelical left, developed connections with the religious right. A former ESA board member, Cromartie in the 1980s called many of ESA's positions "bogus" and allied with the Washington think tank Ethics and Public Policy Center.¹⁰⁹ Lane Dennis, a regular contributor to the *Post-American* in the mid-1970s, edited Francis Schaeffer's most strident works in the early 1980s.¹¹⁰ The studied countercultural impulse of Os Guinness in the mid-1970s turned into fodder for the religious right in the early 1980s. Clark Pinnock, faculty mentor to the Post-Americans at Trinity Seminary in the early 1970s, turned neo-conservative in the 1980s, accusing Sojourners of holding a "naïve worldview" and of justifying a violent Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua.¹¹¹

The 1983 "Peacemaking in a Nuclear Age" conference at Fuller Seminary highlighted evangelical cleavage on the nuclear issue. Wallis breezed into the conference

¹⁰⁸ Peterson, "Christ, Communes," 110.

¹⁰⁹ On Cromartie's involvement in the evangelical left in the 1970s, see "Cromartie Personal Identification," Folder "1977," in ESA Archives. Cromartie had attended Covenant College and was working for Chuck Colson's Prison Fellowship in 1977. He cited Jacques Ellul, John Stott, Koinonia's Clarence Jordan, Carl Henry, *The Other Side*, *Christianity Today*, *Sojourners*, *Reformed Journal*, and *Wittenburg Door* as formative influences on him. On Cromartie's criticism of ESA, see Beth Spring, "With the Religious Right in Disarray, Two Groups Consider New Opportunities," *Christianity Today* 31, No. 9 (July 10, 1987), 46.

¹¹⁰ On Lane Dennis's identification with the emerging evangelical left in the 1970s, see "A Conversation with Young Evangelicals," *Post-American* 4, No. 1 (January 1975), 6-13. On Dennis in the 1980s, see correspondence between Dennis, Schaeffer, Sider, and Vernon Grounds in Folder "1985," ESA Archives.

¹¹¹ Pinnock also cited numbers of other Sojourners who had repudiated their leftist political commitments. Clark Pinnock, "A Political Pilgrimage," *Eternity* (October 1984), 26-29; "A Sojourner Returns: An Interview with Clark Pinnock," *Religion & Democracy* (January 1985), 3-7.

for just a day, only temporarily out on bail from a Washington jail for an illegal demonstration in the Capitol building rotunda. After delivering a fiery speech denouncing nuclear arms and Reagan, he immediately left, unable to participate in extended deliberations.¹¹² For conservative and moderate evangelicals, Wallis' ecumenism served only to heighten suspicions that radical evangelicals harbored Marxist sympathies. For Reformed evangelicals, Wallis' methods represented all that was wrong about an activist approach: hasty symbolic action without deliberate thought or negotiation.¹¹³ Together, these divisions marked the failure of the evangelical left to nurture a coherent identity in the early 1980s.

III.

In a last-ditch effort to resolve evangelical-ecumenical and Reformed-Anabaptist tensions, several key progressive evangelicals in the mid-1980s sought to coalesce the divided movement around a consistent pro-life ethic. For nearly a decade, evangelical left activists had variously linked opposition to patriarchy and nuclear weapons, misogyny and abortion, and abortion and war.¹¹⁴ *The Other Side*, for example, mourned the double

¹¹² John Dart, "Church Conservatives Swamped on Question of Arms Buildup," *Los Angeles Times*, May 28, 1983, p. B6.

¹¹³ API, for instance, called for negotiations as the centerpiece of gradual shift "away from nuclear weapons as the linchpin of its defense policy." See "Just Defense and Nuclear Weapons," *Public Justice Report* 8, No. 5 (February 1985), 3-4. For a continued debate between Anabaptist and Reformed perspectives on nuclear arms and other matters of diplomacy, see Alberto R. Coll, "Christian Realism and Prudence in Foreign Policy: A Challenge to Evangelicals," 21-42, in Michael Cromartie, ed., *Evangelicals and Foreign Policy: Four Perspectives* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1989). Coll writes, "These radical evangelicals, who insist that they are neither 'right' nor 'left' but simply 'biblical,' are in fact heavily indebted to the predominant intellectual milieu of the Left, and to various currents of neo-pacifism, neo-Marxism, and liberation theology. ... They often view arms control as if it were a panacea for our difficult security dilemmas" (21).

¹¹⁴ See, for example, Mary Meehan, "Will Somebody Please Be Consistent," *Sojourners* 9, No. 11 (November 1980), 14; Jim Douglass, "Patriarchy and the Pentagon Make Abortions Inevitable," *Sojourners* 9, No. 11 (November 1980), 14-15; Byron Borger, "Modern Cannibalism," *Vanguard* (January-February

tragedy of the Pentagon's importing of "45,000 human fetuses from South Korea for testing the effects of the neutron bomb on fresh human tissue."¹¹⁵ Sojourners likewise mourned the fact that "Life has become cheap at the Pentagon and in abortion clinics, at the headquarters of large corporations and in pornographic movie houses, at missile silos and genetic research laboratories, in the ghetto and in homes where families are breaking up."¹¹⁶ In its unconventional linking of issues from both the left and right based upon an overarching concern for "life," the evangelical left sought to ultimately reconcile its competing identities and shifting constituencies.

The evangelical left borrowed the "consistent life ethic" from American Catholics. "The protection of life," wrote Eileen Egan as early as 1971, "is a seamless garment. You can't protect some life and not others." Juli Loesch, a Catholic antiwar and nuclear weapons activist in the early 1970s, began in the mid-1970s to agitate against abortion when she awakened to the "subcellular violence" posed to fetuses by nuclear radiation.¹¹⁷ She organized sit-ins at weapons manufacturers and nuclear power plants with protests at abortion clinics, confounding both by distributing anti-Pentagon tracts at anti-abortion rallies and anti-abortion tracts at peace demonstrations.¹¹⁸ Finding no true

1981), 19-20; Marianne McMullen, "Nucleus of Hope," *Sojourners* 12, No. 9 (October 1983), 14-15; "Connections," *Sojourners* 12, No. 10 (November 1983), 42; Liane Rozzell, "Double Jeopardy: Racism and Violence against Women," *Sojourners* 13, No. 10 (November 1984), 20; Ginny Soley, "Our Lives at Stake: The Cultural Roots of Sexual Violence," *Sojourners* 13, No. 10 (November 1984), 13-15; William Stringfellow, "An Assault upon Conscience," *Sojourners* 13, No. 9 (October 1984), 22-25; Phil Baker-Shenk, "A Poisonous Plague: The Crisis of Toxic Wastes and Herbicides," *Sojourners* 13, No. 10 (November 1984), 31-32.

¹¹⁵ "Sidelines," *The Other Side* 14, No. 2 (February 1978), 9.

¹¹⁶ Jim Wallis to "Friend," circa Summer 1981, in Folder IV2, "Direct Mail Packets, Winter 1981-Winter 1983," Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

¹¹⁷ Gretchen Kaiser, "Pro-Lifers for Survival: Breaking Stereotypes," *Georgia Bulletin* (November 25, 1982).

¹¹⁸ James Risen and Judy Thomas, *Wrath of Angels: The American Abortion War* (New York: Basic Books, 1998), 63.

home in either camp, Loesch in 1980 finally merged her twin concerns into an organization called Pro-Lifers for Survival. Joseph Cardinal Bernadin in the early 1980s carried the campaign to a much larger audience as he united abortion, capital punishment, assisted suicide, economic injustice, pornography, unjust war, and the protection of women into a seamless garment.¹¹⁹

Progressive evangelicals looked on with increasing resonance and sought to replicate the success of the burgeoning Catholic movement. As they did, grass-roots connections between evangelicals and Catholics grew.¹²⁰ Vicki Sairs, for example, converted at the evangelical Grace Haven Farm in Mansfield, Ohio, sought out Loesch at a March 1981 antinuclear power demonstration at Three Mile Island. The meeting led Sairs to establish a Pro-Lifers for Survival chapter in State College, Pennsylvania, that tried to persuade campus leftists to a pro-life position on abortion and InterVarsity students to a position against nuclear weapons.¹²¹ *Sojourners'* celebrated coming-out issue against abortion in the November 1980 issue of its magazine also revealed the new approach's Catholic roots. Many of the issue's seventeen articles were either written by Catholics or cited significant Catholic influences. When a flood of letters led *Sojourners*

¹¹⁹ Joseph Bernadin in Thomas Fuechtmann, ed., *Consistent Ethic of Life* (Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1988).

¹²⁰ On the Catholic influence, see Bill Kallio, "From Ambivalence to Action" *ESA Update* 6, No. 4 (July-August 1984), 3; Phil M. Shenk, "Bishops Connect Pro-Life Issues," *Sojourners* 10, No. 1 (January 1981), 8; "Liane Rozzell, "'Respect Life' United Concerns," *Sojourners* 12, No. 10 (November 1983), 9; Danny Collum, "Reagan's Election Crusade," *Sojourners* 13, No. 4 (April 1984), 4-5; Liane Rozzell, "Youth Pro-Lifers Make Connections," *Sojourners* 12, No. 1 (January 1983), 6; Mary Ellen Griffin, "New Campus Organization Joins National Abortion Fight," *Wheaton Record* 104, No. 1 (September 14, 1989), 2-3; Liane Rozzell, "An Affirmation of Life," *Sojourners* 14, No. 6 (June 1985), 34-37; John T. McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003).

¹²¹ Vicki Sairs interview, South Bend, Ind., February 20, 2008.

to print a 20-page booklet to meet demand for the November issue, the broader movement began to sense grassroots potential.¹²²

In the early 1980s several key leaders sought to frame the entire evangelical left's agenda around the issue of life. "The energy of the pro-life movement must be removed from the ideological agenda of the New Right," warned Wallis about letting the religious right co-opt anti-abortion passion.¹²³ Instead, Wallis continued, the evangelical left should rally around abortion as a "threshold issue" that might soften evangelical conservatives and moderates toward progressive political planks.¹²⁴ Ron Sider argued that such a strategy was feasible, pointing out in a 1981 memo to top evangelical leaders that a recent Gallup Poll showed that 20% of evangelicals were "left of center," 37% were "right of center," and 30% were centrist. If more than half of evangelicals were "non-right," Sider complained, then why was the Moral Majority constructing the terms of evangelical politics? Not only was the evangelical right's agenda "not biblical enough," it failed to represent evangelicalism as a whole. A political vacuum existed, wrote Sider, among evangelicals who held to the Moral Majority's "basic pro-life and

¹²² See "Magazine Is 'Pro-Life,'" *Chicago Tribune*, November 22, 1980, W18; Bruce Buursma, "Abortion: The Escalating Battle," *Chicago Tribune*, March 22, 1981, A1; "Postmark," *Sojourners* 10, No. 1 (January 1981), 38-39. On reprints see page 39 of the February 1981 issue of *Sojourners*. And on page 35 of May 1981 issue.

¹²³ Wallis, "Coming Together," 4. On the evangelical left's rivalry with the religious right, see "Minutes of the Board of Directors, ESA," January 19-20, 1985, in Folder "1985," ESA Archives; "Editorial Staff Retreat Report," October 6-8, 1986, in Box 4, Folder 2, Sojourners Collection, WCSC; "Staff Retreat Notes," November 23-24, 1981, in Box 4, Folder 2, Sojourners Collection, WCSC; Spring, "With the Religious Right in Disarray," 46. For much of the 1980s, the movement fell into a routine of writing alternative or response articles.

¹²⁴ Wallis, "Coming Together," 3. On genetic engineering, see Nancy L. McCann, "The DNA Maelstrom: Science and Industry Rewrite the Fifth Day of Creation," *Sojourners* 6, No. 5 (May 1977), 23-26; Wes Granberg-Michaelson, "The Authorship of Life: A Biblical Look at Genetic Engineering," *Sojourners* 12, No. 6 (June-July 1983), 18-22; Jeremy Rifkin, "Dousing the Promethean Flame," *Sojourners* 12, No. 6 (June-July 1983), 23-27. On attempts to reach out to conservative evangelicals on "Sanctity of Human Life Sunday," see "Sanctity of Life," *Sojourners* 12, No. 11 (December 1983), 34.

pro-family concerns” but did not resonate with its positions on the nuclear arms race, poverty and wealth, and racism. “It is urgent and imperative that a mature, responsible evangelical political movement emerge to fill this vacuum,” insisted Sider. It might be possible for “a fairly broadly based centrist movement led by prominent leaders of established evangelical agencies to emerge.”¹²⁵

ESA in fact investigated the possibilities of such a coalition. Sider and Jay Kessler, president of Youth for Christ, surveyed nearly 80 evangelical leaders by correspondence and by travel. In May 1981 trips to Washington, D.C. and Wheaton, Sider and Kessler met with Mark Hatfield, David Mains, David Howard, James Sire, Rufus Jones, Robert Webber, and dozens of others. A clear consensus emerged to pursue a consistent pro-life campaign that might knit progressive evangelicals’ concerns into a consistent whole with more rhetorical force. The ESA board of directors encouraged Sider to write a book—with a proposed title of “What Does It Mean to Be Pro-Life: A Vision for the 80’s”—linking nuclear arms, poverty, the family, abortion, and discrimination. Such an approach would give the campaign a “way of having one central focus without being a one-issue movement.” ESA proposed that dozens of progressive evangelical organizations—such as APJ, Voice of Calvary, Sojourners, ESA, the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, and *Radix*—all emerge at once with

¹²⁵ Ron Sider, “What Should Be the Shape of the Evangelical Political Involvement in the 80’s?” March 20, 1981, Folder “1981,” ESA Archives. ESA’s sense of competition with the religious right showed itself in ESA’s strategy of establishing “a non-profit political organization that will eventually be multi-issue but will develop one issue at a time.” The first prong, the ESA board decided in fall of 1982, would be to focus on the family first, presumably to counteract the Moral Majority. Issues of sexuality, marriage, and parenting would be followed by international relations, genetic research, and computer technology. The first direct mail of the consistent pro-life campaign in parts sounded very much like the religious right. “Millions of unborn will be destroyed by laws permitting abortion on demand,” the letter read. After a thorough condemnation of abortion, euthanasia, and the breakdown of the family, Sider also addressed nuclear proliferation and an “avalanche of human needs and challenges” and nuclear proliferation. See Ron Sider direct mail letter, n.d., Folder “1982,” ESA Archives.

consistent pro-life declarations, at which point masses of evangelicals could sign them in a reprise of the 1973 Chicago Declaration.

