

**Carl McIntire, the American Council of Christian Churches,
and the Politics of Protestant Fundamentalism**

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DISSERTATION

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For my wife Noreen,
who made this dissertation possible.

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WAR

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABA	American Baptist Association
ACCC	American Council of Christian Churches
BAF	Better America Federation
BBF	Baptist Bible Fellowship
BBU	Baptist Bible Union
BPC	Bible Presbyterian Church
CACC	Christian Anti-Communist Crusade
CALCAV	Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam
CLA	Church League of America
COCU	Consultation on Church Union
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FCCCA	Federal Council of Church of Christ in America
FEPC	Fair Employment Practices Commission
GARBC	General Association of Regular Baptist Churches
HUAC	House Un-American Activities Committee
ICCC	International Council of Christian Churches
ICR	International Christian Relief
IFCA	Independent Fundamental Churches of America
KJV	King James Version
NAE	National Association of Evangelicals
NCC	National Council of Churches
NJCCC	New Jersey Council of Christian Churches
PCA	Presbyterian Church of America
PCUS	Presbyterian Church in the United States
PCUSA	Presbyterian Church in the United States of America
SIECUS	Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States
TAM	The Associated Missions
UMT	Universal Military Training
WCC	World Council of Churches

SUMMARY

This dissertation explores the intersection between religious belief and public action among Protestant fundamentalists associated with the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC) during the middle decades of the twentieth century. The central figure in this study is Bible Presbyterian minister Carl McIntire, who was one of the nation's most prominent fundamentalist preachers during that period. He played a paramount role in organizing the ACCC in 1941 as a vehicle for Protestant fundamentalists to challenge public policies that privileged the theologically liberal Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. During the Cold War, McIntire and other fundamentalists in the ACCC broadened their scope of public action as outspoken crusaders against Soviet communism. By the 1960s, many members of this group had aligned themselves with the emerging grassroots conservative movement and subsequently became cultural warriors in an attempt to arrest the nation's moral decline amid the decade's social upheavals.

As the principal spokesperson for the ACCC, McIntire articulated a messianic political theology of Christian Americanism that sanctified the nation's political and cultural heritage. During the 1960s he attracted considerable attention for the right-wing jeremiads he delivered on his daily syndicated radio program. McIntire, together with his co-religionists, ultimately helped to polarize the nation's religious landscape by disseminating a political theology that was anti-liberal and anti-statist. I argue that the ideology of Christian Americanism promoted by this fundamentalist group and its methods of grassroots protest provided the intellectual framework and models for public action that militant evangelicals adopted during the culture wars of the late twentieth century.

I. Introduction

In September 1941, two small fundamentalist sects, the Bible Protestant Church and the Bible Presbyterian Church, joined forces to create the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC). Founded by Collingswood, New Jersey, Bible Presbyterian minister Carl McIntire, who also became its first president, the ACCC sought to bring fundamentalists together in a militant defense of the historic Christian faith. The council became the cornerstone of his Twentieth Century Reformation, a movement that he dedicated to the restructuring of American Protestantism. McIntire started the ACCC for the specific purpose of countering the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (FCCCA), a mainline Protestant ecumenical agency that represented more than thirty denominations. At its founding in 1908, the Federal Council (which in 1950 became the National Council of Churches) undertook a comprehensive cooperative mission that included a social gospel program, and over time that pursuit dominated all others. By 1940, the FCCCA had become visibly linked with New Deal liberalism and the international peace movement.

Evangelical Christians objected to the FCCCA's liberal social agenda and bristled at its leaders' assertion that the council spoke for American Protestantism on public policy matters. In the 1940s, fundamentalists started banding together to challenge the FCCCA's cultural authority and its ascendancy over public institutional channels. They saw in the FCCCA the prefiguring of a regimented and tyrannical new social order leading to the rise of the antichrist. Despite an eschatological narrative prophesying the imminence of the apocalypse, a number of fundamentalists in the early 1940s began calling for believers to unite and fight back against the apostasy disseminated by Protestant leaders in the FCCCA. The American Council of Christian Churches was one such organization. Its constituency consisted largely of battle-seasoned

veterans of the fundamentalist-modernist controversies who insisted on the principle of second-degree separation as an external faith boundary. This doctrine not only mandated that true believers renounce membership in church bodies deemed apostate but also obliged them to shun fellowship with fellow believers who refused to separate from mainline Christianity.

Several months after McIntire created the ACCC, a rival group of fundamentalists formed the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). While the NAE held a number of beliefs and values in common with the ACCC, its leaders strove to dissociate their organization from fundamentalism's belligerent past. They eschewed direct confrontation with the Federal Council and refused to make separation from mainline Protestantism a condition of membership. These conditions precluded the ACCC from collaborating with the NAE and ultimately served to divide the ranks of fundamentalism into two camps. Interestingly, some members of the ACCC did not apply the principle of second-degree separation when it came to political activism. During his career, Carl McIntire consorted with a myriad of right-wing figures that included Roman Catholic anticommunist writer John T. Flynn and South Vietnam's Buddhist Vice-President Nguyen Cao Ky. In a similar manner, separatist preacher Donald A. Waite moonlighted during the early 1960s as an assistant to John Birch Society founder Robert Welch, whose chosen Unitarian faith rejected many historic Christian doctrines.

Although the American Council consisted of fundamentalists from several different Protestant families, they shared a number of predispositions that shaped their political worldview and their modes for public action. For one, their experiences in the intra-denominational fundamentalist-modernist battles instilled in them a martyr complex, and they cast themselves as a beleaguered remnant of true believers vowing to defend the faith from outside the gate. A second closely related proclivity they exhibited involved their embrace of a dualistic mindset that

conditioned them to view events and ideas in polarized shades of black-and-white. These two tendencies guided them in their fervent quest for doctrinal and ecclesiastical purity. They also produced a reactive movement fraught with tension and controversy. The attacks they launched against apostasy often took place at the expense of evangelism, and their vigilance in defending their movement against compromise occasionally yielded fruitless internecine disputes.¹

A third characteristic exhibited by separatist fundamentalists entailed their intense aversion to bureaucratic centralization and concentrations of power. This predisposition drew upon a Puritan inheritance that was fiercely protective of individual liberty.² Fundamentalists conveyed this outlook in the fundamentalist-modernist controversies when they accused progressive-minded church officials of turning their communions into faith-destroying denominational machines. It also appeared in their eschatological prophecies that predicted the penultimate sign of the apocalypse would feature the antichrist's reconstitution of the Roman Empire and his subsequent control over a one-world system of government and church. Separatists' fear of ecclesiastical machines resulted in the ACCC becoming an organization that lacked institutional development and cohesion. This condition paradoxically allowed McIntire to craft it into a leader-centered organization that he and a handful of other ministers dominated. The ACCC's loose organizational structure gave it flexibility in reacting and adapting to immediate events. Characteristic of their standing as an outsider group, McIntire and other members of the ACCC employed confrontational pressure tactics that relied heavily on grassroots participation in letter-writing campaigns, public petitions, and mass rallies. But by the

¹ R. Laurence Moore, *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 166-70; George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1991), 102-03.

² Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 85; Daniel K. Williams, *God's Own Party: The Making of the Christian Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 35.

same token, under McIntire's leadership the council demonstrated little ability to formulate and sustain long-range plans and goals.

Defending the Christian faith from the corrupting influences of liberal Protestantism always remained a vital part of the ACCC's mission. But over time its approach to that mission shifted. In its early years, the ACCC challenged public policies that privileged the FCCCA. In the area of commercial radio broadcasting, for instance, it contested the Federal Council's exclusive arrangement with the national radio networks for free broadcast time of religious programs. With the onset of the Second Red Scare, that type of constructive action fell by the wayside as McIntire and other ACCC clergymen launched blistering anticommunist attacks against the National Council of Churches in an effort to publicly discredit it. Their message found a sympathetic audience among different factions of political conservatives, including members of the House Un-American Activities Committee, who in 1953 goaded Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam into testifying before their committee to answer charges of aiding communism.

During this same period, the ACCC moved more directly into secular politics. Before the Second Red Scare members of the American Council generally confined themselves to passing resolutions that articulated their position on federal policies and legislative proposals. By the late 1950s, the moral politics of anticommunism cemented fundamentalists' alliance with right-wing conservatism, and the ACCC began organizing public events against the appeasement of communism. In early 1959, the ACCC sponsored an anticommunist speaking tour that featured five clergymen from East Asia in an effort to blunt a liberal proposal calling for diplomatic recognition of Communist China. Later that same year, the council sponsored a series of mass rallies protesting President Dwight D. Eisenhower's summit meeting with Soviet Premier Nikita

Khrushchev. The messianic ideology of Christian Americanism undergirded this political awakening. Exalting a national heritage linking God and country, proponents of this ideology evinced virulent communism and regarded free enterprise and individual liberty as divinely sanctioned principles.

This dissertation traces the evolution of the American Council of Christian Churches from its inception in 1941 until 1970, when officers of that organization expelled McIntire after he attempted to commandeer it for his own personal interests. The monumental role he played in starting that organization, articulating a political theology, and rallying its constituents for action makes him the most prominent individual in this dissertation. However, this project is not a biography of him. Rather, it is a study of the separatist fundamentalist subculture and McIntire's leadership over it. By focusing on the relationship between McIntire and the ACCC, this dissertation seeks to provide an understanding of how fundamentalists in this organization transformed belief into public action and ultimately contributed to the rise of the New Christian Right. The ACCC served as a hub of activism for self-identified fundamentalists during the middle decades of the twentieth century. While McIntire played a key role in honing the ideology of Christian Americanism, the network of individuals and churches aligned with the ACCC provided a principal arena for that ideology to circulate. The anticommunist crusades undertaken by separatist fundamentalists in the late 1950s and early 1960s moreover served as a pathway to political activism for several fundamentalists who formed the first New Christian Right groups in the late 1970s.

Scholarly treatments exploring the roots of the contemporary Religious Right have tended to overlook the influence of McIntire and the ACCC. Many works written in the 1980s and the 1990s attributed the New Christian Right's origins to the new evangelical movement. In

this interpretation, Billy Graham and the National Association of Evangelicals figured prominently. Alternatively, some researchers treated McIntire and the ACCC as a part of a separate wave of reactionary fundamentalism that had few connections to the later surge of Religious Right activism.³ More recent scholarship, on the other hand, has revealed a complex picture of the coalitions that laid the groundwork for the New Christian Right. Those works include the contributions made by fundamentalists in the 1950s and 1960.⁴ I argue that the ACCC served as an incubator for the ideological discourses and methods for political action that militants employed during the culture wars of the late twentieth century.