For a time, there appeared to be much potential for such a coalition. During a short-lived Anabaptist-Reformed détente in the early 1980s, leaders of APJ and ESA agreed “to seek avenues of closer cooperation.”¹²⁶ Some principals grew excited enough to suggest a merger, despite their rupture in the 1970s.¹²⁷ Moreover, signs of resonance with a consistent pro-life theme continued unabated as ESA sought to build the “American Coalition for Life.”¹²⁸ At prominent universities, conferences, and evangelical colleges, Sider spoke about the new “integrated pro-life approach.”¹²⁹ Students in far-flung InterVarsity chapters likewise seemed amenable to the theme. Student Kathleen

¹²⁶ See Joseph Comanda, “To the Editorial Committee of *Vanguard*,” July 24, 1979, p. 3-4, in Folder “Correspondence: Bert Witvoet, Editor, 1978-81,” in Wedge Publishing Foundation Collection, Calvin College Archives. Comanda wrote that “there is a fundamental misunderstanding of the Mennonite position” and that “we ought to ally ourselves with these God-fearers in common opposition to the arms race.”

¹²⁷ “Christian Economists Discuss Growth, Justice, and the Bible,” *Public Justice Report* 4, No. 3 (December 1980), 3-4; Ron Sider memo to ESA Board members, “Summary of Investigation of ESA’s New Political Thrust,” June 8, 1981, in Folder “1981,” ESA Archives. By the late 1970s, the heated exchanges between Anabaptist and Reformed antagonists had decreased to a simmer. A visit by Wallis to Toronto, while not converting *Vanguard* editors to Anabaptist sensibilities, did impress them. Many in ICS see Wallis as more mature than several years ago. Still, though “calmer and wiser than some years ago,” he was criticized for still having “no normative sense of the political order in his thinking. He seems interested in building a counter community to the political order.” Many participants felt a new sense of kinship with Wallis during the meeting, even calling each other siblings. See Bert Witvoet, “A Sojourner Came to Town,” *Vanguard* (September-October 1979), 5-7. For examples of crossover in advertising, board membership, and constituency, see “ESA Supports Native Peoples’ Rights, Lays Plans for 1979,” 3-4, and “New Call to Peacemaking,” 4, in *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 2 (November 1978); “Sidelines,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 3 (March 1978), 10; “Advisory Council Founded,” *Public Justice Report* 11, No. 6 (March 1988), 7; “Advisory Council Adds Strength,” *Public Justice Report* 11, No. 8 (May-June 1988), 4-5.

¹²⁸ “ESA Board of Directors Meeting,” October 29-30, 1982, p. 4, in Folder “1982,” ESA Archives. For the final version of a new mission statement reflecting the new emphasis, see “Here We Stand,” September 14, 1984, Folder “1984,” ESA Archives.

¹²⁹ A typical area conference was cosponsored by ESA, JustLife, and half a dozen churches. At a conference entitled “Being Completely Pro-Life” in suburban Philadelphia, for instance, attendees heard a talk by Ron Sider, ate lunch, and got a copy of Sider’s book *Completely Pro-Life*. See “Peace-Meal,” *ESA Public Policy Report* 4, No. 1 (March 1988), 8. On Sider’s speech at Harvard University, see Ron Sider to Jan Dennis, February 28, 1984, in Folder “1984,” ESA Archives. For the text of the speech, see Ronald J. Sider, “An Evangelical vision for Public Policy,” *Transformation* 2, No. 3 (July 1985), 1-9.

Kern of Bluffton College admonished the pro-life movement that “if its members are going to oppose abortion on the premise that killing is wrong, they must oppose the death penalty, war, and anything which ends human life. Christ didn’t play favorites. We mustn’t either.”¹³⁰ A Wheaton student, arguing that abortion was not the sole moral issue of 1984 election, declared that “a genuine pro-life agenda ought to encompass far more than the abortion issue. It ought to defend the victims of the United States’ militarization of Central America. It should seek to rescue the poor and starving throughout the world. A consistent ‘pro-life’ stance would include the highest regard for the danger of nuclear annihilation, even the innocent humans targeted by our missiles.”¹³¹ The World Evangelical Fellowship regularly highlighted life issues in its periodical *Transformation*.¹³² The Association for Public Justice, fairly reticent in their objection to abortion in the 1970s, became more expressively pro-life in the late 1970s, adding to its existing progressive agenda.¹³³

¹³⁰ Kathleen Kern, “Letter to the Editor,” *HIS* 44, No. 8 (May 1984), 31. InterVarsity Press published a book on abortion and the early church that argued that anti-abortion was part of a broader pro-life ethic that also avoided military involvement or watching the gladiators at the Roman circus. See Michael Gorman, *Abortion and the Early Church: Christian, Jewish, and Pagan Attitudes in the Greco-Roman World* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1982).

¹³¹ L.D. Hull, “Democrats Seek Consistency,” *Wheaton Record* 109, No. 4 (September 28, 1984), 3.

¹³² See especially the January 1986 issue that included articles on abortion, apartheid in South Africa, and justice in Nicaragua and Peru. Michael J. Gorman, “Shalom and the Unborn,” *Transformation* 3, No. 1 (January 1986), 26-33.

¹³³ “Basic justice in the land includes more than anti-abortion, and thus the Christian pro-life movements and groups such as APJ should work together to build a wide-ranging citizens’ movement that will work for public justice on more than one issue and thoroughly on each issue,” wrote APJ’s James Skillen. See Skillen, “Can Congress Save the Unborn?” *Public Justice Report* 4, No. 10 (August-September 1981), 2-3. Also see “Abortion, Part I,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 7 (April 1979), 7-8; “Abortion, Part II,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 9 (June-July 1979), 7-10; “Abortion, Part III,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 10 (August-September 1979), 8-10; “Abortion, Part IV,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 3 (December 1979), 6-9; Skillen, “Human Life Bills in Congress,” *Public Justice Report* 4, No. 8 (May 1981), 4-5; “APJ Takes Stand on Justice for the Unborn,” *Public Justice Report* 6, No. 2 (November 1982), 3-4; Skillen, *Justice for the Unborn* (Washington, D.C.: Association for Public Justice, 1982). On members in APJ marching in pro-life rallies, see Gail Jansen, “Abortion,” *Public Justice Report* 7, No. 6 (March 1984), 4, 6; “Abortion Debate Takes New Twist in the Northwest,” *Public Justice Report* 8, No. 10 (August-September 1985), 1-3.

Activism in all quarters of the evangelical left soon began to reflect the new rhetoric. All in the same month ESA members participated both in the Witness for Peace campaign in Nicaragua and the National Right to Life march from the White House to the Supreme Court.¹³⁴ At a Sojourners-organized “Peace Pentecost” demonstration, participants touched on all points of the consistent pro-life ethic. Featured speaker Ron Sider, just completing a book entitled *Completely Pro-Life* with InterVarsity Press, rallied participants gathering outside the White House with a rousing speech.¹³⁵ Carrying signs that read “Choose Life: All Life is Sacred,” protesters prayed against “the twisted priorities of a nation that reverses the biblical wisdom by busily beating plowshares into swords.” Next they proceeded to the State Department to denounce U.S. “promotion of violence and terror in Central America; then to the Soviet embassy, where they prayed for the people of Afghanistan, who have “been brutally invaded by another arrogant superpower”; to the South African embassy to pray against apartheid; to the Supreme Court, where they interceded for the victims of crime and for those on Death Row; and finally to the Department of Health and Human Services where they “prayed for the unborn and for an agenda of justice and compassion for women and children that will create alternatives to the desperate, painful choice of abortion.”¹³⁶ The cumulative protests yielded 248 arrests and generated impressive media attention. A lengthy report on UPI radio called the event the “Christian Conscience Movement in America.” Wallis

¹³⁴ “ESA News Briefs,” *ESA Update* 6, No. 1 (January-February 1984), 1.

¹³⁵ Ron Sider, *Completely Pro-Life: Building a Consistent Stance* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1987).

¹³⁶ Sojourners seemed to embrace anti-abortion action more wholeheartedly. See the issue entitled “Abortion: What Does It Mean to Be Pro-Life?” in *Sojourners* 9, No. 11 (November 1980); Juli Loesch, Tape A23-150, “Consistent Pro-Life,” Box VIII, Sojourners Collection, WCSC; Patricia Narciso, “Consistency for the Sake of Life,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 8 (August-September 1985), 12; Ginny Earnest Soley, “To Preserve and Protect Life: A Christian Feminist Perspective on Abortion,” *Sojourners* 15, No. 9 (October 1986), 34-37.

told reporters, “It was a day for the movement of the Spirit, a day when political stereotypes were shattered and ideological labels were swept aside to make room for the new wind of Christian conscience blowing across our land. The selective and inconsistent morality of both the Right and the Left was challenged by a simple message—all life is sacred.”¹³⁷ The evangelical left hoped that this “fresh vision” would transcend its reputation as an “embittered alternative” to the religious right. Buoyed by media reports that the religious right was in disarray, Wallis saw hope for stitching moderate evangelicals not previously associated with Sojourners, ESA, or APJ into a “politically significant movement” centered on life itself.¹³⁸

The new emphasis culminated, somewhat anticlimactically, in the formation of JustLife, a political action committee. Launched after a failed bid for a congressional seat in 1984 in which Michigan state senator Steve Monsma had difficulty raising money as a pro-life Democrat, JustLife sought to help non-traditional candidates who opposed abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, nuclear weapons, and unequal access to education and health care. Many in the evangelical left harbored high hopes for JustLife, and ESA’s Sider, named JustLife’s executive director, immediately announced a

¹³⁷ Vicki Kemper, “It Won’t Be Long Now: Claiming Spiritual Roots at Pentecost,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 8 (August-September 1985), 32-35; Jim Wallis, “A Consistent Ethic of Life,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 7 (July 1985), 4-5; “Police Arrest Christians in Capital Protest,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 28, 1985, p. 2. Jerry Falwell held a conference the same day in Washington to denounce Peace Pentecost, calling Sojourners a “pseudo-evangelical group” and stating that “[Jim Wallis] is to evangelicalism what Adolf Hitler was to the Roman Catholic Church.”

¹³⁸ Jim Wallis, “Dissenting from the Right,” *Newsweek* (September 17, 1984), 32; Wallis, “The Court Prophets,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 8 (September 1984), 3-4; Wallis, “1985,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 1 (January 1985), 4-5; Wallis, “The Rise of Christian Conscience,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 1 (January 1985), 12-16. By 1985, reporters were suggesting that the evangelical left comprised a key bloc of burgeoning “seamless garment” coalition. See Colman McCarthy, “The Seamless Coalition,” *Washington Post*, February 9, 1985, p. A19.

campaign to boost its membership and its alliance with pro-life Catholics.¹³⁹ JustLife issued voter guides, contributed to twenty-two life-friendly Senate and House candidates in 1986, conducted petition drives, wrote eight legislative bills limiting abortion, and publicized its endorsements of candidates in local newspapers across the nation.¹⁴⁰

Evidence soon mounted, however, that the grand evangelical coalition would not materialize. The peak of the campaign came in 1988 with 6,000 members and a glossy booklet featuring a voter guide and articles by Billy Graham, Sider, and Joseph Cardinal Bernardin urging “aggressive negotiations” with the Soviet Union to end the nuclear arms race, governmental programs that “empower the poor to become self-sufficient,” and an end to abortion, except when necessary to save the life of the mother.¹⁴¹ *JustLife* '88 sold only 27,000 copies, and its sequel fared even worse.¹⁴² Despite endorsing 56 candidates in 1990, JustLife offered only \$22,000 to their political campaigns. In 1993, after

¹³⁹ Ron Sider, “Building for the Future,” *ESA Update* 9, No. 3 (September 1987), 1-2. Key evangelical sponsors included Bill Leslie of LaSalle Street Church in Chicago; Bill Kallio of ESA; Arthur Beals of University Presbyterian Church in Seattle; Steve Monsma, a Michigan politician; James Copple, a Nazarene pastor in Kansas; Neil DeHaan, community development director of a city in New Jersey; Dave Medema, director of a social service agency in Holland, Mich.; Kathleen Hayes, managing editor of *The Other Side*; and Miriam Adeney of Seattle Pacific University. On Sider’s high hopes for JustLife, see Jones, “Radical Evangelical Political Theology,” 385.

¹⁴⁰ Jack Smalligan, “What are PACs and How JustLife Fits In,” *ESA Update* 9, No. 4 (November-December 1987), 1, 3; D.R. Hoover, “The Political Mobilization of the Evangelical Left” (M.A. thesis, University of Oxford, 1992), 101. On JustLife’s legislative proposal, see *Abortion Regulation and Alternatives: A Package of Eight Model Bills* (Philadelphia: JustLife Education Fund, 1990). The proposal included provisions for informed consent, family consent, viability testing for women 20-months pregnant, no public support for abortions, coordination of services for pregnant women, parental leave from work, Medicaid for unborn children, and adoption subsidies.

¹⁴¹ Kathleen Hayes and Ron Sider, eds., *JustLife/88: A 1988 Election Study Guide for Justice, Life, and Peace* (Philadelphia: JustLife Education Fund and Eerdmans, 1988).