A mention on vocabulary is in order for the terms “evangelical” and “fundamentalist,” which appear throughout this dissertation. I relied on the nomenclature established by religious historian George Marsden for those terms. Marsden defined fundamentalism as a militant strain of evangelicalism, while categorizing evangelicalism as a religious movement inclusive of a broader segment of revivalist Christianity. Mid-twentieth century evangelicalism, in short, consisted of an assortment of culturally conservative Protestant groups that included fundamentalists as well as pentecostals.⁵ I limited my use of the term “fundamentalist” throughout this dissertation to those who employed it as a label of religious self-identification. In the context of this study, it refers most generally to those denominations, churches, and

³ William Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America* (Broadway Books, 1995); Sara Diamond, *Roads to Dominion: Right-Wing Movements and Political Power in the United States* (Guilford Press, 1995); Clyde Wilcox, *God's Warriors: The Christian Right in Twentieth Century America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Barry Hankins, *American Evangelicals: A Contemporary History of a Mainstream Religious Movement* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009).

⁴ Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: the Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton University Press, 2001); Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010); Williams, *God's Own Party*; Markku Ruotsila, “Carl McIntire and the Fundamentalist Origins of the Christian Right,” *Church History* 81 (June 2012), 378-407.

⁵ George M. Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 233-36.

individuals that either belonged to the ACCC or were informally aligned with its purpose and mission.

Arranged in chronological order, this dissertation examines the process of fundamentalists' politicization by studying the trajectory of Carl McIntire and the American Council of Christian Churches. Chapter 2 examines the origins of the American Council of Christian Churches. It traces the separatist path taken by McIntire and the Bible Presbyterian Church along with three other church bodies that joined the ACCC during its earliest years: the Bible Protestant Church, General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, and Independent Fundamental Churches of America. McIntire presciently foresaw the realignment of Protestantism between conservative and liberal factions and established the ACCC to aid that process. The construction of this separatist alliance required fundamentalists from different denominational families to reshape their religious identities in order to unite for public action.

Chapter 3 looks at the development of a fundamentalist worldview during the interwar period. Fundamentalists interpreted contemporary events through the apocalyptic lens of dispensational premillennialism. They perceived world society to be in a state of moral degeneration and argued that social chaos and lawlessness would precede God's final judgment. The Federal Council's corruption of the Christian faith, the spread of Soviet communism, and the triumph of New Deal liberalism all pointed to God's final judgment. This apocalyptic narrative developed in symbiotic relation with the ideology of Christian Americanism. It pervaded the moral political philosophy of the separatist movement and greatly influenced the anticommunist crusades that McIntire and other clergymen in the American Council would undertake during the Cold War.

Chapter 4 studies the legal challenges that McIntire and the American Council launched in the 1940s to gain a share of religious broadcasting time that the radio networks and numerous individual stations allocated to the Protestant churches. Commercial broadcasters adopted this policy as a public service to listeners. They often apportioned the Protestant share of radio time to the Federal Council of Churches or one of its local branches because those councils represented the majority of Protestant worshippers. However, this policy also offered broadcasters the ability to filter out hucksters and unsavory bawl-and-jump evangelical preachers who might use the microphone to importune listeners for funds or make inflammatory remarks. McIntire and other members of the ACCC argued that this policy discriminated against Protestant minority groups. They subsequently pressured radio executives for a share of sustaining time using methods that included legal filings, public petitions, and protest rallies. While the ACCC was modestly successful in those efforts, its campaigns for religious broadcast time spurred fundamentalists to organize into a national movement and establish modes for political action that they would rely upon in the future.

Chapter 5 explores the American Council's quest to place its clergy members in the chaplaincies of the Army and Navy during World War II. The council's efforts met with particular resistance from the Navy Chaplain Corps, which actively cultivated a culture of religious pluralism. The Navy's culture promoted diversity and cooperation among the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths but discouraged particularistic sectarianism within those religious traditions. By challenging the Navy's pluralistic recruitment model, separatists in the American Council established a legal foothold for sectarian Protestant groups to integrate the military into their sphere of mission activity.

The American Council of Christian Churches devoted a significant amount of energy to anticommunist crusading during first two decades of the Cold War. Chapter 6 explores the first stage of this strategic shift, which featured the redbaiting of ecumenical leaders in the National Council of Churches. The milieu of Cold War anticommunism became the pathway for McIntire and other separatists to expand their cultural connections and marshal political opposition against the “un-American” beliefs held by ecumenists. One episode that illustrates this circumstance took place in 1953 when the American Council played a decisive role in convincing the House Un-American Activities Committee to probe communist influences in U.S. Protestantism. The climax of this investigation took place in late July when Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam voluntarily appeared before HUAC to defend himself against accusations that he aided Soviet communism.

Chapter 7 examines a second stage of anticommunist crusading that drew the American Council into the arena of right-wing politics. A key event in this transition took place in September 1959 when the ACCC sponsored a series of Faith and Freedom rallies opposing Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev’s visit to the United States. Unlike earlier anticommunist rallies that registered fundamentalists’ opposition to the Protestant ecumenical movement, this set of demonstrations attempted to harness conservative dissent against a presidential foreign policy decision. Fundamentalists in the ACCC traversed further into right-wing politics during John F. Kennedy’s term as President. In widening their channels of political participation, they also broadened their rhetoric to emphasize communism’s threat to public morality. This type of discourse formed the framework for McIntire’s *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* radio program, a chain broadcast that reached listening audiences from coast-to-coast by the early

1960s. His fulminations fostered cultural class antagonisms by linking liberal elites in both religion and government with communism.

Several scholars have observed that the social tumult of the 1960s played a seminal role in the restructuring of American religion. The civil rights movement and the social unrest of the Vietnam War were crucial in replacing sectional and denominational allegiances with a liberal-conservative divide. Chapter 8 studies the response by separatist fundamentalists to the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War. Their criticisms of federally mandated desegregation and civil disobedience comported with the views articulated by segregationists and signaled fundamentalism's expansion in the South. McIntire's espousal of Christian Americanism via his radio program helped sow militant passions among southern white Protestants.

In the concluding chapter, I assess the contributions made by McIntire and the ACCC in laying the foundation for the emergence of the New Christian Right in the 1970s. In the late 1960s, McIntire parted ways with the American Council when he could no longer control its agenda. Both he and the American Council occupied a place at the periphery of the Religious Right movement that arose at the end the 1970s. They would be eclipsed by a new generation of fundamentalist leaders who would establish a new set of organizations with the explicit purpose of returning the nation to God through political action. These new leaders adopted the political theology articulated by fundamentalists in the ACCC but not their obsession with rooting out apostasy and maintaining ecclesiastic separatism.

II. “Therefore Come Out from Among Them, and Be Ye Separate”:

Carl McIntire and the Creation of a Separatist Alliance

On March 18, 1938, a New Jersey Chancery Court judge found judgment against the defendant in the case *J. Ernest Kelly v. Carl McIntire et. al.* This decision marked the end of a legal dispute that began two years earlier when Collingswood Presbyterian Church minister Carl McIntire refused to vacate his pulpit after the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA) ordered his suspension. The PCUSA took this action when McIntire refused to resign from the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. McIntire’s mentor, fundamentalist Presbyterian theologian J. Gresham Machen, founded this agency in 1933 in response to the tolerance of modernism in the mission field by the PCUSA’s official Board of Missions. The Presbyterian General Assembly viewed the Independent Board as disruptive to denominational harmony and in 1934 ordered it disbanded. When Machen, McIntire, and several other dissident clergymen refused to comply with the General Assembly’s mandate, the Church took action against them. McIntire’s 1,100-member congregation sided with him in this dispute. Following his suspension in June 1936 its members voted 479 to 8 to separate from the PCUSA.

Presbyterian polity stipulated that the denomination retained the right to a congregation’s property under such a circumstance. But the Collingswood Presbyterian Church session refused to relinquish control of its property and took active measures to prevent the presbytery from taking possession of it, so the matter entered into civil litigation. McIntire hinged his legal defense upon the argument that the agencies and judicatories of the PCUSA, and not he, had deviated from the historic faith and principles of the Church. Therefore, he was not obligated to

leave the pulpit nor was the denomination entitled to the congregation's property. The judge in this case did not agree. His ruling effectively authorized the PCUSA to evict McIntire and his flock from their church home.¹

On Sunday evening, March 27, 1938, nine days after losing his legal battle, McIntire delivered his final sermon in the church. When the service ended, the congregation marched melodramatically from the sanctuary singing "God of Our Fathers, Living Still," leaving the church and all its contents behind when they exited. The following Sunday, the congregation worshipped in a large Chautauqua tent erected on a vacant lot that would become the site of their new home. More than 1,200 people attended this service, which featured members taking communion from paper cups and pie plates. Less than a mile away, the service at the Collingswood Presbyterian Church – safe once again within the fold of the PCUSA – drew a modest crowd of 200 worshippers. McIntire's flock renamed itself the Collingswood Bible Presbyterian Church and continued to worship in a tent for the next two months until a wood-framed tabernacle could be built.²

His audacious legal challenge to the PCUSA together with his nose for publicity marked his emergence as a Protestant separatist leader. From the wilderness of his Chautauqua tent in 1938, McIntire prophesied, "A real revolution is under way in the Protestant church. This is going to be a complete realignment of Protestant relations in this country. What has happened in the Presbyterian Church is going on in all the larger denominations." Sensing that a great

¹ Edwin H. Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1940), 249-51; "Presbyterian Board Scored by McIntire," *New York Times*, 08 June 1936, 16; "McIntire's Church Quits Presbytery," *New York Times*, 16 June 1936, 26; "Bars Writ to Oust 'Deposed' Pastor," *New York Times*, 07 July 1936, 17; "Vice Chancellor Declares Property Belongs to Pres. Church in U.S.A.," *Christian Beacon*, 24 March 1938, 2.

² Carl McIntire, *Death of a Church* (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1967), 159; "Ousted from Church, 1,200 Meet in Tent," *New York Times*, 04 April 1938, 17; *Carl McIntire's 50-Year Ministry in the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood, New Jersey* (Collingswood: Christian Beacon Press, 1983), 23; John Fea, "Carl McIntire: From Fundamentalist Presbyterian to Presbyterian Fundamentalist," *American Presbyterians* 72 (Winter 1994), 256.

reformation of American Protestantism was underway, he exhorted other Christians to follow his example and emancipate themselves from the infestation of modernism in mainline Protestantism.³ Although the structural realignment of religion in America would not gather force until after midcentury, he saw a liberal-conservative divide taking shape within Protestantism and sought to widen that split.⁴

This chapter examines the stirring of fundamentalist separatism and McIntire's emergence as a prominent spokesperson for that movement. During the 1930s, northern Protestantism began undergoing a long-term realignment as fundamentalists built or expanded their own set of educational institutions, mission agencies, and social networks. In some instances, they declared their church bodies wrecked vessels and abandoned them. In the process they realized that they had more in common with separatists from other communions than with coreligionists from their own denominational families and reoriented their religious identity.⁵ The American Council of Christian Churches emerged from this milieu in 1941 promoting cross-denominational fellowship. McIntire created this organization for the purpose of uniting separatists from across the spectrum of Reformed Christianity to challenge the domination of mainline religion in representing American Protestantism in cultural and political affairs. Their common foe in this crusade was the Federal Council of Christian Churches in America, an ecumenical organization that claimed more than thirty mainline Protestant denominations as members. Separatists such as McIntire viewed the FCCCA as a threat to religious liberty and joined forces to offset its influence in public policy matters.

³ Carl McIntire, "Why Do We Worship in a Tent?" *Christian Beacon* 17 April 1938, 3; "Large Bible Tabernacle Filled at First Sunday Morning Service," *Christian Beacon*, 02 June 1938, 1.

⁴ Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith Since World War II* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989).

⁵ Joel A. Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 44-45; Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 66.

Carl McIntire and the Separatist Impulse

Details regarding Carl McIntire's childhood are sketchy. His father, Charles Curtis McIntire, graduated from Princeton Seminary in 1904 and accepted the pastoral call from a church in Ypsilanti, Michigan, where Carl was born in 1906. Soon after, Carl's father accepted the call to serve as pastor of a Presbyterian church in Salt Lake City and three years later moved the family to Iowa when he accepted the position of executive secretary for the Presbyterian Laymen's Foreign Mission movement. His father's mental health began deteriorating around 1912, resulting in a long-term stay at a therapeutic care facility. Carl's mother, Hettie, divorced her husband during this period and raised her four children as a single mother in her native Oklahoma, where she eventually became dean of women students at Southeastern State Teacher's College in Durant.⁶ Carl earned money during his teen years working as an agricultural laborer and later hawking maps in western Oklahoma. After high school, he attended Southeastern State Teacher's College before transferring to Park College, a Presbyterian school near Kansas City, for his final year.⁷

Carl felt the call to become a minister during his senior year. He contemplated becoming a lawyer before then but changed his mind after reading *What is Faith?* by Princeton Theological Seminary professor J. Gresham Machen. He subsequently applied to Princeton to study under Machen and commenced his seminary training there in the fall of 1928. He entered Princeton at a tumultuous time in the seminary's history. Its president, J. Ross Stevenson, worried that

⁶ Carl was the oldest of the four children. His siblings were Helen, Blair, and Forrest. See, Edgar Elwin Hotchkin, *Decendents of John Hotchkin of Guilford, Connecticut* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1995), 560.

⁷ Stephen D. Crocco and Robert Benedetto, "Carl McIntire: Creeds, Councils, and Controversies," *American Theological Libraries Association Summary of Proceedings* (2004), 60; Ed Reese, *The Life and Ministry of Carl McIntire* (Glenwood, IL: Fundamental Publishers, 1975), 4.

Princeton might become marginal to denominational life if it continued to teach Old School Presbyterian theology exclusively and recommended opening the seminary's curriculum to other theological perspectives being disseminated within northern Presbyterianism.

Stevenson's plan met with resistance from a handful of faculty members. They were led by J. Gresham Machen, who argued that Princeton needed to influence religious thought in the denomination rather than the other way around. With backing from the Presbyterian General Assembly, however, Stevenson ultimately got his way, compelling Machen and three other faculty members to resign and form Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. Twenty students followed them to Westminster. Among them was Carl McIntire, who belonged to an informal group of seminary students known as the "Checkers Club" that met periodically at Machen's home to play checkers and discuss religious issues.⁸

While Princeton's doctrinal inclusiveness became one major controversy, the tolerance of liberalism by the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions among its Christian workers became another contentious issue. Orthodox Presbyterians first objected to the presence of modernism in the mission field in the early 1920s, and this issue came to a climax in 1933 when Machen demanded that the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions take a stand formal against modernism.⁹ When his motion failed, Machen and several other fundamentalist Presbyterians created the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions as an agency outside of the PCUSA. Several clergymen from eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey joined this new agency. Among them was McIntire, who had just taken over the pulpit of Collingswood Presbyterian

⁸ The other three faculty members who left Princeton were Robert Dick Wilson, Oswald T. Allis, and Cornelius Van Til. Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict*, 88-91; C. Allyn Russell, *Voices of American Fundamentalism: Seven Biographical Studies* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 152-55; Marsden, "Understanding J. Gresham Machen," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 11 (1990), 47; Fea, "Carl McIntire," 255.

⁹ Charles Woodbridge, "The Regions Beyond," *Presbyterian Guardian*, 07 October 1935, 8; Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 168.

Church, in Collingswood, New Jersey, which was just outside Philadelphia, after serving two years as pastor of Chelsea Presbyterian Church in Atlantic City, New Jersey.¹⁰

Presbyterian leaders viewed the Independent Board as schismatic and sought to punish those responsible for this provocation. Their reason for putting a stop to this revolt, as William Weston noted, hinged on the role missions played in creating new churches. Denomination officials viewed the autonomy of the Independent Board as a potential threat to church growth and ultimately the unity of the denomination.¹¹ The Presbyterian General Assembly said as much in 1934 when it issued its mandate: members of the Independent Board must either resign or face disciplinary action. Machen considered the General Assembly's edict an attack upon the liberty of Old School theology. He argued that the church exceeded its constitutional authority and vowed not to forsake his ordination vows by yielding to the will of the majority. To do so, he argued, would mean placing the word of man above the word of God. In *The Presbyterian Guardian*, which Machen co-edited, he compared the tyranny of the PCUSA on this matter to Protestantism's long-standing aversion of Catholic Church power, stating, "It is the principle of Romanism asserted over again, only without Rome's intellectual power or imposing tradition."¹² Members of the Independent Board concurred with Machen's appraisal and refused to comply with the General Assembly's demand.

¹⁰ McIntire's church had 1,200 members, making it the largest congregation in the West Jersey Presbytery. See, Crocco and Benedetto, "Carl McIntire: Creeds, Councils, and Controversies," 60.

¹¹ William J. Weston, *Presbyterian Pluralism: Competition in a Protestant House* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), 42.

¹² J. Gresham Machen, "An Apostate Church?" *The Presbyterian Guardian*, 04 May 1936, 42; Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict*, 160; "The Word of God and the Word of Man," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, 07 October 1935, 3.

The church ultimately suspended Machen, McIntire, and several other Independent Board members. When this took place, they seceded from the church.¹³ They subsequently banded together to create the Presbyterian Church of America (renamed the Old Presbyterian Church in 1939). In light of this outcome, the creation of the Independent Board must be seen as a decisive step towards separation. Machen predicted this possibility a decade earlier in his book *Christianity and Liberalism* when he contended that two systems of belief could not long remain in the same communion without impairing the church's mission. He argued that an individual must either adhere to its essential creeds and confessions or withdraw from it. Because modernists had departed from Presbyterianism's historic creeds and doctrines he thought that they were obligated to leave the PCUSA. But he warned that if they should gain control of the church's agencies and institutions, "evangelical Christians must be prepared to withdraw no matter what it costs."¹⁴

The clergymen and congregations that joined the PCA soon discovered that while they shared common cause in opposing apostasy in the PCUSA, they had differing views on eschatology and the meaning of piety. Machen and most other faculty members at Westminster Seminary looked forward to creating a true Presbyterian church predicated on Old School confessionalism and strict constitutionalism. McIntire and several other PCA members, by contrast, adhered to a faith influenced by modern evangelicalism. It included a belief in premillennialism as well as a commitment to living a "separated life," which in practical terms meant abstaining from worldly indulgences that led one into sin. While integral to American

¹³ The other clergymen suspended from ministry in the PCUSA were H. MacAllister Griffiths, Merrill T. MacPherson, Edwin H. Rian, Charles J. Woodbridge, and Paul Woolley. Roy T. Brumbaugh withdrew from the PCUSA before the presbytery passed judgment upon him, while Harold S. Laird and J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., were disciplined but not suspended. See, Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict*, 173.

¹⁴ J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1923), 166.

fundamentalism, such beliefs meant little to an Old School Presbyterian like Machen. Religious historian John Fea distinguished these different views by defining Machen as a fundamentalist Presbyterian and McIntire as a Presbyterian fundamentalist. These different orientations became a source of conflict when clergymen began discussing the doctrinal standards for their new church.¹⁵

McIntire moved out from the shadow of his mentor in late 1936 when he opened a factional dispute within the PCA over the issue of premillennial eschatology. This clash began earlier that year when Westminster faculty member John Murray wrote a series of articles delineating what he viewed as essential church doctrines in the pages of *The Presbyterian Guardian*. Murray raised the eyebrows of premillennialists when he attacked the dispensational system delineated in the *Scofield Reference Bible* for its incompatibility with Reformed theology's covenant of grace. In September another Westminster professor, R.B. Kuiper, wrote that a great opportunity existed for the fledgling sect to eliminate "un-Presbyterian elements" that had crept into the faith in recent decades, and he rejoiced that the most recent batch of seminary graduates exhibited neither of the "two anti-reformed heresies" prevalent in American fundamentalism: Arminianism and dispensationalism.¹⁶

Kuiper's remark stirred McIntire to action. In his weekly *Christian Beacon* newspaper, which he started earlier that year, McIntire sharply criticized Kuiper for his statement and demanded that the other amillennialists "cease their veiled and continued attacks upon the premillennialist position." McIntire declared that premillennialists comprised the majority of

¹⁵ Fea, "Carl McIntire," 257; D.G. Hart and John R. Meuther, *Fighting the Good Fight: A Brief History of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church* (Philadelphia: The Committee on Christian Education and the Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1995), 46-47.

¹⁶ George M. Marsden, "Perspective on the Division of 1937 – Part II: Clash of Two Traditions," *The Presbyterian Guardian* (February 1964), 22-23; R.B. Kuiper, "Why Separation was Necessary?" *The Presbyterian Guardian*, 12 September 1936, 227.

members in the church and warned of a revolt if those verbal assaults persisted. Kuiper wrote McIntire stating that he was criticizing dispensationalism as a doctrinal system not premillennialism and asked him to print his clarification in the *Christian Beacon*. McIntire rebuffed Kuiper's request much to the chagrin of Machen and other church leaders.

McIntire acknowledged in private that Kuiper's statement on dispensationalism did not directly challenge premillennial theology. His purpose in provoking this controversy appears to have stemmed from a desire to keep premillennialists from being relegated to the margins of denominational life. He was convinced that the faculty at Westminster intended to suppress premillennialism and other fundamentalist doctrines not indigenous to Old School theology. Despite Machen's assurance that the PCA would permit liberty on eschatology, McIntire resented being an outsider in a church body dominated by Westminster traditionalists. He was not alone in feeling alienated. Allan MacRae, an assistant professor of Old Testament studies at Westminster, complained that he felt isolated at the seminary because of his premillennial views. MacRae noted that a few faculty members who hailed from Dutch Reformed and Scottish Presbyterian backgrounds were pulling the seminary towards high Calvinist confessionalism and devaluing American Presbyterianism's evangelical tradition.¹⁷

Machen and other coeditors of the denomination's bi-weekly journal, *The Presbyterian Guardian*, attempted to defuse the rancor caused by McIntire. They openly chastised McIntire for misrepresenting Kuiper's position and for refusing to print his rebuttal in the *Christian Beacon*. They furthermore assured readers that premillennialism was not incompatible with

¹⁷ "Premillennialism," *Christian Beacon*, 1 October 1936, 4; McIntire to Buswell, 21 October 1936, Box 284, Folder 53, Papers of John Oliver Buswell, Jr., Presbyterian Church in America Historical Center, Covenant Seminary, St. Louis, MO; Andrew M. McGinnis, "Stranger in a Strange Land: Allan MacRae, Personal Identity, and the Division of 1937," *Presbyterian* 33 (Fall 2007) 97-101.