¹⁴² Kathleen Hayes, ed., *JustLife/90: 1990 Study Guide for Justice, Life, and Peace* (Philadelphia: JustLife Education Fund, 1990).

mustering only \$6,000 in donations to candidates, the PAC folded, deeply in debt after an unsuccessful emergency fundraising campaign.¹⁴³

Even the promise of an all-encompassing “consistent pro-life” campaign failed to overcome irreconcilable divisions over identity politics that continued into the mid-1980s. Despite common policy resonance over nearly every issue articulated by JustLife, the Association for Public Justice declined to enter the coalition. Skillen objected primarily to JustLife’s premature jump into electoral politics without a clearly stated public philosophy, biblical rationale, or political constituency. “A PAC without a political philosophy or base of support may only prove one more time that Christians don’t know how to take politics seriously,” wrote Skillen. He suggested that ESA—and evangelicals in general—instead spend at least a decade formulating a public philosophy, then building a constituency, and finally beginning to elect officials based on that philosophy.¹⁴⁴

A relatively newer dilemma about constituency proved far more damaging than long-standing disagreements over methodology. Should the evangelical left emphasize the “evangelical” or the “left?” Should boundaries be constructed theologically or politically? Abortion, the most difficult component for the evangelical left to weave into the seamless garment, offers the best case study of these dilemmas. The evangelical left

¹⁴³ Van Temple and Dave Medema, “September Report,” October 3, 1990, in Folder “1990,” ESA Archives; Mary E. Bendyna, “JustLife Action,” 198, 200, 290, in *Risky Business? PAC Decisionmaking in Congressional Elections*, eds. Robert Biersack, Paul S. Herrnson, and Clyde Wilcox (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1994). (195-201). ESA, the prime mover behind JustLife, launched an environmental campaign after JustLife folded. See “Proposal for a Major ESA Focus on the Environment,” Folder, “1990,” ESA Archives.

¹⁴⁴ Jim Skillen, “New PAC Appeals to Consistent Pro-Life Christians,” *Public Justice Report* 9, No. 10 (August-September 1986), 4-5. For JustLife’s response, see Steve Monsma and Jack Smalligan, “JustLife Responds,” *Public Justice Report* 10, No. 1 (October 1986), 6.

eyed strident anti-abortion activity with suspicion during the 1970s.¹⁴⁵ First, abortion remained off the evangelical radar in general during the 1960s and early 1970s. Major evangelical publications such as *Christianity Today* ignored the issue or expressed ambivalence. Likewise, the Chicago Declaration never mentioned abortion. Second, when abortion finally did become paramount for many evangelicals, it came to be very closely linked to the religious right. “Like many,” explained Wallis to a crowd of Wheaton students, “we have often been put off by the anti-abortion movement. Its attitudes toward women and the poor, combined with its positive support for militarism and capital punishment, have been deeply offensive to us and have helped keep us away from the issue of abortion.”¹⁴⁶ Third, secular leftists constrained many in the evangelical left from fully embracing an anti-abortion stance. Friendships and political alliances forged in 1970s antiwar activism lay in the balance if the evangelical left assumed an

¹⁴⁵ On ambivalent and pro-choice views toward abortion by young evangelicals in the 1970s, see Miller and Rush, “God and the GOP in Kansas City,” 59; Sider, *Completely Pro-Life*, 38; Jeffrey McClain Jones, “Ronald Sider and Radical Evangelical Political Theology” (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University 1990), 393-394, 407, 423, 428, 432; Nancy Hardesty, “Concerning Abortion, We Affirm That ...,” Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration,” ESA Archives; Hardesty to Sider, August 29, 1973, in Folder “1973 Chicago Declaration,” ESA Archives; Bill Kallio, “From Ambivalence to Action,” *ESA Update* 6, No. 4 (July-August 1984), 3; Stan Diddams, “Wallis Presents Consistent Pro-Life View,” *Wheaton Record* 105, No. 19 (April 3, 1981), 1; Jim Stentzel, “Seminary Votes No on Pacifism,” *Sojourners* 8, No. 6 (June 1979), 7; Gerald Vandezande, “Towards a New Solidarity,” *Vanguard* (January-February 1973), 23; “Notes from an Abortion Symposium,” *Right On* 3, No. 9 (March 1972), 10; Linda Doll and Verne Becker, “What Is a Magazine?” *HIS* 39, No. 1 (October 1978), 32; Mark Fackler, “Abortion: Two Views,” *HIS* 39, No. 5 (February 1979), 16-18. Compare this ambivalence with the Manichean views and activism in Charles E. White, “Why I Joined the Fight against Abortion,” *HIS* (February 1984). On cautions about moral and constitutional ambiguity regarding abortion, see Henry, *Politics for Evangelicals*, 72, 77; Alan Keith-Lucas, *Integrating Faith and Practice: A History of the North American Association of Christians in Social Work, 1950-1993* (St. Davids, Pa.: NAACSW, 1994), 23. For more examples of evangelical ambivalence on abortion, see Tandi Stern, “Evangelicals Split on Abortion Issue,” *Wheaton Record* 109, No. 15 (January 25, 1984), 1-2; oral interview with Sharon Gallagher, July 7, 2006, Berkeley, Cal.; R. F. R. Gardner, *Abortion: The Personal Dilemma: A Christian Gynaecologist Examines the Medical, Social, and Spiritual Issues* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972). Pro-choice evangelicals were concerned about women’s reproductive rights, rape, safety of the mother, stress on existing family structures, the silence of Scripture on abortion, and the question of when a fetus is infused with a soul.

¹⁴⁶ Jim Wallis, “Coming Together on the Sanctity of Life,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 11 (November 1980), 3; Stan Diddams, “Wallis Presents Consistent Pro-Life View,” 1; Kallio, “From Ambivalence to Action,” 3; Wes Michaelson, “Christian Responses in Politics: Sojourners, Part II,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 9 (June-July 1979), 3-7.

activist stance against abortion. “When the subject of abortion comes up, our shared energies and values come to an awkward and embarrassing halt,” explained Bill Weld-Wallis.¹⁴⁷ Cathy Stentzel made her “conversion from pro-abortion to pro-life” in the late 1970s, but only after she and others in *Sojourners* blocked pro-life articles from being printed in the magazine. “We had a highly charged debate but could not reach consensus about abortion itself.” The article was not printed, but the issue came up twice every year in planning sessions until 1980, when *Sojourners* came out more clearly against abortion.¹⁴⁸ Well into the mid-1980s, the group felt pressure from ecumenical circles.¹⁴⁹ *Sojourners* ultimately declined Sider’s invitation to provide a representative on the JustLife board of directors because “it would give the wrong impression to some feminists.”¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Bill Weld-Wallis, “Abortion: The Political Dilemma,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 9 (October 1984), 4-5; Liane Rozzell, “An Affirmation of Life,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 6 (June 1985), 34-37; Ginny Earnest Soley, “To Preserve and Protect Life: A Christian Feminist Perspective on Abortion,” *Sojourners* 15, No. 9 (October 1986), 34-35.

¹⁴⁸ Cathy Stentzel, “A Quiet Conversion,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 11 (November 1980), 4-6.

¹⁴⁹ One woman wrote of being “increasingly alienated by *Sojourners*.” “The message I’m getting from *Sojourners* is, ‘You are not a white, heterosexual male, so you don’t exist. You’re inferior. You’re not part of the family of God.’ Discussions of abortion that refuse to even grapple with a woman’s right to control her own body, neglect of feminist theology, ignoring the issues and lives of women of color and lesbian women, the monopoly of male authors—I experience these as violence.” See Martha L. Williams, “Postmark,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 7 (July 1985), 49; “Postmark,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 9 (October 1985), 48-49; Phillipa Todd to *Sojourners*, July 7, 1986, in Box 2: Folder 1 “Postmark: Abortion,” *Sojourners* Collection, WCSC. For hundreds more negative letters on a Richard Foster article about homosexuality, see Box 2, Folder 2, “*Sojourners* Postmark, Jan-Oct 1985,” *Sojourners* Collection, WCSC. For pressure on The Other Side community in regard to homosexuality, see Kyle Cleveland, “The Politics of Jubilee: Ideological Drift and Organizational Schism in a Religious Sect” (Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1990), 102; John Alexander, “On Defending Homosexual Behavior,” *The Other Side* 20, No. 8 (August 1984), 6-7. Some within *Sojourners* left because it remained too theologically evangelical. See, for example, Dennis Ronald MacDonald, “From Faith to Faith,” 109-119; and Robert M. Price, “Beyond Born Again,” 145-150, in Edward T. Babinski, ed., *Leaving the Fold* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1995).

¹⁵⁰ Ron Sider quoted in Jones, “Ron Sider and Radical Evangelical Political Theology,” 433. “We do not yet have a clear or satisfying position on the complicated question of abortion legislation,” wrote *Sojourners*’ editors in 1984. “While we are not ‘pro-choice,’ we find the anti-abortion legislation currently offered to be quite offensive in its obvious biases against women and the poor. . . . An alternative is desperately needed, and we are ready to work with other frustrated, pro-life people to try to find one.” See “Abortion: The Political Dilemma,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 9 (October 1984), 4.

Other evangelical left leaders, if considerably more pro-life regarding abortion than Sojourners, also articulated a certain measure of ambivalence.¹⁵¹ The Association for Public Justice periodically discussed the economic and constitutional dilemmas of abortion legislation.¹⁵² Even ESA, which on occasion tried to muster up outrage and Manichean rhetoric, failed to take an official position on abortion legislation for much of the 1980s.¹⁵³ After ESA came out more explicitly against abortion in the mid-1980s, a consultant noted that the organization's "position on abortion is seen as very high-profile by people in related organizations" and might be considerably contributing to a low female membership.¹⁵⁴ Unwilling to alienate this key part of their constituency, the evangelical left continued to focus more on other issues such as hunger, economic justice, defense spending, the nuclear arms race, racism and Central America. Each of these issues rated higher than abortion in an October 1987 survey of ESA's membership.¹⁵⁵ Many seemed willing to take a personally-opposed, but pro-choice position or to restrict

¹⁵¹ Interestingly, members of evangelical left groups demonstrated less ambivalence than their leaders. Data from the 1990 National Survey of Religious Activists and the Faith and Social Justice Project showed nearly identical views by the Christian Left (composed of Sojourners, Bread for the World, JustLife, and Evangelicals for Social Action) and the Christian Right (Prison Fellowship, Focus on the Family, Americans for the Republic, and Concerned Women). For example, 9% of interviewed activists on the Christian Right said that abortion should always be permitted for any reason. Only 7% of activists on the Christian Left made the same statement. See Charles F. Hall, "The Christian Left: Who Are They and How Are They Different from the Christian Right?" *Review of Religious Research* 39, No. 1 (September 1997), 33-34.

¹⁵² "Abortion: Part I," *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 7 (April 1979), 7-8.

¹⁵³ Corwin Smidt, "Where Do Evangelicals Really Stand on Abortion and a Nuclear Freeze?" *ESA Update* 10, No. 3 (May 1988), 1; "Here We Stand: A Reaffirmation of ESA's Commitments," in Folder "1984," ESA Archives.

¹⁵⁴ See Howard in "Minutes of Strategic Planning Report and Response," p. 10, December 8, 1990, in Folder "1990," ESA Archives.

¹⁵⁵ "Who We Are and Where We Are Headed: A Summary of the ESA Member Survey," *ESA Update* 10, No. 2 (April 1988), 2.

abortion without banning it altogether.¹⁵⁶ Many simply seemed to hope that the issue would go away.

In the end, the measured tone of the evangelical left's consistent pro-life message did not match the immediacy and intensity of the religious right's anti-abortion rhetoric.¹⁵⁷ Nuclear proliferation held the potential for mass destruction and loss of human life. American intervention in Central America had resulted in the loss of a few lives. South African apartheid perpetuated inequality. But nothing, anti-abortion activists contended, could compare to millions of babies aborted each year in their own backyards or the threat to faith of a ban of prayer in school. The evangelical left simply lacked the populist flair of the religious right. Staunch evangelical pro-lifers, many of whom saw the debate in Manichean terms, sensed the evangelical left's ambivalence and kept their distance from the consistent pro-life campaign. Conservatives feared that evangelical

¹⁵⁶ Very little in the November 1980 issue of *Sojourners* addressed the legal aspects of abortion. It could easily be read as personally-against-but-pro-choice. *Sojourners* reader Patricia Dutcher of Hamilton, New York, wrote, "My great fear is that if abortion is made illegal, women who yet choose to abort will be prosecuted for murder. I can imagine no worse persecution of women who have made the agonizing decision to abort, nor a more useless waste of our energy, time, and resources. I am ready to preach, teach, cajole, persuade, and counsel, publish, demonstrate, and work for a consistent, across-the-board stand for life. But I am not willing to change the legal status of abortion if that will allow women to be further victimized by a society which would focus its moral outrage on the 'crime' of abortion." See Dutcher, "Postmark," *Sojourners* 10, No. 1 (January 1981), 38-39. On attempts to restrict without banning abortion, see "Abortion Regulation and Alternatives," 3. "JustLife Education Fund prefers that states would be free to ban all abortions except to save the life of the mother, but until that day comes, we offer these bills as responsible, defensible steps in the direction of protecting and honoring human life."

¹⁵⁷ On the evangelical left's measured tone regarding abortion, see Vernon Grounds, "How Should We Pray for the Presidential Elections?" *ESA Parley* 4, No. 1 (March 1988), 4-5; "American and Canadian Groups Propose Legislation on Abortion," *Public Justice Report* 13, No. 2 (November 1989), 4; D. Gareth Jones, *Brave New People: Ethical Issues at the Commencement of Life* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1984). On the religious right's use of strident rhetoric in regard to abortion, see Thomas M. Chmelovski to Pam Proctor, September 5, 1984, in Box 345, Folder 24, "Brave New People; 1984," InterVarsity Collection, BGCA. Chmelovski wrote of Jones's *Brave New People* as "an apostate piece of heretical trash as Brave New People" and of the "demonic atrocity of abortion." "I have resolved not to buy another work from InterVarsity," he wrote, "until you have removed this unfortunate book from circulation and have issued an apology to your fellow Christians for your very unwise and anti-Christian decision to publish it in the first place. Also, I shall encourage all my friends, especially those who buy large quantities of books, to take the same steps that I am taking." For more on the intriguing dust-up between evangelical leaders and the evangelical constituency on *Brave New People*, see Box 345, Folder 24 in the InterVarsity Collection, BGCA.

progressives had engineered a pro-life stance on abortion as a ploy to entice evangelicals to liberal stands on poverty, the death penalty, and nuclear weapons.¹⁵⁸ The consistent pro-life campaign thus faltered as the support of evangelical moderates and conservatives—and then of leftists such as Sojourners—failed to materialize.

What little momentum remained in the evangelical left radiated from non-evangelical sources. *Sojourners*, half of whose 60,000 subscriptions were purchased by Catholics, worked with Feminists for Life more than National Right to Life.¹⁵⁹ APJ maintained connections with many Catholics, including Richard John Neuhaus.¹⁶⁰ JustLife, with roots in early 1980s evangelicalism, found itself with a membership that

¹⁵⁸ Robert A. Case II, the executive director of Christian Action Council, asked, “Why has there been no cry of ‘outrage and violence’ from *Sojourners* against the slaughter of over 1,000,000 intra-uterine humans in our country last year. You are not afraid to use prophetically inflammatory language to express your outrage against our Vietnam war effort . . .” See “Postmark,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 1 (January 1977), 34; Another *Sojourners* reader, the chair of the Eugene-Springfield Right to Life chapter, likewise complained, “I am uncomfortable with the Christian ‘far right.’ I don’t believe that God is a Republican. But . . . I am displeased by what I perceive to be an inconsistency (perhaps not in definition as much as presentation) of your message. Rarely do you ever address the issues of abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia. Even when these issues are headline news, you have failed to provide adequate coverage (if any).” See Cynthia A. Rahm to *Sojourners*, July 23, 1986,” in Box 2, Folder 1, “Postmark: Abortion,” *Sojourners* Collection, WCSC. Robert Keim of Roswell, New Mexico wrote, “Amid all these screams for justice [Central American, inner-city, etc.], I have yet to find a single word on behalf of the preborn. The potential holocaust going on every day in clinics around the world. Whatever injustice is perpetrated on the poor and oppressed of this world is minor when held up against the injustice of being ripped from the womb. Your recent editorial against capital punishment was succinct and well done, but to cry against the execution of a convicted murderer and then to remain silent in the face of the massacre of the innocent preborn is the foulest of hypocrisy. It seems almost as if you don’t want to offend any far left sensibilities regardless of whether these sensibilities are ‘Christian’ or not. . . . I am concerned that for *Sojourners*, pro-life has become an ‘aborted’ issue. I have been receiving *Sojourners* for just over two years, and apart from a rare quip in ‘For the Record,’ no serious attention has been given to the Christian’s ongoing responsibility to proclaim the rights of the unborn. I understand that the issue was extensively addressed in the November 1980 *Sojourners*, but much as gone unreported in four years, including the termination of 4.5 million unwanted pregnancies!” See Keim to *Sojourners*, July 30, 1986, in Box 2, Folder 1, “Postmark: Abortion,” *Sojourners* Collection, WCSC. For similar statements also see Gary F. Daught, “Postmark,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 7 (August 1984), 41; Mike Rodriques, “Postmark,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 10 (November 1984), 37; Susan Thomas, “Postmark,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 8 (August-September 1985), 48; Richard Corl of Bremen, Ind., to *Sojourners*, March 1, 1985, and Joe Lynch to Corl, July 29, 1986, in Box 2, Folder 1, “Postmark: Abortion,” *Sojourners* Collection, WCSC.

¹⁵⁹ “Seeds,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 5 (May 1985), 38.

¹⁶⁰ “Christian Responses in Politics: United State Catholic Conference, Part II,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 1 (October 1979), 7-10; “A Pastoral Visit with Political Significance,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 2 (November 1979), 1-2.

was only 27% evangelical but over half Catholic.¹⁶¹ Bread for the World, whose original board in 1973 included prominent evangelicals such as Mark Hatfield, John Perkins, Myron Augsburger, Frank Gaebelein, and Stanley Mooneyham, by 1984 had a constituency that was only 15% evangelical.¹⁶² ESA considered removing “evangelical” from its name, noting that it puts them “immediately in a defensive mode.”¹⁶³ By the late 1980s it was clear that the evangelical left had failed to effectively cultivate its evangelical constituency. Religious resonance paled in comparison with political resonance. Specifically, the evangelical left, reticent and too late to capture the energy of the evangelical antipathy and activism centered on abortion, lost many evangelicals to the religious right.¹⁶⁴ ESA’s ambition to build a “new Seamless Garment Network,” while earning substantial media attention and a diverse membership, failed to gain widespread traction in part because it attracted no single constituency deeply.

Straddling these many worlds—evangelical, mainline, Catholic, leftist—clearly hindered the evangelical left. While offering the potential for a greater constituency and

¹⁶¹ 19% was mainline. See Bendyna, “JustLife Action,” 196. On increasing connections with Pax Christi and Pro-Lifers for Survival (whose membership was half Catholic and only one-third Protestant), see oral interview with Juli Loesch Wiley, February 25, 2008; “That All May Live in Peace,” *ESA Advocate* 8, No. 1 (February 1986), 1-2. Catholic board members included Juli Loesch of Feminists for Life; Patricia Narciso, a pro-life activist; Scott Rains of Pro-Lifers for Survival; and Daniel Simmons of Mercy Corps. See Beth Spring, “A New Political Group Will Oppose Abortion, Poverty, and Nuclear Arms,” *Christianity Today* 30, No. 9 (June 13, 1986), 36-37. JustLife literature sparkled with contributions from Catholic luminaries. See Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “The Call for a Consistent Life Ethic,” *JustLife/88* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 4-7; Juli Loesch, “The Right to Life: Our Shared Humanity,” *JustLife/88*, 18-21; J. Bryan Hehir, “Ending the Arms Race: A Gospel Imperative,” *JustLife/88*, 22-23.

¹⁶² Its constituency was 40% Catholic and 45% mainline Protestant. See Arthur Simon, Bread for the World,” *Transformation* 1, No. 4 (October 1984), 22-24. Original board in 1973 included.

¹⁶³ See Medema and Aeschlimann in “Strategic Planning Report,” 10-11.

¹⁶⁴ On JustLife’s explicit religious claims, see Spring, “A New Political Group,” 37; “Abortion Regulation and Alternatives,” 47. “JustLife Education Fund’s stance for a consistent life ethic is rooted in the belief that every person has been created in God’s image. This fact forever stamps all persons as being of immeasurable worth, a worth confirmed by God sending Jesus Christ, the only son, to die for humankind.” Board member James Copple similarly stated, “JustLife has a specifically Christian rationale. What makes it appealing to me is that this group of Christians is willing to make a political statement that grows out of a religious commitment. We accent the resurrection of Jesus Christ because that is life.”

the hope of a “politically significant movement” that transcended parochial ecclesiastical boundaries, its ecumenism also diffused its resources and left it open for attack from all sides.¹⁶⁵ Whenever the movement offered a carrot to political allies on the left, conservative evangelicals shouted heresy. Whenever it made a move back toward their theologically conservative evangelical roots, ecumenical activists cried betrayal. Ticklish issues of ecumenicity thus sabotaged the campaign. When the consistent life ethic never became a specifically evangelical theme, the final attempt to revive the evangelical left in the 1980s failed.

IV.

More than strategic missteps or even the dilemmas of identity, the political limits of the 1980s doomed the evangelical left’s push for viability. Its consistent pro-life campaign failed to conform to a hardening American political party structure. Stephen Monsma, a pro-life Democrat in the Michigan House of Representatives, encountered the dilemmas of political unorthodoxy in several failed campaigns in the 1980s. In 1982 Monsma lost a bid for the U.S. House of Representatives.¹⁶⁶ Three years later he also lost an election for a seat in the Michigan Senate. In both cases, hostility from Democratic colleagues toward his pro-life stance on abortion (despite his reliable support of welfare

¹⁶⁵ For an example of Sojourners’ breadth of contacts, see the fragmented notes of a report by Jim Wallis to the Sojourners community. The indefatigable Wallis had traveled to five cities in seven days speaking on Sojourner’s vocation as a community. He spoke to 500 Franciscan women, to the evangelical Jubilee Fellowship in Philadelphia, to Riverside Church in New York City at a mainline preaching conference, to the evangelical Jubilee Partners in Georgia, to the Conyers Monastery with Trappist monks, to the evangelical intentional community Open Door in Atlanta, and to Miami Beach for the National Catholic Lay Evangelism Conference. See notes from “Community Retreat,” October 10, 1982, in Box IV1, Folder “Articles and Critiques of Sojourners,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC.

¹⁶⁶ Adam Clymer, “Democrats Shaping Election as Referendum on Economy,” *New York Times*, October 3, 1982, p. 1, 30.

measures and a tight race for party superiority in the State Senate) plagued Monsma's campaign. Aide David Medema told the *New York Times* that Monsma's opposition to state financing of abortions caused big problems. "We expected tolerance from the Democratic Party but found that tolerance evaporated around the abortion issue. For pro-life Democrats, money would dry up in election campaigns."¹⁶⁷ Ironically, Monsma also encountered opposition from anti-abortion activists despite his pro-life stance. He had previously secured the endorsement of Michigan's Right to Life organization, but many insiders loudly objected because it was in the interest of their cause to retain Republican control of the Senate.¹⁶⁸ The disheartening experience prompted Monsma to collaborate with Ron Sider and Catholic leaders to form JustLife.

The issue of abortion cast the moral-political fracture of evangelicalism—and the dilemma of Monsma and many others in the evangelical left—in sharp relief. "The activists in the Democratic Party," complained congressman Bill Nelson of Florida, "... have formed the image of the party." Another evangelical Democratic congressman, Don Bonker of Washington state, told *Christianity Today*, "Regrettably, the Democrats come up short on questions of personal morality."¹⁶⁹ Fitting into existing party structures grew progressively difficult through the 1980s. By 1984 the Democratic Party's official platform described reproductive freedom as a "fundamental human right." By 1992 Democratic leaders were exerting considerable pressure on candidates to toe the line in the party's re-embrace of reproductive rights and prohibited Robert Casey, a pro-life

¹⁶⁷ "G.O.P. Retains Edge in Michigan Senate," *New York Times*, March 28, 1985, p. A19; Medema quoted in Peter Steinfels, "Beliefs: The Plight of Voters Whose Views on Abortion Are at Odds With Their Party's," *New York Times*, March 28, 1992, p. 10.

¹⁶⁸ Hoover, "Political Mobilization, 100.

¹⁶⁹ Bill Nelson, Don Bonker, and Tony Hall quoted in "How Will the Democrats Answer Evangelical Concerns?" *Christianity Today* 29, No. 12 (September 6, 1985), 51-52.

Democrat from Pennsylvania, from speaking on the subject at the party's national convention.¹⁷⁰ Tony Hall, a Democratic congressman from Ohio who embraced a pro-life stance after converting to evangelical faith while in office, explained that his switch on the issue "caused me a lot of trouble. ... You can mention my name [among the Democratic Party leadership] and they spit ... [They] even ... walk across the street not to talk to me because they hated the fact that I ... was a Democrat and yet pro-life."¹⁷¹

If some in the evangelical left felt homeless in the Democratic Party, they felt equally out of place in the Republican Party. Many could not bear to support a party that "when they aren't lobbying for abortion legislation, they are busy being militarists, opposing civil rights legislation, and opposing virtually all nonmilitary foreign aid. ... if we clasp the New Right to our bosoms and somehow succeed in the narrow sense of getting a bill passed—then we'll have won a minor battle. But at what cost?"¹⁷² For progressive evangelicals the Republican Party failed on many counts to offer a consistent pro-life position. But hardening party structures constrained pro-life evangelical Republicans who tended to cross party lines on economic and defense issues, according to JustLife's David Medema.¹⁷³ Reagan's FBI, for example, targeted Sojourners in a bungled mid-1980s investigation.¹⁷⁴ Conservative evangelicals likewise attacked the

¹⁷⁰ McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom*, 280-281; Bendyna, "JustLife Action," 199.

¹⁷¹ Hall quoted in D. Michael Lindsay, *Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 41. Richard Pierard, also acutely aware of the electoral dilemma posed by his political views, explained, "I came to realize that I could not consistently oppose the 'legalized' killing in Vietnam and in our prisons and ghettos and yet accept the destruction of unborn lives by abortion," he wrote. "I felt isolated in my stance, viewed by liberals as hopelessly reactionary, anti-feminist, and ideologically in league with the far right." See Richard Pierard letter, in "Postmark," *Sojourners* 10, No. 1 (January 1981), 39.

¹⁷² Gary Govert, "Choosing Life," *Vanguard* 11, No. 4 (July-August 1981), 18-19.

¹⁷³ Bendyna, "JustLife Action," 199-200.

¹⁷⁴ "Statement by Ed Richardson," November 2, 1984, in Box VI12, Folder 3, "Sojourners Community Updates," Sojourners Collection, WCSC; Joe Roos, "Some Saturday Morning Visitors," *Sojourners* 14,

evangelical left for not taking the abortion holocaust seriously enough, and evangelical Democrats awkwardly struggled to defend themselves. A Wheaton student wrote, “Everyone should know that we are not ‘babykillers,’ but in fact struggle deeply with our support of pro-abortion candidates, holding life in the highest regard.”¹⁷⁵ Monsma’s difficulties were not anomalous as many tried to fit a pro-life stance on abortion into an otherwise politically progressive platform.