Reformed thought.¹⁸ In private, Machen seethed at McIntire's impertinence and his low standard of journalistic integrity. He beseeched McIntire's trusted ally Wheaton College President J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., to restrain him, stating, "I do not believe it is right to pour kerosene oil on a fire as Mr. McIntire is doing." He further confided to Buswell that McIntire displayed an insolent attitude when he and a few other PCA members tried to discuss this matter with him. This whole affair left Machen both troubled and saddened.¹⁹

McIntire provoked a second controversy at this same time over the issue of alcohol consumption at Westminster. In a letter to the school officials, he addressed rumors of faculty and students imbibing in intoxicating beverages and asked the administration to prohibit it. The school's registrar dismissed McIntire's complaint in his reply, "I doubt whether the teaching of the Bible contemplates that there should be enforcement by regulation of this matter in specific cases." Although Westminster's administrators did not endorse drinking, they found no scriptural basis for banning it and for the time being continued to permit it on the basis of Christian liberty.²⁰

McIntire's attitude on the consumption of alcohol reflected an outlook common within American evangelicalism on a Christian's obligation to live "the separated life." Proponents of this doctrine argued that drinking, even in moderation, impaired one's ability to live piously and undermined one's cultural credibility as a Christian witness. This ideal of Christian piety originated with holiness revivalism within Methodism during the late nineteenth century and subsequently swept through the modern evangelical movement. While abstinence from alcohol

¹⁸ Marsden, "Perspective on the Division of 1937 – Part II," 23; "The Second General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, 14 November 1936, 41-42.

¹⁹ Machen to Buswell, 9 October 1936, Machen to Buswell, 05 November 1936, Box 284, Folder 22, Buswell Papers.

²⁰ Marsden, "Perspective on the Division of 1937 – Part II," 28; Hart and Meuther, *Fighting the Good Fight*, 49; "The Presbyterian Church of America," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, 26 June 1937, 86.

represented a key element of the separated life, tobacco use, dancing, card playing, and movie theater attendance were often proscribed as well.²¹

Others premillennialists in the PCA joined McIntire in this battle. One of them was R. Laird Harris, who wrote in a Sunday school lesson for *The Presbyterian Guardian* that while consuming alcohol in moderation was not a sin in itself, it often created a stumbling block that “causes our weaker brother to sin.” Therefore, concern for the welfare of fellow brethren in Christ clearly trumped the principle of Christian liberty.²² J. Oliver Buswell made a similar case in *The Christian Life*, which he published a few months later. He acknowledged that while Christ drank wine during his days on earth, the community-oriented social life of ancient Palestine differed significantly from the urban “speed-machine world” of the modern age, which lacked “settled, well-established social inhibitions.” In a thinly veiled criticism of Westminster’s policy on alcohol, Buswell wrote, “You, my friend, whoever you are, even with your emphasis on orthodoxy, are guilty of the blood and souls of young men and women if by your advocacy and example of moderate drinking you lead them...into a life of drunkenness.”²³ As president of Wheaton College from 1926 to 1940, Buswell enforced the separated life by banning the use of alcohol and making students sign a pledge of conduct as a condition of enrollment. The different attitudes on alcohol consumption between non-denominational Wheaton College and

²¹ Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 57-58.

²² George P. Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod* (Cherry Hill, NJ: Mack Publishing Company, 1974), 229-30; R. Laird Harris, “The Sunday School Lessons,” *The Presbyterian Guardian*, 24 October 1936, 33.

²³ J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., *The Christian Life: The Lamb of God: Volume IV* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1937), 87-88.

Westminster Seminary are illustrative of the two religious cultures that resided within the PCA during its formative years.²⁴

Machen endeavored to bridge the growing division within the denomination throughout second half of 1936. But McIntire, Buswell, and other premillennialists challenged his authority as church leader. In early November, McIntire wrote an editorial in the *Christian Beacon* criticizing the new ecclesiastical “machine” that had arisen in their midst. This editorial came less than two weeks before the election of officers at the annual meeting of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions.²⁵ The premillennialist faction voted as a bloc during that meeting, ousting Machen as president of that agency and replacing him with one of their own. Machen took this turn of events as a personal blow and expressed angst that the board would lose its Presbyterian character. At roughly this same time, Buswell chided him on Westminster’s errant ways and defended McIntire’s right to use the *Christian Beacon* to voice his opinions on controversial church issues. Machen at last recognized that a parting of ways was perhaps at hand, but he died of pneumonia on January 1, 1937, during a speaking mission to North Dakota before that schism occurred.²⁶

The Bible Presbyterian Church

After Machen’s death, the breach between the two sides quickly widened with each refusing to conciliate. McIntire remarked that the Westminster faction relied on a dried-up

²⁴ Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict*, 239; Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 230; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 60.

²⁵ “A Machine,” *Christian Beacon*, 05 November 1936, 4; Marsden, “Perspective on the Division of 1937 – Part II,” 28; Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 224.

²⁶ Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 225; Hart and Meuther, *Fighting the Good Fight*, 49, 52.

legalism that inhibited effective testimony regarding Christ's second coming, while the Westminster group set its sights on purifying the church from the contamination of non-Presbyterian beliefs.²⁷ McIntire, Buswell, and twelve other ministers broke with the PCA at the general assembly in May 1937 and announced their intention to form a new church. They subsequently gained permanent control over the Independent Board of Foreign Missions after members of Westminster Seminary's Old School faction resigned from it.²⁸

Those who separated from the Presbyterian Church of America named their new denomination the Bible Presbyterian Synod. The name symbolized a synthesis of Presbyterianism with the non-denominational character of the American evangelicalism's Bible church movement.²⁹ Its founders proclaimed themselves the heirs of historic American Presbyterianism. In a *Christian Beacon* editorial, McIntire referred to their short-lived tenure in the Presbyterian Church of America as a "false-start." Contrary to the claim by the founders of the Bible Presbyterian Church that their sect represented the historic Presbyterian faith, they found it necessary to modify the Westminster Confession of Faith to include statements on premillennialism, which signified a more recent accretion to the doctrinal standards for that branch of Protestant Christianity.³⁰

Trustees for the Bible Presbyterian Church opened Faith Theological Seminary in Wilmington, Delaware, in the fall of 1937 and appointed former Westminster faculty member

²⁷ Hart and Meuther, *Fighting the Good Fight*, 51, 54; Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 244.

²⁸ "Bible Presbyterian," *Christian Beacon*, 10 October 1940, 4.

²⁹ Hart and Meuther, *Fighting the Good Fight*, 50; Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 247; McIntire to Buswell, 25 November 1936, Box 284, Folder 53, Buswell Papers; Barry Hankins, *Francis Schaeffer and the Shaping of Evangelical America* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2008), 13.

³⁰ Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict*, 243; *Minutes of the First General Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church, Meeting at Collingswood, New Jersey, September 1938*, 1; Fea, "Carl McIntire," 257.

Allan MacRae its president. The plan to create a seminary took shape in late 1936 when divisions between the two factions in the PCA began to solidify. The idea initially proposed locating the seminary at Wheaton College; however, this enterprise never materialized due to an absence of financial support. Noteworthy among the new students at Faith Seminary was Francis A. Schaeffer, who had commenced his theological training at Westminster in 1935 but transferred to Faith for his final year of study in 1937. This switch was motivated in part on his complaint that Westminster's emphasis on divine election was so "hyper-Calvinistic" that it subverted the need for evangelism. Schaeffer subsequently became the first minister ordained by the Bible Presbyterian Synod. He would later play a significant role in politicizing evangelicals over the issue of abortion during the 1970s.³¹

An important attribute of the Bible Presbyterian Church featured an intense anxiety about ecclesiastical centralization. Its clergymen demonstrated their disquiet at centralization by ensuring that all its affiliated mission agencies and educational institutions were controlled by independent boards of trustees. Their fear of centralization also extended to the synod's relationship with its constituent churches. The Bible Presbyterian constitution stipulated that local church membership was voluntary, and each congregation held control of its own property. This provision differed significantly from the PCUSA, where the denomination held legal jurisdiction over individual churches regardless of whether the local congregation financed the land purchase and construction costs.³²

³¹ "Eight Members and General Secretary Resign from Independent Board Over Issue of Independency," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, 12 June 1937, 79-80; "Foreign Missions Forge Ahead," 12 June 1937, *The Presbyterian Guardian*, 81; "Correction and Explanation Concerning the Proposed Seminary at Wheaton College," *Baptist Bulletin* (July 1937), 7; McIntire to Buswell, 25 November 1936, Box 284, Folder 53, Buswell Papers; Hankins, *Francis Schaeffer*, 13.

³² *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, Part I* (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1937), 68; Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict*, 249; Carl McIntire,

Presbyterian separatists were well aware that forfeiture of church property for the sake of conscience placed a substantial price on secession that impeded their effort to pry more congregations from the PCUSA. The case of *Kelly v. McIntire* heard by the New Jersey Chancery Court therefore served as a legal test case designed to advance their cause.³³ McIntire hinged his legal defense on the argument that the PCUSA had “departed from the fundamental principles, faith, and constitution of the denomination.” Therefore the presbytery was not entitled to the deed of Collingswood Presbyterian Church. The plaintiffs in this case, J. Ernest Kelly and four other congregation members, had backing from the PCUSA. They argued that neither McIntire nor the church session had the right to divert property from uses not approved by the denomination. New Jersey Vice Chancellor Francis B. Davis ruled in their favor and refused to consider the doctrinal dispute upon which McIntire predicated his defense. Despite the claim by McIntire’s attorney after this verdict that his client would take this case to the Supreme Court if necessary, the church session ultimately decided not to appeal the judge’s ruling and voluntarily vacated the building. McIntire’s congregation reconstituted itself as the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood.³⁴

The American Council of Christian Churches

The denouement in this legal drama marked the beginning of McIntire’s transformation from being a leader of Presbyterian separatism to being a leader of fundamentalist separatism. Prior to his eviction McIntire largely confined his acts of dissent to his own communion.

Twentieth Century Reformation (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1944), 190; Louis Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement* (The Hague: Mouton, 1963), 22.

³³ Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 22.

³⁴ Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict*, 250-51; “Old Organization Goes to Court; Seeks Injunction,” *The Presbyterian Guardian*, 06 July 1936, 164; *Services of Dedication: Bible Presbyterian Sunday School, Haddon Avenues and Cuthbert Boulevard, Collingswood New Jersey* (n.d.), 3.

Following that event he set his sight on a grand restructuring of American Protestantism. His weekly newspaper *Christian Beacon* became an important voice for militant “come outers” from other denominations who made separation from mainline apostasy a test of Christian faith. Many of them would form the nucleus of the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC) in the decade that followed.³⁵

McIntire created the ACCC for the specific purpose of opposing the ecumenical power of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (FCCCA). Throughout the 1930s, fundamentalists grew increasingly wary of the FCCCA’s programmatic initiatives. Among them was the revival of a social gospel tradition during the Great Depression and an embrace of the political process to achieve those ideals. A second trend that alarmed evangelicals involved a surge in Protestant ecumenism that was marked by a wave of denominational mergers and the quest to find religious unity through the FCCCA. Relatedly, evangelicals also became indignant at the cultural authority amassed by the FCCCA and the claims by its leaders to speak for the Protestant churches in matters pertaining to public policy. Fundamentalists espied the coming of a regimented and repressive super church and expressed alarm at these developments. McIntire echoed the sentiments of many premillennialists when he declared in 1940, “Centralization and control from the top appear to be the order of the day in the church. Sad and tragic – Protestantism wants to imitate Rome! It feels it must have one voice representing all people.”³⁶

The FCCCA’s perceived threat to religious liberty galvanized conservatives from several Protestant denominations. Numerous fundamentalists by the late 1930s expressed the need for

³⁵ During the first synod meeting, members of the Bible Presbyterian Church passed a resolution enabling it to establish fellowship with other fundamentalist churches and organizations. *Minutes of the First General Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church*, 10.

³⁶ James DeForest Murch, *Cooperation Without Compromise: A History of the National Association of Evangelicals* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1956), 45; Samuel McCrea Cavert, *The American Churches in the Ecumenical Movement, 1900-1968* (New York: Association Press, 1968), 183-84; “The Ruling Elders,” *Christian Beacon*, 08 August 1940, 4.

collective action to counter the ecumenical leviathan. Among them was the pastor of a Bible Protestant Church in Eastport, New York, Charles Pepoon, who wrote to McIntire in July 1939 asking, “Has not the day arrived when all the forces of God should join forces as a testimony for Christ against the onslaught of infidelity by the Federal Council of Churches of the Anti-Christ in America?” Along the same lines, Wilkesburg, Pennsylvania, minister W.O.H. Garman, who led the Ohio regional chapter of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America (IFCA), suggested more concerted action among militant separatists who were fragmented into “so many little groups.”³⁷

Fundamentalists had long assailed the FCCCA for introducing values alien to American Christianity. But a driving issue that caused them angst in the early 1940s involved the inequitable distribution of free radio broadcast time. Evangelicals recognized radio’s potential to reach lost souls and a number of them developed successful paid religious programs. Yet in the late 1930s and early 1940s they sensed their access to the airwaves being constricted when many radio stations stopped selling commercial airtime for religious broadcasting and instead donated time as a public service to religious organizations on a sustaining-time basis. Radio executives nearly universally distributed that broadcast time to mainline Protestant groups. With considerable justification, fundamentalists argued that this discriminatory policy was meant to drive them from the airwaves.³⁸

³⁷ Pepoon to McIntire, 3 July 1939, Box 56, Folder 22, Carl C. McIntire Manuscript Collection, Speer Library, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ; *Minutes of the Second General Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church, Meeting at Collingswood, New Jersey, November 1939*.

³⁸ Tona J. Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial: Radio, Religion, and Popular Culture in America* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 116-19; Dennis N. Voskuil, “The Power of the Air: Evangelicals and the Rise of Religious Broadcasting,” in *American Evangelicals and the Mass Media*, ed. Quentin J. Schultze (Grand Rapids, MI: Academie Books of Zondervan, 1990), 75-76; Quentin J. Schultze, *Christianity and Mass Media in America: Toward a Democratic Accommodation* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2003), 156-57; “Federal Council,” *Christian Beacon*, 29 August 1940, 4; “Federal Council Important Acts,” *Christian Beacon*, 26 December 1940, 1; “Radio,” 12 September 1940, 4.

McIntire convinced clergymen in the Bible Presbyterian and Bible Protestant churches that the viability of the evangelical faith in American society necessitated united action, and in the fall of 1940 churchmen from the two denominations began working out the details for a national council of fundamentalist churches. In early September 1941, McIntire sent a draft of the American Council's constitution to four hundred evangelical leaders around the nation inviting them to become members of the sponsoring committee. This move essentially sought to enlist their support for this venture without offering them a voice in determining the ACCC's structure or purpose.³⁹ Elected as the council's first president, McIntire publicly announced the ACCC's creation on September 17, 1941, proclaiming it "the voice of evangelical Christians" and predicting that it would spark a "revolutionary realignment in American Protestantism."⁴⁰

The ACCC initially established its headquarters at the National Bible Institute in midtown Manhattan. Don O. Shelton founded this independent missionary training institution in 1907. After his death in February 1941, McIntire and other separatists from the Bible Protestant and Bible Presbyterian churches colonized its board of directors and named J. Oliver Buswell as the school's new president.⁴¹ For McIntire, establishing the ACCC's national office in New York City gave it the legitimacy and prestige he sought as a competitor of the FCCCA, which also had its headquarters in Manhattan. He remained adamant about keeping the ACCC's offices in New

³⁹ "History of the American Council of Christian Churches," *Christian Beacon*, 16 April 1942, 2; Circular Letter dated 06 September 1941, Box 358, Folder 1, McIntire Collection.

⁴⁰ Carl McIntire, "American Council of Churches Organized: Headquarters in New York," *Christian Beacon*, 17 September 1941, 1.

⁴¹ The Board of Trustees at Wheaton fired Buswell the previous year ostensibly because of his schismatic activities as a Presbyterian separatist. The National Bible Institute was renamed Shelton College in 1950 when it moved to Ringwood, New Jersey. See, George Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987), 45; *Carl McIntire's 50 Years as Pastor of the Congregation of the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood, N.J.*, 33.

York in the decades that followed despite the financial strain it placed on the organization's budget, which averaged less than \$100,000 annually.⁴²

The National Association of Evangelicals and the Fundamentalist Rivalry

At the same time that plans were underway to create the American Council of Christian Churches, another evangelical group was laying the groundwork for a similar venture. In the winter of 1940-41, Rumney, New Hampshire, evangelist J. Elwin Wright and Africa Inland Mission General Secretary Ralph T. Davis traversed the nation to build support for a national evangelical fellowship. Their desire to create an association of evangelicals arose from a set of concerns similar to those that inspired the formation of the ACCC.⁴³ Davis conveyed those sentiments in a December 1940 circular letter to other evangelical leaders:

It is thought that the government may some day recognize only the Federal Council of Churches because they believe that Council represents all Protestant groups, but we know otherwise. Evangelicals are divided in so many larger and smaller groups and with little point of contact, so it is not surprising that the Federal Council of Churches continues to boast of representing so many millions of Christians.⁴⁴

Their idea for a national fellowship gained momentum during the first half of 1941. Moody Bible Institute President Will Houghton subsequently invited Wright, Davis, and ten other evangelicals to Chicago for a round-table meeting in late October to discuss how to move forward with their proposal. Before that meeting took place, however, Wright learned of

⁴² The ACCC moved its office to a rented office on Park Row in Lower Manhattan in 1945. "Officers of ACCC Answer Charges," *The Evangelical Methodist*, January 1969, 3; "Who is Carl McIntire's Worst Enemy?" Folder McIntire, Carl, W.O.H. Garman Collection, Fundamentalism File, Mack Library, Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC; "ACCC: No Longer Doing its Founder's Will," *Christianity Today*, 21 November 1969, 41; *Minutes from 1968 American Council of Christian Churches General Assembly*, Box 354, Folder 35, McIntire Collection.

⁴³ Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 144-45; *Evangelical Action! A Report of the Organization of the National Association of Evangelicals for United Action* (Boston: United Action Press, 1942), 5-6.

⁴⁴ Ralph T. Davis circular letter, 11 December 1940, Box 14, Folder 27, Africa Inland Missions International Records, Billy Graham Center Archives, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL.

McIntire's plan to launch the ACCC and pled for him to delay the unveiling of his organization until the two groups could meet and invited McIntire to the summit at Moody Bible Institute. McIntire, however, refused to delay the launching of the ACCC and instead traveled to Chicago with executive council members H. McAllister Griffiths and Harold S. Laird to convince Wright and the others to join their organization.⁴⁵

Wright remained hopeful of finding common ground between the two groups before that meeting. But it quickly became apparent during that meeting that differences of opinion on a few key issues precluded the possibility of combining forces. The group aligned with Wright and Davis disagreed with the ACCC's plan to make opposition to the Federal Council of Churches an essential feature of fellowship. More importantly, it disagreed with the ACCC's leaders on the matter of ecclesiastical separation and disapproved of their decision to deny voting membership to churches that remained attached to denominations in the Federal Council of Churches. In Wright's estimation, "it was not good judgment to form an organization to fight another organization."⁴⁶ He envisioned building a movement based upon constructive evangelism with the intent of avoiding altogether the demand that members separate from church bodies belonging to the FCCCA. Related to this point, the pentecostal-raised Wright wanted to construct a movement inclusive of both the pentecostal and fundamentalist branches of evangelicalism. The ACCC's leaders rejected outright the notion of including pentecostals in their fellowship.

⁴⁵ Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 145; *Evangelical Action*, 5-6; McIntire, "American Council of Churches Organized: Headquarters in New York," 1; "History of the American Council of Christian Churches," 2.

⁴⁶ *Evangelical Action*, 7; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 146; Wright to McIntire, 17 February 1942, Box 249, Folder 43, McIntire Collection.

Their attitude on this point exhibited fundamentalists' traditional revulsion at pentecostalism for its belief in faith healing and tongues speaking.⁴⁷

Another apprehension articulated by the Wright-Davis group regarded the ACCC's method of organization building. Wright thought that McIntire acted hastily in creating a pan-fundamentalist organization without first consulting a larger cross section of its constituent base. He viewed grassroots participation as key to organizational development and conveyed this sentiment to McIntire prior to the round-table meeting at Moody Bible Institute:

I see some difficulties to be encountered in getting even a few additional denominations to go into a movement which they have been given no opportunity to assist in developing. I could have wished that the adoption of your constitution had been preceded by a series of conferences in which thirty or forty of the more evangelical bodies could have an opportunity to participate.⁴⁸

When the two sides failed to reach an accord, representatives from the ACCC left the meeting. Those who remained formed the Temporary Committee for United Action among Evangelicals and subsequently issued a call for evangelicals to convene a national congress at St. Louis in 1942 to commence the process of constituting their organization. An adversarial relationship quickly developed between the two groups. In a missive to Wright in December 1941, McIntire accused him of being uncooperative in his relations with the ACCC and a compromiser for not wanting to take a firm stand against modernism and apostasy. "While talking peace with us," he declared, "you have preceeded [sic] to attack us and attempted to

⁴⁷ Notes of Ralph T. Davis, Box 14, Folder 27 Africa Inland Missions International Records; McIntire, *Twentieth Century Reformation*, 195; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 142-44. The contempt that fundamentalists held for pentecostalism was famously displayed by early twentieth century fundamentalist Morgan G. Campbell who once scorned it as the "last vomit of Satan." See Randall Herbert Balmer, *Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 391.