It was the misfortune of the evangelical left to emerge in an era of hardening party structures and increased enforcement of political orthodoxy. Prior to the 1970s the little political activism—in civil rights, for example—carried out by religious actors took place on the left. Moreover, notes historian John McGreevy, the Democratic Party “arguably stood to the right of the Republicans on issues of sexual morality.”¹⁷⁶ Secular elites meanwhile dominated the Republican Party, whose oligarchs felt little compulsion to kowtow to the desires of religious conservatives, who did not mobilize until the late 1970s. The assertion of Democratic Party elites in the early 1980s, however, realigned American party structures. Party leaders, under pressure from secular feminists and leftists, turned back the McGovern electoral reforms, which had inadvertently given the evangelical Carter an advantage in 1976. In order to marginalize the evangelical populist

No. 2 (February 1985), 5; Laurence Zuckerman, “Who’s Peeking in on *Sojourners*,” *Columbia Journalism Review* 25, No. 1 (May-June 1986), 14-6; Joe Roos, “Listening in on the Church,” *Sojourners* 15, No. 2 (February 1986), 4. On alleged IRS harassment, see Joe Roos, “The IRS: On our Case,” *Sojourners* 16, No. 5 (May 1987), 6.

¹⁷⁵ L.D. Hull, “Dems to Demonstrate Diversity,” *Wheaton Record* 109, No. 2 (September 14, 1984), 1-2. A recent survey of evangelical politicians by sociologist Michael Lindsay found that “the top reason given for their political affiliation was the party’s pro-life position.” See Lindsay, *Faith in the Halls of Power*, 41.

¹⁷⁶ John McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom*, 278-280, 284; Risen and Thomas, *Wrath of Angels*, 18-19, 143. Many prominent pro-life Democrats—Thomas Eagleton, Sergeant Shriver, Edmund Muskie, Tip O’Neill, Richard Gephardt, and Edward Kennedy—ran for public office with their party’s support as late as the early 1970s.

activists that had upset the Democratic nomination process, party leaders introduced a complex set of policies that apportioned “superdelegate” votes according to demographic characteristic and political office.¹⁷⁷ By the early 1980s Democratic leaders, having driven evangelicals out, coalesced into a party dominated by secular, urban elites and hostile to the anti-abortion concerns of evangelicals, whether Democratic or Republican.¹⁷⁸ When in 1980, the Democratic Party for the first time endorsed the pro-choice position as “a basic human right”—and the Republican Party supported a human life amendment and dropped support for the ERA—religious conservatives flocked to “God’s party” as the fault lines in the new realignment grew larger.¹⁷⁹

The evangelical left, for whom abortion was only one of many salient issues, rejected the new faces of both political parties. Sider denounced Republicans for their disinterest in poverty initiatives and Democrats for their pro-choice stance.¹⁸⁰ APJ

¹⁷⁷ K.B. Kraakevik, “The Political Mobilization of White Evangelical Populists in the 1970s and Early 1980s” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 2004), 184-192.

¹⁷⁸ Political scientists Gerald De Maio and Louis Bolce describe the victory of a “secularist putsch” in the Democratic Party, which Richard Nixon could reasonably describe as the party of “acid, amnesty, and abortion.” De Maio and Bolce perhaps overstate the case in speaking of the “hijacking” of the Democratic Party by irreligious secularists, yet secularists certainly contributed to the realignment of party structures in the 1970s. See Louis Bolce and Gerald De Maio, “Our Secularist Democratic Party,” *Public Interest* 149 (Fall 2002), 3-20; Amy Sullivan, *The Party Faithful: How and Why Democrats Are Closing the God Gap* (New York: Scribner, 2008);

¹⁷⁹ Evangelical anti-abortion activist Franky Schaeffer argues that if the media had not ignored the cry over abortion, the realignment might have been stanchied. He writes, “The losers were Democratic Party leaders and other liberal readers of the ‘paper of record’ who were blindsided by subsequent events. ... Had the Democratic Party leaders read about or watched reports on these events—often filled with people who still identified themselves as Democrats in those days—they might not have been so sanguine about allowing their party to become so exclusionary on the abortion issue.” See *Crazy for God*, 284-287.

¹⁸⁰ In a speech at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard on May 16, 1983, Sider said, “Some of the stances I take in this article are identified with liberal/left movements, others with conservative/right causes. ... I strongly endorse an immediate nuclear freeze; at the same time I reject abortion on demand. I was radical change in the foreign policy of Western nations toward the Two Thirds World so that their influence sides with the poor masses rather than affluent elites and trans-national corporations; but I also want much tougher laws against drunk driving to reduce murder on our highways. I believe women have been seriously oppressed and I have endorsed the Equal Rights Amendment (though I would like a clause which would guarantee that it could not be used to support abortion on demand); but I also consider the strengthening of the family one of the most urgent concerns for current public policy and warmly approve

denounced Democrats for not supporting educational vouchers and Reagan for his hawkish diplomacy.¹⁸¹ Unreconstructed new leftists denounced the dual party structure that left little room for radical solutions. *Vanguard*, for instance, condemned “rightist, centrist, and leftist” orientations as beholden to the “spirit of pragmatism, dominant in North America.”¹⁸² True faithfulness and an uncompromising commitment to Scripture, the movement contended, would never fit existing categories or conventional arguments. The biblical concept of Jubilee, explained *The Other Side*’s Merold Westphal, simply did not represent a capitalist or welfare state model of economics.¹⁸³ “The politics of Christ,” wrote the president of Wheaton’s Student Peace Coalition, “transcend party affiliation.” “People shouldn’t be bound to what a political ideology dictates,” Alison Rader explained in linking a pro-life stance on abortion to opposition to nuclear arms and the

President Reagan’s attempt to have parents notified when public agencies give minor children contraceptives.” Sider’s speech continued by protesting inequalities in education, housing, and jobs for minorities, by urging the environmental protection even if it means slower economic growth, and by urging the boycotting of companies that support television with violence and sex. See Ronald J. Sider, “An Evangelical vision for Public Policy,” *Transformation* 2, No. 3 (July 1985), 1-9. For similar denunciations of Reagan, see “Don’t (Just) Blame Reagan,” *The Other Side* 19, No. 6 (June 1983), 14-15; George Chauncey, “Responding in Faith to Reagan’s Assault on the Poor,” *The Other Side* 20, No. 5 (May 1984), 8-10.

¹⁸¹ While APJ lauded Reagan’s endorsement of vouchers, they nevertheless criticized his lack of a coherent vision for education. See “U.S. Department of Education in Question,” *Public Justice Report* 6, No. 5 (February 1983), 2; Jim Skillen, “Politicians Wrongly Polarizing Education,” *Public Justice Report* 6, No. 10 (August-September 1983), 2-3. On denunciations of Reagan more generally, see “Republicans and Democrats Do Not Measure Up,” *Public Justice Report* 8, No. 1 (October 1984), 5, 7; Jim Skillen, “The Post-Reagan Era: What Will the Future Bring?” *Public Justice Report* 11, No. 3 (December 1987), 4-5; Karen Hosler Kispert, “Michael Dukakis,” *Public Justice Report* 11, No. 4 (January 1988), 5-6.

¹⁸² Ed VanderKloet, “An Explanation,” *Vanguard* 8, No. 1 (June-July 1978), 3.

¹⁸³ Merold Westphal, “Sing Jubilee: A Probing Look at How Leviticus 25 Could Affect Economic and Social Relations in our Modern Industrial Society,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 3 (March 1978), 29-31. Even APJ, the most politically conventional young evangelical group out there, used this sort of rhetoric: “The Association for Public Justice and the APJ Education Fund were founded on the conviction that the biblical testimony is the ultimate light, the final authority for political life. That testimony cannot be set aside simply because it does not allow us to build a big enough coalition of people to exert political pressure.” See Jim Skillen, “By What Light Are We Guided?” *Public Justice Report* 5, No. 1 (October 1981), 6.

peace movement in general.¹⁸⁴ Boyd Reese, a former member of the Sojourners community, recalls how “profoundly suspicious” the group was of both political parties.¹⁸⁵ Jim Wallis, who briefly tried to organize Christian feminists to protest abortion, delighted in confounding political expectations. Unorthodox alignments, he said, would “really blow the polarities of right and left.”¹⁸⁶ This rigid insistence on political flexibility—a willingness to alienate “just about every part of the political spectrum, from the extreme left to the extreme right and almost every thing in between”—gave the evangelical left rhetorical and ideological freedom but little political traction.¹⁸⁷

For a newly mobilized tradition with a mandate to engage social structures, the evangelical left found itself in a dilemma. The newly hardened party structures made it nearly impossible to authentically engage in politics. Some voted for Reagan in the 1980s based solely on his anti-abortion stance. Some endorsed Democrats, like Sojourners’ Danny Collum did of Mondale, as the “lesser of two evils” (but only after deriding

¹⁸⁴ L.D. Hull, “Democrats Seek Consistency,” 3. Richard Pierard similarly wrote, “You reinforced my unpopular conviction that the right to life involves standing up for life all along the line, regardless of what others may say or think.” See Richard Pierard letter in “Postmark,” *Sojourners* 10, No. 1 (January 1981), 39.

¹⁸⁵ Boyd Reese, “Resistance and Hope: The Interplay of Theological Synthesis, Biblical Interpretation, Political Analysis and Praxis in the Christian Radicalism of *Sojourners* Magazine” (Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1991), 221.

¹⁸⁶ Quoted in Mary McGrory, “Following Conscience’s Lead,” *Washington Post*, May 28, 1985, p. A2. Sojourners Cathy Stentzel similarly stated, “I am wholeheartedly in support of the Equal Rights Amendment. Feminists who use a pro-choice position on abortion as a litmus test for membership in the women’s movement must re-examine that position. There have been almost 7 million abortions in this country since 1973. I don’t want to be identified with that measure of liberation.” Quoted in Flake, *Redemptoriana*, 254.

¹⁸⁷ “I keep bumping into people who say they agree with ESA on almost every issue except ... The exception may be nuclear disarmament or abortion or homosexuality.” See Ronald J. Sider, “Why ESA Is Stubbornly Multi-Issue,” *ESA Advocate* 11, No. 1 (January 1989), 1-2. Also see “Strategic Planning Report,” 12. On APJ’s devotion to a multi-issue approach, see “Board Votes to Hire Full-Time Executive,” *Public Justice Report* 4, No. 5 (February 1981), 1-2.

Mondale as “total establishment”).¹⁸⁸ Others avoided the ballot box entirely, though these non-voters despaired that their abstinence was “in essence a vote for Reagan and his war on the poor and the Third World.” Even theologically Reformed progressives found the party structure too constraining as one of their own, former Calvin professor Paul Henry, seemed stuck in a Republican stranglehold on Capitol Hill. A delegation of Calvin professors, irritated with Henry’s reluctance to oppose Reagan’s intervention in Nicaragua, confronted him in the mid-1980s. “Tell me, Mr. Henry, what will be the good of overthrowing the Sandinista government if, in the process, we establish the principle that a President is permitted to break Federal laws, defy Congress, and deceive the American public as to his true intentions?”¹⁸⁹ Observing the inflexibility of the party system, APJ’s Skillen declared, “The liberal/conservative tradition is in crisis and cannot endure. A more adequate public philosophy must take its place if representative democracy is to survive and flourish.”¹⁹⁰ What could a consistently pro-life evangelical do except “seek God’s Spirit for counsel, and ask for forgiveness for our part in a world that leaves us with choices such as these”?¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁸ Collum noted that Mondale had remained a supporter of the Vietnam War and served as the “front man” for the Democratic establishment’s successful effort to exclude the biracial MS Freedom Democratic Party delegation in favor of the whites-only delegation. Calling Mondale the “last cold war liberal,” Collum noted that “Cold War liberalism gave us the hydrogen bomb, the peacetime draft, the Korean War, the intercontinental ballistic missile, the Bay of Pigs, the missile gap, the Vietnam War, the invasion of the Dominican Republic, the counterforce doctrine, the decision to deploy first-strike missiles in Europe, the MX missile, and military aid and advisers to the government of El Salvador.” See Danny Collum, “What’s at Stake ... And What Isn’t: A Readers’ Guide to the Presidential Election,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 8 (September 1984), 12-16. For a similar critique from APJ, see William Garfield, “Walter Mondale,” *Public Justice Report* 7, No. 7 (April 1984), 3, 5.

¹⁸⁹ See Daniel R. Miller to Paul Henry, December 1, 1986, correspondence in author’s possession. When Henry finally called for an end of funding for the Contras, Miller wrote, “Thank you for placing that principle above the cries for party unity.” See Miller to Henry, April 28, 1987.

¹⁹⁰ Jim Skillen, “The Bork Moment,” *Public Justice Report* 11, No. 2 (November 1987), 6. (4-6).

¹⁹¹ Bill Weld-Wallis, “Abortion: The Political Dilemma,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 9 (October 1984), 4-5.

In the mid-1980s the evangelical left, objecting to the current incarnations of the Republican and Democratic parties, sought to find an electoral niche that might transcend the two-party system. In the 1980s APJ, reviving its Dutch heritage, repeatedly looked across the Atlantic to weigh the merits of European party structures.¹⁹² The evangelical left, however, ultimately found a more resonant tradition for precedents on how to reform the system that had made political pariahs out of them by looking back in American history to the turn-of-the-century populist movement.¹⁹³ Like southern and western farmers in the 1880s who tried to wrest power from eastern power brokers, the evangelical left sought to ensure that disadvantaged citizens participate in decisions affecting their lives. John Alexander of *The Other Side* exegeted Scripture passages as examples of populist rhetoric and affirmed a proposal for a “people-oriented economics” for the 80% of the population “consistently excluded from economic decision-

¹⁹² Jim Skillen, “Voter Turnout and the Decline of American Democracy,” *Public Justice Report* 12, No. 3 (December 1988), 1, 7. For a similar global critique of the American electoral system from The Other Side community, see Jim Forest, “Election Eve Blues,” *The Other Side* 20, No. 10 (October 1984), 18-19.