⁴⁸ Wright to McIntire, 15 September 1941, Box 249, Folder 43, McIntire Collection.

undermine our position with false claims of unanimity.” He told Wright flatly, “responsibility for dividing the Protestant forces rests upon you men.”⁴⁹

McIntire’s combativeness gave Wright caution in dealing with him. When he learned that McIntire intended to rally an oppositional faction at St. Louis, Wright warned him not to attend the convention “with a premeditated plan to foment discord.” He emphasized the democratic nature of the conference and promised that representatives from the American Council would receive time to present their proposal if they so desired. “It is difficult to understand the opposition of the American Council to this national conference,” he asserted. “If your plan is the best one, there is no doubt but that it will be so recognized by the leaders who gather. If it is not the best one, the sponsors of the American Council should be willing to accept the verdict of the leaders with good grace and join in whatever form of organization is finally adopted.”⁵⁰

Several dozen conservative Protestants turned out for the conference in St. Louis, which marked the beginning of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). McIntire and several of his supporters attended with the aim of persuading delegates to accept the ACCC’s position as the basis for evangelical fellowship. When McIntire received time to address the convention, a contentious half-hour floor debate erupted on whether he should be permitted to speak. Delegates eventually granted him five minutes to state his case. But when he attempted to distribute an informational booklet on the ACCC, a motion to terminate his time at the podium was quickly seconded. Wright disliked the use of this parliamentary tactic to silence McIntire and the next day pled for delegates to permit him a half hour to speak. They conceded to Wright’s request but

⁴⁹ Murch *Cooperation Without Compromise*, 53; McIntire to Wright, 20 December 1941, Box 249, Folder 43, McIntire Collection.

⁵⁰ Wright to McIntire, 17 February 1942, *ibid.*

ultimately rejected McIntire's pitch. The ACCC's representatives promptly left the convention when their proposal was rebuffed, sending a clear signal that their terms were not negotiable.

The delegates who remained subsequently formed a committee to draft a constitution and elected Boston's Park Street Church pastor Harold J. Ockenga as the interim president.

Interestingly, Ockenga studied under Machen and had been McIntire's classmate and close friend at both Princeton and Westminster. But after seminary, their paths diverged. Ockenga, unlike either Machen or McIntire, did not view ecclesiastical separation as a requisite for Christian faith and retained membership in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.⁵¹

The rivalry that developed between the American Council of Christian Churches and the National Association of Evangelicals led to a bifurcation in fundamentalism's ranks. Historian George Marsden argued that before World War II the terms evangelicalism and fundamentalism were interchangeable.⁵² Beginning in the 1940s, however, the NAE's leaders appropriated the term evangelical in a self-conscious effort to distance themselves from the combative connotation associated with fundamentalism. Those reformers stood at the leading edge of what present day scholars refer to as the neo-evangelical or new evangelical movement. Most often associated with the great crusader of the post-World War II era Billy Graham, they strove to articulate fundamentalism's biblical principles through gospel witness rather than adversarial denunciations.⁵³

Carl McIntire and the American Council of Christian Churches, on the other hand, helped redefine the meaning of fundamentalism. In the 1920s, the fundamentalist coalition included

⁵¹ Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 147-48; Murch, *Cooperation without Compromise*, 58; "St. Louis Meeting Sets Up Temporary Association, *Christian Beacon* 16 April 1942, 2.

⁵² Balmer, *Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism*, 518; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 147-48; Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, 48; McIntire, *Twentieth Century Reformation*, 195.

⁵³ Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, 48.

conservatives and evangelicals who opposed modernist theology and modern cultural mores. By the 1940s a slightly different meaning emerged. Fundamentalism became a self-designation among ecclesiastical separatists who demanded that other believers liberate themselves from the apostasy of the mainline churches. The ACCC's quest for a pure faith led its leaders to adopt the policy of second degree separation towards the new evangelical movement. This doctrine demanded that Christian believers separate from anyone, including fellow evangelicals, who maintained fellowship with apostate religious institutions.⁵⁴

In the 1940s, however, it was not entirely clear which group was heir to the fundamentalist heritage. Some fundamentalists, such as Wheaton College President V. Raymond Edman and Moody Bible Institute President Will Houghton, refused to get caught in the middle of the ACCC-NAE rivalry and remained on the sidelines. Other fundamentalists, such as southern separatists Bob Jones, Sr., and Bob Jones, Jr., switched allegiances over time. The Joneses initially supported the NAE with great enthusiasm because it took a stance against apostasy but permitted individual liberty on the issue of ecclesiastical separation. As a former Southern Methodist clergyman, Bob Jones, Sr., empathized with the plight of conservative ministers who continued to struggle against liberalism inside the Methodist Church. But in the early 1950s, the Joneses switched their loyalty to the ACCC as a result of both their own drift towards hard-line separatism and the willingness of certain evangelicals in the NAE to interact with Protestant ecumenists.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 232-35; Hankins, *American Evangelicals*, 34.

⁵⁵ Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 71; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 152; Mark Taylor Dalhouse, *An Island in the Lake of Fire: Bob Jones University, Fundamentalism, and the Separatist Movement* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 62, 65.

The ACCC and the Separatist Alliance

The ACCC's constituency claimed lineage to several different ecclesiastical families within the Reformed tradition that included Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, and Baptist. But some of its members also sprang from the independent Bible church movement and never went through the travails of separating from a denomination. Collectively they shared a number of tenets common to American fundamentalism. They included a belief in biblical inerrancy, intense commitment to evangelism, faith in the imminent premillennial second coming of Christ, and the obligation to live a separated life.⁵⁶ The alienation and separation from mainline Christianity experienced by the majority of the ACCC members, moreover, shaped their militant outlook towards ecumenical Protestantism and their extreme aversion to centralized power. These ideological traits stemmed in part from a premillennial belief forecasting the corruption and consolidation of Christendom and its alliance with the political regime of the antichrist in the end times. Those tendencies can also be attributed to the bureaucratic rationalization of mainline denominational life during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Insofar as the anxiety about centralized power affected religious practice, sectarians in the ACCC consciously avoided recreating the ecclesiastical machinery of their former churches. McIntire's Bible Presbyterian Synod, for example, mandated confessional unanimity but granted autonomy to each congregation in dealing with ecclesiastical matters not explicitly articulated in the constitution. Each congregation furthermore held dominion over its property and allowed individual churches to call their own pastor. Bible Presbyterianism exhibited other elements of a confederated structure. The sect did not publish an official news organ, relying primarily on McIntire's *Christian Beacon* for church news. Nor did it establish any post-secondary schools or

⁵⁶ Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 6.

mission agencies. The synod instead gave official approval to doctrinally aligned independent institutions, which included Faith Seminary, National Bible Institute (later Shelton College), Highland College (established in Pasadena, California, in 1950), and the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions. An independent board of trustees dominated either by McIntire directly or a coterie loyal to him controlled each of these institutions.⁵⁷

Other denominations that joined the American Council of Christian Churches exhibited similar aversions to institutional development. The General Association of Baptist Churches (GARBC) and the Independent Fundamental Churches of America (IFCA), which both emerged from a historic milieu of congregational autonomy, each gave approval to their own set of independent schools and mission agencies. Although the GARBC and IFCA both published an official journal, the clergy in those communions exhibited fierce libertarian streak by insisting that those ecclesiastical bodies were a fellowship of churches and not a denomination.⁵⁸

Aside from the Bible Presbyterian Church, the other church bodies that formed the core constituency of the American Council of Christian Churches during its early years were the Bible Protestant Church, the Independent Fundamental Churches of America (IFCA), and the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches (GARBC). The Bible Protestant Church consisted of dissenters from the Eastern Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church who rejected the unification of Methodism in 1939. This merger brought together the Methodist Protestant Church, Methodist Episcopal Church, and Methodist Episcopal Church, South.⁵⁹ Dissidents from

⁵⁷ Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 251, 271-73.

⁵⁸ Joseph M. Stowell, *The Background and History of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches* (Hayward, CA: J.F. May Press, 1949), 36-38; James O. Henry, *For Such a Time as This: A History of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America* (Westchester, IL: Independent Fundamental Church of America, 1983), 188.

⁵⁹ Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004) 921-22; Newton C. Conant, *How God Delivered 34 Churches* (Camden, NJ: Bible Protestant Press, 1964),

the Methodist Protestant Church's Eastern Conference objected most specifically to unification with the Methodist Episcopal Church, which was the largest and most liberal of the three denominations.⁶⁰

The leader of this anti-union movement was Camden, New Jersey, minister Newton C. Conant, who claimed that the Methodist Episcopal Church emphasized social Christianity to the point where it had almost entirely “gone into the field of economics and politics.” He viewed this merger as a sign of the end times, declaring, “I believe the Scriptures teach the apostasy of the professing church and its final rejection by Christ, I believe the Scriptures also reveal a merging of the machinery of all apostate Protestantism in preparation for the reign of the Scarlet Woman.” Conant's allusion to the scarlet woman, also known as the great harlot of Babylon, referred to a passage from Revelations 17 that premillennialists argued prophesied the emergence of a powerful one-world church of the antichrist in the end times. He predicted liberals in the new unified Methodist church would impose a tribute on individual churches to fund their social agenda and silence ministers who continued to preach Wesleyan orthodoxy.⁶¹

Another minister from the Eastern Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, Walter A. Patrick, depicted the Plan of Union in more populist tones. Writing in June 1939, nine months after British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain signed the infamous Munich Accord with Adolph Hitler, Patrick spoke metaphorically of the Methodist Plan of Union as a “second Munich.” Church leaders in the Methodist Protestant Church, he protested, promulgated

30-31. On the eve of merger, the Methodist Protestant Church had 198,000 members. The Methodist Episcopal Church had 4.3 million members, while the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, had 2.8 million members. See The Association of Religious Data Archives <<http://www.thearda.com/>>, accessed 22 May 2013.

⁶⁰ Conant, *How God Delivered 34 Churches*, 30-32, 97

⁶¹ Ibid., 20-21; Robert C. Fuller, *Naming the Antichrist: The History of An American Obsession* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 146.

this union without the input of rank and file clergy. “My fight, and my church’s fight is not against any M.E. church, nor any M.E. pastor nor people,” he wrote, “but against those ‘higher ups,’ the ecclesiastical gods of the bishopric who would make us ‘recalcitrants’ and ‘insurgents’ jump at every crack of their hierarchical whips.”⁶²

The angst conveyed by Conant, Patrick, and other dissenters from the Methodist Protestant Church became palpable when the Methodist union became a settled matter and further debate shut down in the denomination’s official journal. McIntire aided them by making the *Christian Beacon* available as a medium to continue their resistance. This action infuriated the hierarchy of the Methodist Protestant Church, prompting Conant’s bishop to chastise him for airing their dispute in a Presbyterian publication.⁶³ In the end thirty-four churches from the Eastern Conference, consisting of about 1800 members, refused to become part of the Methodist union. This number represented more than one-half of the fifty-seven congregations from that conference.⁶⁴ The majority of congregations in this resistance movement were located in New Jersey, with others scattered throughout eastern Pennsylvania and southern New York. Their orientation to American fundamentalism combined with the tarnished reputation of the Methodist label provided them with an incentive to rename their church body. At the first annual conference in 1940, representatives rechristened it the Bible Protestant Church, and elected Conant as president. McIntire’s role in helping this dissident group break free from the Methodist Protestant Church became the basis for close relations between the Bible Protestant

⁶² Conant, *How God Delivered 34 Churches*, 40-41.

⁶³ Ibid, 30-32, 51; W.S. Patrick, “Methodist Protestants Thank Beacon,” *Christian Beacon*, 26 Sept. 1940, 3.

⁶⁴ The Association of Religious Data Archives <http://www.thearda.com/Denoms/D_1433.asp>, accessed 22 May 2013.

and Bible Presbyterian churches, which led to the formation of the American Council of Churches.

The Methodist Church held a policy similar to that of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. in regard to the denomination's right to property. This policy, together with the risk of career suicide for clergymen who remained outside the Methodist church, helped erode support for the anti-union movement. Interestingly, the thirty-four churches that rejected the Methodist merger managed to retain their property when church officials failed to dissolve the Eastern Conference as an incorporated entity regulated by the laws of New Jersey. Their attorney in this case was Weidner Titzck, a young lawyer from McIntire's church, who seized upon this oversight to establish legal jurisdiction over the Eastern Conference.⁶⁵

Unlike the Bible Protestant Church, the Independent Fundamental Churches of America, which joined the ACCC in 1942, got its start under different circumstances and in a different region of the nation. The IFCA began as an association of several small-town, evangelical tabernacles in western Iowa at the height of the fundamentalist-modernist conflict in 1923. Originally named the American Conference of Undenominational Churches, it expanded rapidly into a regional fellowship with members scattered throughout the eastern Great Plains. The ACUC functioned as a loose-knit fellowship of independent churches that placed few demands upon members. Its proscriptions included a stipulation that member churches not bear a name indicating denominational affiliation nor engage in fellowship with "progressive Christians."⁶⁶

The rural origins of the ACUC, together with its non-denominational character, made it anomalous to the separatist beginnings of other fundamentalist bodies that joined the ACCC.

⁶⁵ Conant, *How God Delivered 34 Churches*, 121-22, 151, 157.

⁶⁶ William A. Bevier, "A History of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America" (Th.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1958), 7; Henry, *For Such a Time as This*, 30.

Members of the ACUC focused their energy more on revival than doctrine. This aspect together with its non-denominational character attracted a broadly defined evangelical constituency that included pentecostals. It also granted full membership to female clergy, a characteristic not uncommon among primitive evangelicals. In the late 1920s, however, the ACUC underwent a significant transformation. An influx of separatists from urban churches in cities like St. Louis, Chicago, and Philadelphia significantly altered the organization's membership composition – not to mention its geographical center. By the time the ACUC became the IFCA in 1930, it had adopted stricter bylaws and statement of faith. In this process it banned pentecostals and women clergy from membership altogether.⁶⁷

William “Billy” McCarrell, pastor of the Cicero Bible Church in Cicero, Illinois, became the leading light in this restructuring process. He became executive secretary of the IFCA at its founding in 1930 and consented to having his church serve as the association's headquarters during the early years of its existence. The IFCA became a refuge for clergy and churches from a variety of Protestant traditions. Most of the churches that joined it were relatively small. However, the IFCA did have some congregations with sizable memberships. Notable among them were McCarrell's Cicero Bible Church and Martin DeHaan's Calvary Undenominational Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. By 1943 the IFCA claimed 435 churches with an estimated

⁶⁷ Henry, *For Such a Time as This*, 30-32, 49; Stewart G. Cole, *The History of Fundamentalism* (New York: R.R. Smith, Inc., 1931), 297; Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 158, 165; Margaret Lambert Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender, 1875 to the Present* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993), 63; Mark Chaves, *Ordaining Women: Culture and Conflict in Religious Organizations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 111. St. Louis evangelist O.B. Bottorff remarked in the late 1920s that the ACUC's theology “was shot full of errors” and played a significant role in putting the organization on firmer doctrinal ground. See Dorothy Martin, *The Story of Billy McCarrell* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 132.

membership of 50,000, making it significantly larger than either the Bible Presbyterian or Bible Protestant churches.⁶⁸

The largest church body to join the ACCC during its early years was General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, which was founded by representatives from twenty-two separatist churches at Chicago's Belden Avenue Baptist Church in May 1932. By the time it joined the ACCC a decade later, it had about 70,000 members.⁶⁹ Geographically, its membership consisted largely of churches found in a swath of the industrial North between New York and Iowa, with the heaviest concentration of congregations located in New York and Michigan. Additionally, the GARBC claimed a cluster of churches in the Los Angeles area.⁷⁰

The clergy and laymen who founded the GARBC were all veterans of the fundamentalist-modernist controversies that wracked the Northern Baptist Convention during the 1920s. It superseded the Baptist Bible Union (BBU), which was an organization formed in 1923 by William Bell Riley, J. Frank Norris, T.T. Shields, and other fundamentalist clergymen to combat modernism in the Baptist communion. The GARBC differed from the organization it replaced in a number of respects. To start with, the BBU was founded to combat modernism in the Northern Baptist Convention. The GARBC, on the other hand, emerged from separatist impulse. It was created for the purpose of establishing the basis for fellowship outside that denomination after the BBU failed to achieve its goals. Secondly, the BBU had been an organization led by preachers renowned for their jeremiads against modernism and modern society but who lacked organization building skills. They proved to be too independent and too beholden to the idea that

⁶⁸ Henry, *For Such a Time as This*, 38-39; The Association of Religious Data Archives <http://www.thearda.com/Denoms/D_1099.asp>, accessed 21 May 2013.

⁶⁹ Bill J. Leonard, *Baptists in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 117; The Association of Religious Data Archives <http://www.thearda.com/denoms/D_1389.asp>, accessed 21 May 2013.

⁷⁰ "Fellowshipping Churches with the G.A.R.B.C., 1945" *Baptist Bulletin*, September 1945, 7-17.

their powerful preachments alone could mobilize the masses. The clergymen who formed the GARBC eliminated this shortcoming by granting membership to churches rather than individuals. This strategy ensured that it developed into a congregationally-oriented communion rather than a leader-centered one.

Robert T. Ketcham, who served as pastor at Central Baptist Church, in Gary, Indiana, emerged as the leader of the GARBC in the early 1930s and demonstrated qualities of organization building that had been in short supply among the BBU's individualistic leaders. His desire to construct the GARBC into a democratic fellowship was put to the test by Fort Worth, Texas, fundamentalist preacher J. Frank Norris, who was known as much for his charismatic speaking ability as his flamboyant and mercurial personality. In 1935, Norris accepted a second pastorate at Detroit's Temple Baptist Church. The following year he turned up at GARBC's annual meeting with an application for membership on behalf of Temple Baptist Church. Ketcham disliked the idea of having a domineering preacher such as Norris in the GARBC and set aside his application on the suspicion that it did not carry the approval of his church. The credentials committee later rejected Temple Baptist Church for membership when it indeed determined that deacons at Norris's church never discussed the matter. Norris retaliated with savage vengeance by disparaging Ketcham as a power-hungry tyrant. This accusation in part compelled Ketcham to push the GARBC to eliminate his position as president and replace it with a Council of Fourteen led by a chairman. Broadening the GARBC's base of power helped it to remain a democratic yet organizationally weak fellowship of churches.⁷¹

⁷¹ Curtis Wayne Whiteman, "The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, 1932-1970" Ph.D. diss., St. Louis University, 1982), 168; Stowell, *The Background and History of the GARBC*, 64; Murray J. Murdoch, *Portrait of Obedience, the Biography of Robert T. Ketcham* (Schaumburg, IL: Regular Baptist Press, 1983), 148, 179; Norris to Ketcham, 21 February 1944, Folder 1085, J. Frank Norris Collection, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

The GARBC's decision to join the ACCC came into conflict with its anti-hierarchal impulse. Since it was a fellowship that emphasized traditional Baptist polity of congregational autonomy, a question arose on whether the association had the right to speak for its churches. At its annual meeting in 1942, representatives voted to join the ACCC with the understanding that this action did not commit the individual churches to join the council. The GARBC defined the limits of its affiliation with the ACCC by approving of cooperation in areas mutually beneficial to its churches, such as the denunciation of apostasy and lobbying for legal rights in public policy matters. But they disapproved of inter-denominational collaboration in areas that could possibly clash with Baptist doctrines, such as the sponsorship of evangelistic campaigns and Bible conferences or the establishment of educational institutions.⁷²

Conclusion

During the late 1920s and early 1930s a number of scholars and journalists predicted the demise of Protestant fundamentalism with an air of Darwinian confidence. Those assessments are in large measure correct if one gauges fundamentalism's vitality by the noise of intra-denominational ecclesiastic battles and anti-evolution crusades that raged during the first half of the 1920s. Scholarship in recent decades, however, has revealed that fundamentalism not only survived but continued to thrive. Historian Joel Carpenter persuasively argued that although fundamentalism endured as a fragmented patchwork of small and sometimes alienated religious groups in the 1930s, its educational institutions and missions proliferated and flourished.⁷³

⁷² Whiteman, "The General Association of Regular Baptist Churches," 312-13; Stowell, *The Background and History of the GARBC*, 68.

⁷³ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 191-92; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 13-16.

The intra-denominational conflicts of the 1920s facilitated the erosion of traditional denominational loyalties and set in motion the reorientation of white northern Protestantism along ideological lines. In many instances fundamentalists redefined and refined religious identity in relation to their denominational heritage and their attachments to one another.⁷⁴ The bond between J. Gresham Machen and Carl McIntire, for example, had been fairly close during their campaigns against modernism in the PCUSA. But Machen discovered shortly before his untimely death that his conception of Presbyterian orthodoxy differed from that of his former student. Machen sought to conserve Princeton theology's place in Presbyterianism, while McIntire synthesized elements of faith that were common to American evangelicalism but not to Old School Presbyterianism. In a similar manner, Baptist fundamentalists Robert T. Ketcham and J. Frank Norris closed ranks as members of the Baptist Bible Union during the 1920s to fight the encroachment of liberalism into the Baptist faith. But in the course of constructing the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, Ketcham deemed Norris's domineering personality officious to the organization's democratic spirit.

The religious landscape of the 1930s was further complicated by clergymen who upheld American fundamentalism's principles but chose not to separate from mainline Protestantism. Presbyterian minister Harold Ockenga, who was McIntire's close friend in seminary, believed in premillennial theology and the principles of holiness but elected to stay in the PCUSA. He gave import to one's personal faith than organizational affiliation. This type of situation existed in other Protestant denominations as well. Baptist clergymen William Bell Riley, who was one of the leading fundamentalists in the anti-evolution crusades in the 1920s, stayed in the Northern

⁷⁴ Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 66; Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 135.

Baptist Convention until well into the 1940s, while Robert Ketcham became one of the leading crusaders for Baptist separatism.⁷⁵

With the contours of new religious identities and alliances visible within Protestantism by the 1940s, a number of evangelicals articulated a desire to build a public theology correspondent to their faith. The American Council of Christian Churches emerged from this milieu as a multi-denominational coalition intent on sparking a revolutionary realignment of Protestantism. While militant fundamentalists coalesced around the testimony of the American Council of Christian Churches, the National Association of Evangelicals attracted moderate fundamentalists who avoided the ACCC's strategy of denouncing apostasy at every turn. Its leaders dissociated themselves from fundamentalism's combative reputation with the self-designation of evangelical. The emergence of these two organizations created a foundation for the division of fundamentalists into two distinct camps in the decades that followed.