¹⁹³ In addition to the similarities discussed below, the evangelical left’s startling fixation with farming, despite their overwhelmingly urban lives, added yet another parallel to the American populist movement of the late nineteenth century. On the inordinate focus on farming, rooted in its connection to global hunger and perhaps some nostalgia for Dutch Calvinist and Swiss-German Anabaptist grandparents who were farmers, see James Visser, “The Farmer as Provider,” *Vanguard* 7, No. 5 (September-October 1977), 8-11; Robert Coles, “Poor God: Psychiatrist Robert Coles Probes the Faith of the Rural Poor,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 1 (January 1978), 30-36; “Food, Farming, and Foreign Policy,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 2, No. 2 (November 1978), 1-2; James Skillen, “Alarming Loss of Farmland Reported: APJ Testifies in Iowa,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 7 (April 1980), 1-2; “Land Use in New England,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 9 (June-July 1980), 8; James Skillen and Robert Malloch, “Justice for the Land,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 10 (August-September 1980), 1-2; See James Skillen, “Justice for Land and People,” *Public Justice Report* 4, No. 6 (March 1981), 2-4; Joyce Ribbens Campbell, “Preserving Farmland: The View from Washington,” *Public Justice Report* 4, No 8 (May 1981), 1-4; Danny Collum, “The Forgotten Farmer: The Crisis in American Agriculture,” 14-17, and David Ostendorf, “For Generations to Come,” 18-21, in *Sojourners* 15, No. 9 (October 1986). In the 1970s, Jack Newfield and Jeff Greenfield’s book *A Populist Manifesto* (New York: Warner Paperback Library, 1972) was on the Post-American reading list. See Reese, “Resistance and Hope, 213.

making.”¹⁹⁴ Sider wrote, “Only if every person is genuinely free to make basic economic decisions can she or he truly exercise dominion over the economic realm.”¹⁹⁵ APJ thus introduced legislation to protect political minorities from being “smothered by an artificial majority.”¹⁹⁶ Sojourners pushed for public control over investment which would take power away from financial oligarchs. It launched campaigns by citizens of letter-writing, direct action, and alliances with the poor—such as establishing a daycare and the Southern Columbia Heights Tenant Union—in order to empower the lower classes to become “shapers of history.”¹⁹⁷ ESA workers organized communities in Chicago and Philadelphia and joined Housing Now!, a national coalition of organizations outraged by “a governmental process that allows the rich and powerful to make billions through manipulation of housing programs while the poor lack decent homes.”¹⁹⁸ The evangelical

¹⁹⁴ John F. Alexander, “The Wicked Rich, The Righteous Poor,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 1 (January 1978), 12-15; Al Krass and Gar Alperovitz, “Forging New Alternatives,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 3 (March 1978), 36-44.

¹⁹⁵ Ron Sider, “Towards a Political Philosophy,” *ESA Advocate* 10, No. 7 (October 1988), 1.

¹⁹⁶ James Skillen, *Justice for Representation: A Proposal for Revitalizing our System of Political Participation* (Washington, D.C.: Association for Public Justice, 1979). On Sojourners’ Wes Michaelson’s support for proportional representation, see “Christian Responses in Politics: Sojourners, Part II,” *Public Justice Newsletter* (June-July 1979), 6.

¹⁹⁷ Danny Collum, “Economics: The Way America Does Business,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 10 (November 1985), 12-17; Reese, “Resistance and Hope,” 222, 228, 244. Also see the fragmented notes from March 1982 in a Sojourners member’s diary that reveal the group’s concern for the poor and its wrestling about how to address poverty: “Our whole bent in wanting to be with the poor is in wanting to do, give power”; “Full circle of involvement with neighbors—wanting to be involved with the poor directly. Very involved with poor people when moved—SS was larger than Sunday worship; picnics—more neighborhood than community; cooking dinner—help with neighbors; “Almost everybody in community was involved with people in neighborhood ... Judy Floyd ... opening self to the poor ... incentive for voluntary poverty ... much further along in peace than economics/relationship to poor; romanticizing about poor people ... being poor in every way—economically, socially, physically, educationally, psychologically, culturally.” See “Lenten Discussions, 3/10/82,” in Box IV1, Folder 8, “Community and Magazine: Notes and Ideas,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC. On the Chicago Conference on Good News to the Poor, see Sider to “contributor,” December 5, 1989, in Folder, “1989,” ESA Archives.

¹⁹⁸ Joan Wulff, “A Tale of Two City Ministries,” *HIS* 40, No. 6 (March 1980), 19-23; Beth Spring, “Creative Caring in Hard Times: How Churches Are Helping America’s Poor,” *HIS* (March 1984), 24-25. On evangelical left advocacy on behalf of the poor, see Wallis, *Revive Us Again*, 127-130; Ron Sider, “Home Sweet Home?” *ESA Advocate* 11, No. 9 (October 1989), 1; Barb Tamialis, “A Center for Neighborhood Ministry,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 3 (March 1978), 31; Tamialis, “A Center for Neighborhood

left's neo-populist rhetoric and activism sought to stanch the power of any structure—corporate, governmental, or labor—that exerted undue authoritarian control.¹⁹⁹

While the evangelical left never formed its own political party as the populist movement did, it did express admiration for alternative parties and candidates. Sojourners lauded the Green Party.²⁰⁰ APJ praised Anderson for running as an independent.²⁰¹ Most of all the evangelical left commended Jesse Jackson for subverting conventional politics.²⁰² Progressive evangelicals as diverse as APJ and Sojourners liked his “public

Ministry,” *Sojourners* 10, No. 4 (April 1981), 26-27; Jean Vanier, “A Home for the Crushed and Lonely: A Call to Community with the Poor,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 5 (May 1985), 24-26; Jim Wallis, “Housing the Homeless,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 3 (March 1977), 5-6; Mary Ellen Hombs, “Renovated Houses, Displaced Persons: A Fable for American Cities,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 3 (March 1977), 28-30; “Night Hospitality: Reflections on Sharing with Washington’s Homeless,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 2 (February 1978), 30-31; Perry Perkins, “Community Efforts Change Government Policy,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 5 (May 1978), 28-29; Keary Kincannon, “Long Time Coming,” *Sojourners* 12, No. 8 (Sept 1983), 31; Jim Wallis, “The New Refugees,” 13-17; *Sojourners* 7, No. 11 (November 1978); Sider, *Cry Justice! The Bible Speaks on Hunger and Poverty* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1980); Richard J. Barnet, *The Lean Years: Politics in the Age of Scarcity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1980); Jim Wallis, “Poverty Is a Scandal,” *Sojourners* 14, No. 10 (November 1985), 4-5; Dana Powell, “Patchwork Central: Abandoning Blueprints for Community,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 5 (May 1978), 20-21; Richard Cizik, *The High Cost of Indifference: Can Christians Afford Not to Act?* (Ventura, Cal.: Regal Books, 1984), 27.

¹⁹⁹ “We have to get accustomed to the idea that ... the danger of totalitarianism does not just come from the side of the state (or from organized labor), but equally from the side of the so-called free enterprise, which systematically tries to make the government an extension of private commercial interests.” See Sander Griffioen, “Government and the Corporation,” *Public Justice Report* 4, No. 6 (March 1981), 7. (4-8). For examples of anti-corporatism, see “‘The More Trouble We Get, the More Religious We Get’: An Interview with Cesar Chavez,” *Sojourners* 6, No. 10 (October 1977), 21-25; Jim Wallis, “Mammon’s Iron Thumb,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 2 (February 1978), 3-5; “Laboring On: How You Can Help Reduce the Exploitation of Many Low-Paid Workers,” *The Other Side* 14, No. 3 (March 1978), 16; Harry Antonides, “Why the Poor Get Poorer,” *Vanguard* 9, No. 1 (January-February 1979), 5; Michael B. Russell, “A Battleground for Industrial Strife,” *Sojourners* 8, No. 4, (April 1979), 10-13; Denise Giardina, “The Destruction of Black Wolf,” *Sojourners* 8, No. 11 (Nov 1979), 12-13. On suspicion of leaving “technical details in the hands of the experts,” see “Key Campaign Issues: The Economy,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 8 (May 1980), 1-2.

²⁰⁰ Gary J. Dorrien, “A Green Kind of Politics: The Worldwide Prospects of a New Movement,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 9, (September 1984), 36-38

²⁰¹ “Anderson’s independent bid,” wrote Skillen, “is a small step, a small sign, indicating something that we all sense deep down inside: our system does not provide enough distinguishable alternatives, enough real political choices to U.S. citizens who will be represented by the winning candidates whether or not we want them.” See James Skillen, “Three Candidates for President?” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 9 (June-July 1980), 7-8.

²⁰² Sharon Gallagher interview, July 7, 2006, Berkeley, Cal.; Jim Wallis, “Signs of the Times: Issues, Values, and the Rainbow Campaign in Election ’88,” *Sojourners* 17 (November 1988), 14-21; Danny Collum, “In search of the New South: Jesse Jackson Breaks Common Ground,” *Sojourners* (June 1988),

philosophy,” his progressive politics, his pro-life position (until he recanted it), his clear articulation of faith, and his populist rhetoric.²⁰³ APJ declared that Jackson’s neo-populism fit its own impulse to marshal “a people’s power ... in democratic opposition.”²⁰⁴ Jim Wallis of Sojourners wrote, “A political campaign which places its priority on justice for the poor and the marginalized is a rare thing ... Jackson’s campaign here stood unique and was the closest by far to the biblical priorities.”²⁰⁵ ESA board member Barbara Skinner served as Special Assistant to the Jackson presidential campaign.²⁰⁶ For a time, Jackson’s candidacy sparked new hope among the evangelical left that their domestic agenda might expand from local community organizing to a “national political strategy on the foundation of local empowerment.”²⁰⁷ Like Jackson’s failed campaign, however, the neo-populist impulse among the evangelical left, suffering from a lack of electoral and financial heft, did not result in electoral success. Anabaptist and separatist factions of the movement were oriented more toward symbolic protest than organization. The Reformed, who affirmed traditional politics, were not well-suited to the two-party system of American politics. Compared to troops of the religious right, who had the advantage of holding even less political theory than the evangelical left and who

14-20; Danny Collum, “Under the Rainbow,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 7 (August 1984), 4; Sider quoted in Jones, “Ronald Sider and Radical Evangelical Political Theology,” 429; Skillen, “Key Campaign Issues: 1984,” *Public Justice Report* 7, No. 4 (January 1984), 1-3.

²⁰³ On Jackson’s public philosophy, see James Skillen, “Jesse Jackson: The Candidate in ’88,” *Public Justice Report* 7, No. 8 (May 1984), 1, 5. On his explicit articulation of faith, see David A. Coolidge, Jr., “Jesse Jackson,” *Public Justice Report* 11, No. 4 (January 1988), 12-13; Hall, “How Will the Democrats Answer Evangelical Concerns?” 52.; Reese, “Resistance and Hope,” 249. On his progressive politics, see “Jesse Jackson Storms Rural Iowa,” *Public Justice Report* 10, No. 9 (August-September 1987), 1, 6.

²⁰⁴ “Buthelezi, Pleads for Non-Violent Transition in South Africa,” *Public Justice Newsletter* 3, No. 1 (October 1979), 3-7.

²⁰⁵ Wallis, “Signs of the Times,” 16-17; Collum, “In Search of the New South,” 17.

²⁰⁶ “ESA Elects New Board Members,” *ESA Update* 7, No. 1 (February 1985), 1.

²⁰⁷ Reese, “Resistance and Hope,” 249.

enjoyed the success that came along with being coopted by a burgeoning Republican Party, the evangelical left remained without a political home.

The movement thus inevitably followed a different trajectory than politically conservative evangelicals of Orange County.²⁰⁸ Instead of multi-million-dollar fundraising campaigns in the Sunbelt, which was enjoying unprecedented economic growth, the evangelical left labored in the rustbelt, a region burdened by high oil prices and the failures of the auto industry.²⁰⁹ Not only could they not enjoy the spoils of federal defense contracts, they did not want to. Teachings on the renunciation of wealth and criticisms of capitalism led adherents away from high-paying business and industry jobs and alienated evangelicals who already held such jobs. Moreover, attempts to corporatize the movement were often hesitant and tardy.²¹⁰ “Whenever I go and meet a wealthy person,” complained Fuller’s David Hubbard, “I find that Bill Bright has been there first.”²¹¹ Cal Thomas, a former lieutenant of Jerry Falwell who in 1984 left the religious right, explained, “Since I started living a simple lifestyle, I can’t afford all the stamps I once could when I was a captive of the profit motive and working for Falwell!”²¹² Anti-technocratic and small-is-beautiful tendencies militated against the development of a well-funded, large movement.

²⁰⁸ On the wealth and mobilization of Orange County evangelicals, see Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001). On the demography of Sojourners, see Joe Roos, “Into 1980 Together,” *Sojourners* 9, No. 1 (January 1980), 4-5. Two-thirds of Sojourners’ readers’ families earned less than \$20,000 a year.

²⁰⁹ Thomas J. Sugrue, *Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

²¹⁰ On direct mailings, see “Meeting of the Board of Directors, ESA,” January 19, 20, 1985, in Folder “1985”; Ron Sider to Mark Hatfield, April 21, 1989, in Folder “1989,” ESA Archives.

²¹¹ Quoted in Kenneth L. Woodward, “Born Again!” *Newsweek* (October 23, 1976), 78.

²¹² Cal Thomas to Dale Yaeger, May 22, 1988, in Folder “1988,” ESA Archives.

The evangelical left—hamstrung by its refusal to fit into ecclesiastical structure, its unwillingness to align itself with a traditional party, and its demographics—seemed to be in perpetual danger of insolvency. At the Thanksgiving Workshops, graduate students’ attendance was sporadic for lack of money, despite clear indications of interest and support. After travel allowances of \$9,800 disbursed by the Lilly Foundation ran out, even established scholars at major state universities could not afford to attend planning meetings.²¹³ By 1981, ESA’s books were in disarray. The organization was in debt and had failed to file taxes for several years.²¹⁴ New administrator Bill Kallio engineered a remarkable recovery in the early 1980s. He paid \$6,500 in IRS penalties, and attracted 2,500 new members. ESA moved from Grand Rapids to Washington, D.C., and hired three new staffers. Giving increased 30 percent, and the number of ESA chapters grew to thirty-five.²¹⁵ Still, that Kallio could exult over financial turnaround of \$26,000 showed the distance between ESA and the religious right. ESA struggled with solvency through the rest of the 1980s, surviving primarily through small donations as well as Sider’s numerous speakers fees.²¹⁶

Other organizations within the evangelical left mirrored ESA’s financial struggles. CWLF suffered significant financial deficits.²¹⁷ LaSalle Church in Chicago

²¹³ Robert S. Lecky to Ron Sider, October 14, 1974, in Folder “1974 Chicago Workshop Planning,” ESA Archives. Lilly also granted ESA \$16,000 to fund regional workshops in the mid-1970s. Mennonite Central Committee donated \$5,000. See “Minutes of the Planning Committee of Evangelicals for Social Concern,” January 24, 1975, in Folder “1975 Chicago Workshop Planning,” ESA Archives.

²¹⁴ “Minutes of Board of Director’s Conference Call,” August 25, 1981, in Folder “1981,” ESA Archives.

²¹⁵ “Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting,” June 17, 1982, in Folder “1982”; Kallio to Sider, May 18, 1982, Folder “1982”; Bill Kallio, “Monthly Report,” January 6, 1981, in Folder “1981,” ESA Archives; Ron Sider, untitled mailing, circa Fall 1983, in Folder “1983,” ESA Archives

²¹⁶ Ron Sider Speaks,” *ESA Advocate* 11, No. 11 (December 1989), 7.

²¹⁷ “Analysis of CWLF Ministries and Financial Accounts and Recommendations,” April 1975; “Remit Envelopes,” August 1, 1974, in Folder “CWLF Council,” Box 2, CWLF Collection, GTU Archives.

complained of perpetual lack of money.²¹⁸ The cover of the June-July 1976 issue of the *Wittenburg Door* read, “Celebrating Five Years of Operating with a Loss.” *Vanguard* magazine, internally torn over diverging political philosophies, failed to publish an issue for seven straight months in 1978 and begged subscribers for additional funds in order to stay afloat. Although 300 readers sent in \$25 each, temporarily keeping the magazine alive, *Vanguard* folded in 1981.²¹⁹ JustLife survived on average donations of \$30 before folding in 1992.²²⁰ By comparison, *Sojourners* magazine, though paying its employees “subsistence level salaries” and refusing to take government or foundation grants, thrived. Buoyed by a successful direct mail drive in the late 1970s, *Sojourners’* subscriptions tripled, and then continued to grow through the early years of the Reagan administration until leveling off at 55,000 in 1983.²²¹ Overall, however, the evangelical left struggled financially.

Entering the 1984 and 1988 elections with little money and political clout, the evangelical left again despaired over the lack of appealing options.²²² “So, we are on the outside. Pro-lifers don’t like us because we push them to embrace a consistent pro-life ethic. Our friends in the justice and peace movement don’t like us because we make them

²¹⁸ James Hefley and Marti Hefley, *The Church That Takes on Trouble* (Elgin, Ill.: David C. Cook, 1976), 73.

²¹⁹ Paul Schrottenboer to Josina B. Zylstra, July 18, 1979, in Box 1, Folder 2, “Wedgewood Foundation Financial Records, 1970-1981,” Vanguard Collection, Calvin Archives; Ed VanderKloet, “An Explanation,” *Vanguard* 8, No. 1 (June-July 1978), 3; “Dear *Vanguard* Subscriber,” *Vanguard* 9, No. 4 (July-August 1979), 15.

²²⁰ Bendyna, “JustLife Action,” 197.

²²¹ “Subscriber Base,” in Box IV4, Folder 7, “Subscriber Base Charts,” *Sojourners* Collection, WCSC; James Ridgeway, “Evangelical Group Is Rooted in Radical Movement,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 19, 1985, A15.

²²² Former *Sojourners* member Boyd Reese notes that “the critiques of the neo-populist movement by Reissmann, Miller, and Gans raise significant questions about the adequacy of neo-populist practice applied to building a broadly-based, national political coalition.” See Reese, “Resistance and Hope,” 256.

uncomfortable with our anti-abortion talk. The presidential campaign forces us to focus on this. We have no clear choice. Neither candidate is genuinely pro-life. Neither comes close.”²²³ *Sojourners*, despite its impressive subscription base and normally upbeat rhetoric, seemed to resign itself to political obscurity. Wallis, contending that a spiritual awakening was needed before political action could take place, began to talk more explicitly about pastoral work and revivalism. ESA, on the other hand, seemed to have a renewed appetite for political struggle, launching new campaigns centered on public policy and the environment. Its stagnant membership and the demise of JustLife, however, again revealed both an unforgiving political landscape and a confused identity.

A consultant hired by ESA in 1990 barraged the organization’s leadership with a series of questions about its identity: Was its mission to “disciple evangelicals” or to influence politicians about public policy? Was its primary constituency evangelicals or non-evangelicals? Had it lost its evangelistic focus? Was it flitting from one idea to the next without follow-up? Was ESA merely the person of Ron Sider? In a drawn-out discussion at ESA headquarters, board members and administrators clashed over each one of these questions, leaving the group frustrated and confused about how to proceed.²²⁴ And so for the evangelical left, the Reagan era ended as it began: with an incoherent identity. While the evangelical left’s wide reach across ecumenical traditions made it more influential than most suspected, its influence was nonetheless obscured by that broad reach. By failing to speak in an explicitly evangelical voice, the evangelical

²²³ Bill Weld-Wallis, “Abortion: The Political Dilemma,” *Sojourners* 13, No. 9 (October 1984), 4-5.

²²⁴ “Strategic Planning Report and Response, Day 2,” December 8, 1990, in Folder “1990,” ESA Archives.

left forfeited its chances for large-scale mobilization.²²⁵ By 1990 the movement was spent, exhausted by internal friction and left homeless outside the American political party system.

And yet the evangelical left could claim lasting success in arenas less dependent on politics, strictly defined. Enjoying the advantages of following national trends supported by general sociological changes, evangelical left's consciousness-raising regarding gender, simple living, and the environment made significant headway among evangelical moderates. Ron Sider's *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, for example, while not changing American economic or foreign policy, did shape the giving and consumptive patterns of millions of evangelicals in the 1980s and beyond. After attending Lausanne II in Manila, Sider could in good faith, despite the evangelical left's utter failure in electoral politics, declare, "What especially impressed—and delighted—me was the extent to which the ESA vision of wholistic concern for both evangelism and social action has now become the prevailing perspective of mainstream evangelicalism worldwide. That was not the case when ESA was launched with the Chicago Declaration in 1973!"²²⁶

²²⁵ Many ideas of the evangelical left were take over (and freely given to) ecumenical groups. Thus the evangelical left never got full credit because observers could not see the evangelical roots of movements such as Witness for Peace and Pledge of Resistance. Moreover, they were ambivalent about taking credit, brand-name promotion, and organizational growth. See Joel A. Carpenter, "How Much Has Changed?" (paper presented at the 30th anniversary celebration of ESA, Philadelphia, Pa., July 25, 1993), p. 14-15. The evangelical left's refusal to conform has marginalized them among political parties and the media, leaving many to simply highlight the religious right.

²²⁶ Sider fundraising letter, December 5, 1989, in Folder "1989," ESA Archives.

V.

Scholars of religion, trying to debunk secularization theorists who argued that religion was privatizing, even disappearing, in response to modernity, have pointed to the global re-emergence of religion in the last quarter of the twentieth century. José Casanova described large religious movements in India, Iran, Spain, and the United States that were not only surviving, but in some cases controlling the public arena.²²⁷ Martin Marty and Scott Appleby's "Fundamentalism Project" put American Protestant fundamentalism in global context, suggesting that parts of other major religions also were morphing into fundamentalist form in response to modernity.²²⁸ In a 1989 study of American religious practitioners, sociologists Christian Smith and Mark Regnerus similarly suggested that "a significant minority of Americans resist individual-level privatization. They want religion to speak to social and political issues, and act accordingly."²²⁹ This dissertation affirms this "deprivatization" thesis. Evangelicals for McGovern, Citizens for Carter, Evangelicals for Social Action, and the Association for Public Justice show that the evangelical left anticipated the more celebrated emergence of Moral Majority. Evangelicals of all stripes engaged the political realm in new and unexpected ways in the 1970s and 1980s.²³⁰

The story of the evangelical left, however, also illuminates the limits of evangelical politicization. First, the racial, gender, and theological diversities of the

²²⁷ José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

²²⁸ For the first release in the project, see Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds., *Fundamentalisms Observed* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

²²⁹ Mark D. Regnerus and Christian Smith, "Selective Deprivatization among American Religious Traditions: The Reversal of the Great Reversal," *Social Forces* 76, No. 4 (June 1998), 1347-1372.

²³⁰ Richard Cizik, "A Plan for Action: Tips on How the System Works," 169-223, and "Voter Registration—A Guide for Evangelicals," 224-232, in Cizik, *High Cost of Indifference*.

evangelical left point to the inherent structural fragmentation of evangelicalism. While the National Association of Evangelicals proper consists of only 43 member denominations, scholars consider at least a thousand more of the nearly 4,000 Protestant denominations in the United States to be evangelical.²³¹ The fragmentation extends even beyond the astonishing number of denominations, given the decreasing salience of denominational markers. Many evangelicals now identify primarily with social service agencies, missionary organizations, colleges, individual congregations, or even evangelical celebrities.²³² Given this “priesthood of all believers” theology, evangelicalism lacks a long-standing tradition of political thought or a hierarchical system of governance.²³³ While this bottom-up structure allows the movement to react to market forces, in turn giving it a stunning resilience and a capacity for growth, this feature also hinders political coherence.²³⁴ As evangelicalism reaches out to different social classes, geographies, and ethnicities with the preoccupying message of salvation, it

²³¹ David B. Barrett, George T. Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 789.

²³² Even within these structures, if the evangelical left is any indication, a coherent identity should not be assumed. See “APJ Members Getting Together in the Capitol,” *Public Justice Newsletter* (March 1979), 4-5; Sider quoted in Jones, “Radical Evangelical Political Theology,” 434.

²³³ Nathan Hatch notes the “democratic structure of evangelicalism—audience centered, intellectually open to all, organizationally fragmented.” For more on evangelicalism’s stress on individual experience and conscience, see Mark A. Noll, *America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 93-113; Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Hatch, “Evangelicalism as a Democratic Movement,” 77, in George Marsden, ed., *Evangelicalism and Modern America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984); Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *The Churching of America, 1776-1990: Winners and Losers in our Religious Economy* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992).

²³⁴ This phenomenon also occurs globally. Mark Noll, noting that while “evangelicals worldwide are moral conservatives as in the United States” and often “lean toward democratic and liberal policies (though with exceptions, the most salient feature of evangelical politics abroad is “chameleon-like variability.” “No consistent or predictable economic and geopolitical agenda,” he concludes, “defines evangelical politics worldwide.” See Noll, “Evangelicals and Politics,” Paper presented at Colloquium on Religion and American History, February 14, 2007, Notre Dame, Ind.; Paul Freston, *Protestant Political Parties: A Global Survey* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2004); Paul Freston, *Evangelicals and Politics in Asia, Africa, and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

can rarely bring itself to mold its converts into a particular political perspective.²³⁵ The democratization of American evangelicalism, seen especially in the egalitarian-ordered evangelical left, encourages diversity in both political method and theory.²³⁶

Second, a strong strand of apoliticism persists, even among evangelicals noted for their political activism. Sojourners, for instance, periodically regrouped to focus on churchly and community activities.²³⁷ ESA vacillated in the late 1980s over whether to focus on personal discipleship of college students or political lobbying and policy research.²³⁸ Ron Sider cautioned members, “Politics is not nearly as important as many people think. It’s not the way to bring salvation. It’s not the only way to change the world.”²³⁹ Fuller Seminary’s David Hubbard cautioned evangelical feminists that the “kingdom cause” of spreading the Gospel message must “loom above all other causes to

²³⁵ Joel Carpenter notes that Latino evangelicals are “relatively friendly to the social justice and environmental issues emphasized by ESA.” See Carpenter, “How Much Has Changed?” 7.

²³⁶ On continuing friction between Wallis and Sider over abortion, radical vs. liberal political approach, and theology, see Jones, “Radical Evangelical Political Theology, 433-435. On improved, but still “frosty” relations between APJ and ESA, see “Minutes of Strategic Planning Report and Response,” December 8, 1990, p. 7, in Folder “1990,” ESA Archives. For reports from a 1985 conference in which 25 evangelical leaders debated politics from the perspectives of Reformed theology, Anabaptism, the Moral Majority, the American Coalition for Traditional Values, see “The Bible, Politics, and American Democracy,” *Public Justice Report* 9, No. 3 (December 1985), 1-3.

²³⁷ The change of name from *Post-American* to *Sojourners* emphasized the biblical and spiritual, rather than political, nature of the group. While spiritual emphases could serve to heighten the stridency of political claims, the recurring spiritual impulse usually came after political defeats and chastenings. In the mid-1980s, for instance, *Sojourners* attempted a resurgence of concern for “the church. *Sojourners* launched a revival campaign, arguing that political solutions “will not be enough.” Political solutions must be rooted in “rebuilding the church as a community of people committed in a whole way to each other, to being the Body of Christ, to demonstrating the unity of God’s people in all respects.” See “Sojourners to Launch Revival Campaign,” *New Options* (April 16, 1984), 3. Copy in Box IV1, “Articles and Critiques about Sojourners,” Sojourners Collection, WCSC. On a significant faction in ESA in the late 1980s that urged less focus on public policy and more on discipleship and education within the evangelical community, see Campolo, Sine, and Cerbone in “Minutes of Strategic Planning Report and Response,” 7-10.

²³⁸ “Strategic Planning Report,” 7-9.

²³⁹ Ron Sider, “The Limitations of Politics,” *ESA Advocate* 10, No. 8 (November-December 1988), 1, 6.

which we attach ourselves.”²⁴⁰ Roberta Hestenes, asserting that primary commitment must be to Christ and his purposes, similarly declared that women be “in” but not “of the women’s movement.”²⁴¹ Most adherents of the evangelical left, even as they elevated the position of social action, still subordinated politics to evangelism, personal discipleship, and faithfulness to spiritual ideals.²⁴²

The religious right offers the most compelling counterexample to this argument of political limits. Yet even this mobilization of several million evangelicals in 1980 bent to the structural and theological limits of evangelical politics.²⁴³ Campaigns to enforce

²⁴⁰ Quoted in Phyllis E. Alsdurf, “Evangelical Feminists: Ministry Is the Issue,” Folder, “Evangelical Women’s Caucus Conference,” Fuller Archives.

²⁴¹ Quoted in Karin Granberg Michaelson, “Moving into the Mainstream,” *Sojourners* 7, No. 8 (August 1978), 7. For similar calls by contributors to APJ, see Clarke Cochran, “Biblical Politics Revisited,” *Public Justice Report* 13, No. 1 (October 1989), 4; James W. Skillen, “Is ‘Biblical’ a Bad Word?” *Public Justice Report* 12, No. 5 (February 1989), 3.

²⁴² George Marsden, “Where to Begin in Thinking about American Evangelicalism,” Presentation at the Organization of American Historians, March 30, 2007. A representative of APJ wrote, “Should a Christian political movement ever decide to seek parliamentary representation, it must never be preoccupied with electoral success.” See “Christian Political Action in North America,” *Public Justice Newsletter* (May 1978), 3-6; Mark Olson, “Looking for the Prince,” *The Other Side* 20, No. 10 (October 1984), 20-21.

²⁴³ See Stephen D. Johnson and Joseph B. Tamney, “The Christian Right and the 1980 Presidential Election,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 21, No. 2 (June 1982), 123-131; Seymour M. Lipset and Earl Raab, “The Election and the Evangelicals,” *Commentary* 71 (March 1981), 25-31; Mary E. Bendyna and Clyde Wilcox, “The Christian Right Old and New: A Comparison of the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition,” in James M. Penning and Corwin E. Smidt, eds., *Sojourners in the Wilderness: The Christian Right in Comparative Perspective* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997), 41-56. For a contemporary version of this argument, see Darryl G. Hart on the “unstable compound that evangelicalism adds to American conservatism.” See “Last Dance? The Future of the Religious Right and American Conservatism,” Speech to The Philadelphia Society, April 28, 2007. Even conservative evangelicals themselves, in their more honest moments, acknowledged evangelical diversity and confessed the limits of this fragmentation. A writer in *Moody Monthly* in 1980, the year in which Moral Majority exploded into prominence, wrote, “There is no single ‘Christian’ position on these controversial matters, yet many evangelical leaders presume to speak God’s mind on them ... no Christian candidate or group of candidates has all the answers.” See Ted Miller, “Shall We Join the New ‘Christian Crusade?’” *Moody Monthly* (Sept. 1980), 20-22. In 1983 Robert Dugan, director of the NAE, wrote, “With dark scowls, some commentators allege that evangelicals have designs on becoming a political power bloc that would be decisive even in presidential elections. Some are absolutely paranoid about the evangelical vote. We think it fair to inquire whether evangelicals are being organized to control elections. The answer? Not by us. And not by leaders of NAE’s 43 member denominations. Nobody has the leverage to produce a political bloc of evangelical Christians, although there are those who are trying.” See Dugan, *NAE Washington Insight* (June 1983), quoted in Kraakevik, “White Evangelical Populists,” 154.

theological purity and evangelical rivalries sabotaged the new pattern of co-belligerency.²⁴⁴ Cults of celebrity occasionally resulted in a political flash in the pan, but they lacked the support of most evangelical institutions. Not surprisingly, given the ecclesial structure of evangelicalism, no one emerged as a suitable political kingpin.²⁴⁵ Billy Graham, the evangelical with the most potential to build a permanent political bloc, remained preoccupied with evangelistic crusades. Others—such as Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, and Bill Bright—engaged in internecine bickering. The Moral Majority, already languishing for half a decade, finally dissolved in 1986, and Robertson, though finishing strongly in several primaries and caucuses in 1988, lacked broad-based support and never got close to the nomination.²⁴⁶

Moreover, many in the religious right, despite their political machinations, continued to claim, and often act, as if evangelism took priority over politics and social change. Not only did evangelicals invest much more money into educational and missionary enterprises than politics, but their Manichean interpretations of Scripture

²⁴⁴ Scott Appleby notes the difficulties within the religious right between Catholics, Mormons, and evangelicals. See R. Scott Appleby, "Catholics and the Christian Right: An Uneasy Alliance," 93-133, in Corwin R. Smidt and James M. Penning, eds., *Sojourners in the Wilderness: The Christian Right in Comparative Perspective* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997). On Falwell's endorsement of George H.W. Bush and the limited support given to Robertson's 1988 presidential campaign by Falwell's constituency, see Robert B. Fowler, *Religion and Politics in America: Faith, Culture, and Strategic Choices* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), 102-103; Robert Wuthnow, "The Future of the Religious Right," 44, in Michael Cromartie, ed., *No Longer Exiles: The Religious New Right in American Politics* (Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1992). (27-46)

²⁴⁵ Kraakevik reports that the media "had difficulty finding quotes that could pass editorial muster because journalists were looking for a leader, or at least someone with a title. On occasion, the media invented 'spokesmen' for quotes and explanations—media-created leaders were half-jokingly referred to as 'media-elect.'" See Kraakevik, "White Evangelical Populists," 160. On the political implications of the "official search committee" for Graham's successor and the media's bewilderment at the lack of leadership and organization within the movement, see Kenneth L. Woodward, "The Split-Up Evangelicals," *Newsweek* (April 26, 1982), 88. On evangelicalism's lack of "a cohesive integrating structure, leader, or publication that could swiftly coordinate their energies," see Henry, "Signs of Evangelical Disunity," *Christianity Today* 20, No. 14 (April 9, 1976), 33-34; Carl F. H. Henry, "Decade of Gains and Losses," *Christianity Today* 20, No. 12 (March 12, 1976), 42-43; Tim Miller and Tonda Rush, "God and the GOP in Kansas," *Christianity Today* 20, No. 24 (September 10, 1976), 60.

²⁴⁶ Marley, *Pat Robertson*, 146-151

often made them too idealistic to function effectively in the political realm.²⁴⁷ After an agonizing decade with few spoils to show for their efforts, numbers of disillusioned conservative evangelicals recanted.²⁴⁸ Bitter toward the Republican Party, Gary Jarmin of Christian Voice accused the party of having “Milk-Bone Syndrome: ‘They don’t want to relinquish power and control to their Christian puppies. They just want to throw us a Milk-Bone every now and then.’”²⁴⁹ While the majority of evangelicals continued to vote Republican to enjoy substantial media coverage, many began to call for alternative priorities and methods for social change.²⁵⁰ Scholars of politics, dissecting elections in the 1980s, began to accuse journalists of over-hyping the influence of the religious right.

²⁴⁷ For every \$1 evangelicals contribute to political organizations, they spend \$12 on foreign missions and international relief and development, another \$13 on evangelical book and music shops, another \$25 on evangelical higher education, another \$31 on private elementary and secondary schools.” See Michael Hamilton, “The Financing of American Evangelicalism since 1945,” 130, in *More Money, More Ministry: Money and Evangelicals in Recent North American History* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000). On Dobson’s Manichean political tactics and rocky political history, see Dan Gilgoff, *The Jesus Machine: How James Dobson, Focus on the Family, and Evangelical America Are Winning the Culture War* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2007).

²⁴⁸ On the failures of Reagan and the Republican Party to deliver on Supreme Court nominations, abortion legislation, see Richard A. Pierard, “Mending the Fence: Reagan and the Evangelicals,” *Reformed Journal* (June 1983), 18-21; Lindsay, *Faith in the Halls of Power*, 41; Gilgoff, *Jesus Machine*, 85-87; Nesmith, *New Republican Coalition*, 79, 132-136; Pierard, “Religion and the 1984 Election Campaign,” *Review of Religious Research* 27, No. 2 (December 1985), 100; Steve Bruce, *The Rise and Fall of the New Christian Right: Conservative Protestant Politics in America, 1978-1988* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

²⁴⁹ Nesmith, *New Republican Coalition*, 134. On the stiff resistance from the Republican establishment when evangelicals flooded caucuses and launched campaigns for their own candidates in Minnesota, Iowa, Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, and Oklahoma in the mid-1980s, also see Nesmith, *New Republican Coalition*, 134-136.

²⁵⁰ Paul Weyrich, renouncing the goal of “Christianizing America,” urged retrenchment and more pluralism. See Beth Spring, “A New Political Group Will Oppose Abortion, Poverty, and Nuclear Arms,” *Christianity Today* 30, No. 9 (June 13, 1986), 36-37; Jeffrey K. Hadden, “Taking Stock of the New Christian Right,” *Christianity Today* 30, No. 9 (June 13, 1986), 38-39. Also see Cal Thomas and Ed Dobson, *Blinded by Might: Why the Religious Right Can’t Save America* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1999). Thomas Atwood of the Heritage Foundation, for instance, while encouraging evangelicals to vote Republican also encouraged them to “grow up, to get beyond the naïve, messianic aim of trying to save the country through politics.” See “NAE’s Annual Seminar Looks to the Future of the Parties,” *Public Justice Report* 13, No. 6 (March 1990), 4.

As political analysts—many now predicting a surge of evangelical centrism—forecast the shape of evangelical politics in the twenty-first century, they would do well to note the movement’s considerable limits.²⁵¹ Evangelicalism, while effectively nurturing a theological core, adjusts acutely to its local environment, rarely coalescing beyond its varied geographies, traditions, and ethnicities to pursue a common political agenda. Even as many strains of evangelicals have risen to mainstream prominence in the last thirty years with a common agenda to engage the public square, their methods and policy planks remain fragmented. “One of the ironies of our time,” wrote Sider in 1985, “is that just as evangelical Christianity approaches a time of maximum potential impact on American public life, it threatens to self-destruct in a blaze of ferocious fratricide.”²⁵² Given its disordered ecclesiology, its many non-political churchly priorities, and its racial, theological, and political diversities, evangelicalism’s political prospects have been, and are likely to remain, exaggerated.

²⁵¹ Sullivan, *The Party Faithful*; E. J. Dionne, *Souled Out: Reclaiming Faith and Politics after the Religious Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); David D. Kirkpatrick, “The Evangelical Crack-Up,” *New York Times Magazine*, October 28, 2007.

²⁵² Sider, “A Plea for More Radical Conservatives and More Conserving Radicals,” 11-16.

APPENDIX A

Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern

As evangelical Christians committed to the Lord Jesus Christ and the full authority of the Word of God, we affirm that God lays total claim upon the lives of his people. We cannot, therefore, separate our lives from the situation in which God has placed us in the United States and the world.

We confess that we have not acknowledged the complete claim of God on our lives.

We acknowledge that God requires love. But we have not demonstrated the love of God to those suffering social abuses.

We acknowledge that God requires justice. But we have not proclaimed or demonstrated his justice to an unjust American society. Although the Lord calls us to defend the social and economic rights of the poor and oppressed, we have mostly remained silent. We deplore the historic involvement of the church in America with racism and the conspicuous responsibility of the evangelical community for perpetuating the personal attitudes and institutional structures that have divided the body of Christ along color lines. Further, we have failed to condemn the exploitation of racism at home and abroad by our economic system.

We affirm that God abounds in mercy and that he forgives all who repent and turn from their sins. So we call our fellow evangelical Christians to demonstrate repentance in a Christian discipleship that confronts the social and political injustice of our nation.

We must attack the materialism of our culture and the maldistribution of the nation's wealth and services. We recognize that as a nation we play a crucial role in the imbalance and injustice of international trade and development. Before God and a billion hungry neighbors, we must rethink our values regarding our present standard of living and promote a more just acquisition and distribution of the world's resources.

We acknowledge our Christian responsibilities of citizenship. Therefore, we must challenge the misplaced trust of the nation in economic and military might - a proud trust that promotes a national pathology of war and violence which victimizes our neighbors at home and abroad. We must resist the temptation to make the nation and its institutions objects of near-religious loyalty.

We acknowledge that we have encouraged men to prideful domination and women to irresponsible passivity. So we call both men and women to mutual submission and active discipleship.

We proclaim no new gospel, but the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ who, through the power of the Holy Spirit, frees people from sin so that they might praise God through works of righteousness.

By this declaration, we endorse no political ideology or party, but call our nation's leaders and people to that righteousness which exalts a nation.

We make this declaration in the biblical hope that Christ is coming to consummate the Kingdom and we accept his claim on our total discipleship until he comes.

November 25, 1973, Chicago, Illinois

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