⁷⁵ Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 50.

III. “The Kings of the East Are Marching to the West”:

Fundamentalism and Politics during the 1930s

In December 1935, J. Frank Norris sponsored a week-long revival at Temple Baptist Church in Detroit. This event featured several prominent Baptist fundamentalist speakers, including former Baptist Bible Union heavyweights William Bell Riley and T.T. Shields as well Robert T. Ketcham and David Otis Fuller from the parvenu General Association of Regular Baptist Churches.¹ As the rally neared its end, several hundred ministers and laymen gathered for a special session to pillory the Northern Baptist Convention for its emphasis on the social gospel rather than the gospel of Christ. One matter they discussed was a report by the denomination’s Commission on Christian Social Action that urged the church to use various forms of Christian social action to help democratize the capitalist economy. The churchmen attending this session roundly condemned the report for leading Baptists “into the camp of Karl Marx and Lenin.” They also vilified Northern Baptist leader and former Federal Council Churches President Albert W. Beaven for a letter he wrote on behalf of the National Religion and Labor Foundation asking President Franklin Roosevelt to nationalize the country’s basic industries and strengthen trade unionism to pull the nation from the Great Depression.²

The interest in social matters by Northern Baptist clergy and laity was indicative of a wider resurgence of the social gospel during the Great Depression. Liberals in a number of denominations seriously questioned the fundamental principles of free market capitalism and

¹ John Evans, “Baptist Group Hits ‘Red Trend’ of Church Heads,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 08 December 1935, 29; Louis Entzminger, “The Great Lakes Bible School to Be Held in the Temple Baptist Church,” *The Fundamentalist*, 15 November 1935, 1-2.

² Evans, “Baptist Group Hits ‘Red Trend’ of Church Heads,” 29; “Baptists Hail Plan for Political Step,” *New York Times*, 23 June 1935, 27; “Leadership of Northern Baptist Convention Officially Endorses Communism,” *The Fundamentalist*, 03 January 1936, 2; Robert Moats Miller, *American Protestantism and Social Issues, 1919-1939* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1958), 73.

urged government regulation of the capitalist system to restore the economy. Their proposals and pronouncements became more frequent as the Depression reached its bottom. Some churches like the Northern Baptist Convention recommended specific courses of action in the early 1930s that prefigured Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. The Federal Council of Churches, never complacent in applying Christian principles to social issues, played a large role in this efflorescence of social Christianity as well. Its leaders threw the weight of institutional Protestantism behind reform legislation and actively tried to influence government policies.³

Conservative Protestants in a number of different communions abhorred this type of political activism and criticized social gospel leaders and groups for substituting the salvation of Christ with socialism. Separatist fundamentalists, such as those who attended Norris's Bible rally in December 1935, routinely scandalized the social gospel as a Soviet-inspired prescription for collectivizing society. Their indictments represented a rhetorical strategy designed to strengthen their religious identity and encourage other congregations to separate from the Northern Baptist Convention.⁴

Historical treatments of fundamentalism have often given short shrift to the movement's character in the 1930s, concentrating either on the militant crusades of the 1920s or the emergence of neo-evangelicalism in the 1940s. In that narrative, the 1925 evolution trial of John T. Scopes stands as the culmination of fundamentalists' political consciousness rather than a stage of development. As the rally at Norris's Temple Baptist Church illustrates, fundamentalists shifted their cultural concern to communist influences in religion and national political life

³ Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 921-22; Miller, *American Protestantism and Social Issues*, 88.

⁴ Joel A. Carpenter, "Introduction," in *Conservative Call to Arms*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter (New York: Garland Publishing, 1988), 3-4.

during the 1930s. While the Great Depression and the rise of totalitarian regimes abroad created the climate for this development, more influential was the surge of modern liberal thought in church and government. Fundamentalists reacted against these trends by constructing an anti-liberal political philosophy that wed millenarian prophecy to American exceptionalism. They situated social Christianity's reform impulse and Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal expansion of federal power into an apocalyptic scenario that prophesied the emergence of the antichrist and his rule over a one-world system of church and state. Fundamentalists' construction of an anticommunist worldview in the 1930s set the stage for their reengagement with public culture in the decades that followed.⁵

Premillennialism and the Legitimation of American Exceptionalism

Premillennialism is a religious view of the end times (formally known as eschatology) that is embraced by a large percentage of American evangelicals. Its doctrines include the belief that Christ will physically return to earth, vanquish the forces of Satan, and establish a thousand-year reign of peace and righteousness on earth (the millennium). Modern premillennialism originated in the 1830s with British Plymouth Brethren Church leader John Nelson Darby, who constructed a system of theology that divided human civilization – both past and future – into seven distinct dispensations or ages. Those seven ages consisted of Paradise, Noah, Abraham, Israel, Gentiles, the Church Age, and the Millennium. The first five dispensations had already been fulfilled in the Old Testament. Each began with God's offer of salvation to mankind and ended in human society's rebellion from God and then divine punishment. The final two dispensations – the Church Age and the Millennium – had yet to be consummated. Darby

⁵ Matthew Avery Sutton, "Was FDR the Antichrist? The Birth of Fundamentalist Antiliberalism in a Global Age," *Journal of American History* 98 (March 2012), 1053-54.

contended that God revealed his plan for the end of the Church Age and the Millennium in a number of biblical passages, most of which were found in the books of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation.

Dispensational theology made its trans-Atlantic crossing to the United States and gained wide acceptance among American evangelicals during the advancement of the industrial age. Cyrus I. Scofield, more than any other individual, standardized and popularized dispensational thought within American evangelicalism. His *Scofield Reference Bible*, first published in 1909, featured annotated footnotes on key biblical prophecy passages. More than seven-and-a-half million copies were sold during the twentieth century, making it the most widely recognized text on premillennial dispensational thought. Scofield's end-times scenario featured a rapid sequence of events that began with the rapture of true believers to heaven, followed by a seven-year great tribulation, Christ's second coming at the end of the tribulation, and the millennium.

Certain that the millennium was close at hand, dispensationalists scoured current events for the eschatological signs of the times. They preached that in the last days apostasy would riddle the institutional church; lawlessness, crime, and immorality would run rampant; and natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods would greatly increase. In addition to these general precursors of the end times, their eschatological narrative contained a number of specific prophecies. The end of the Church Age, they predicted, would feature the restoration of the nation of Israel, the reconstruction of the Roman Empire under an all-powerful antichrist, the antichrist's establishment of a one-world system of church and government, and a godless horde led by the ruler of Russia meeting its fate on the plains of Armageddon in a war against Israel.⁶

⁶ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 49-58; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 89-90, 247-49; Paul S. Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992), 87-98; Matthew Avery Sutton, "Was FDR the Antichrist?" 1057.

Although premillennial dispensationalism became a widely accepted biblical interpretation within fundamentalism, it should be noted that not all Christian fundamentalists subscribed to dispensational theology or its premillennial eschatology. While Baptist fundamentalists tended to adopt the frameworks of both dispensationalism and premillennialism, clergy in the Bible Presbyterian Church rejected dispensationalism's theory that God offered a different plan of salvation for each biblical epoch. But they did incorporate premillennialism's apocalyptic sequence of events into their belief system. Still, even among premillennialists there were often disagreements on the specific end-times prophecies and their timing. Bible Presbyterian clergymen Carl McIntire and Allan MacRae, for instance, believed that the rapture of the true church would take place before the tribulation, while their colleague J. Oliver Buswell argued that the rapture would take place in the middle of the great tribulation. Some fundamentalists rejected altogether both dispensationalism and premillennialism. Strict Presbyterian confessionalists, such as McIntire's mentor J. Gresham Machen, adhered to an amillennial position that defended the doctrinal view of Christ's second coming but rejected prophecies pertaining to the rapture, the tribulation, and Christ's establishment of a millennial kingdom on earth.⁷

Millenarian movements project an interpretive understanding of human society and its relationship to God. Between the Revolutionary War and the Civil War evangelicals most frequently espoused a postmillennial eschatology that conveyed optimism about the perfectibility of human society. This theological interpretation taught that Christ's millennial kingdom would emanate from the spiritual and moral social progress of this age. The worldview associated with

⁷ Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 248; John A. Battle, "Eschatology in the Bible Presbyterian Church," *WRS Journal* 11 (August 2004), 12-16; D.G. Hart and Meuther, *Fighting the Good Fight: A Brief History of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church* (Philadelphia: The Committee on Christian Education and the Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1995), 18.

premillennialism, in contrast, emphasized modern society's inexorable downward moral slide leading to God's wrathful final judgment. Although premillennialists subscribed to a limited set of fixed eschatological predictions, their end-times prophecies remained elastic enough that they saw the signs of the times in each new cultural, political, or international crisis.⁸

The economic and social transformations wrought by the rise of modern industrialism plainly contributed to this pessimistic worldview. Evangelicals' prophecies about human society's impending doom proceeded in part from their own perceptions about America's place in the world. The postmillennial confidence evinced by early nineteenth century evangelicals about society's progress and perfectibility evoked the positive spirit of manifest destiny, which justified America's place as a divinely appointed redeemer nation. Evangelical optimism turned to pessimism when Old World social and cultural influences began permeating American society in the late nineteenth century. One cause for concern was the erosion of the nation's Protestant character due to mass migrations of unassimilated Catholic and Jewish immigrants from eastern and southern Europe. Additionally, alien intellectual currents that included German higher criticism, Darwinism, and socialism found a home in America's religious and educational institutions.⁹

World War I proved a boon for premillennialism's fortunes. The war itself confirmed for evangelicals that the world was getting worse and not better. More importantly, Britain's capture of Jerusalem in 1917 and the Balfour Declaration, which proposed a Jewish homeland in Palestine, indicated human society's movement towards its ultimate fate. These events, coupled

⁸ Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More*, 98-99; Sutton, "Was FDR the Antichrist?" 1057.

⁹ Hankins, *American Evangelicals*, 84.

with the return diaspora to Palestine of tens of thousands of Zionist Jews, gave credibility to premillennialism's futurist prophecies.¹⁰

The concept of American exceptionalism underlay evangelicals' millennial expectations. Premillennialists spoke of America's greatness in the past tense and believed that it no longer possessed the ability to function as a redeemer nation. This sentiment came into sharp focus during the First Red Scare as hysteria over Bolshevik radicalism seized the nation. Philadelphia evangelist Arno Gaebelein, who edited the premillennial journal *Our Hope*, blamed this situation on modernists. "If the church had been faithful in giving the Gospel to the foreign masses," he declared, "such conditions would not have to be faced today." Rather than going out among the nations to spread the Gospel, he declared, the nation's Protestant churches withheld it from the foreign masses. Moody Bible Institute faculty member Grant Stroh made a similar assessment, adding that the principal instigators of labor radicalism were immigrants who washed onto America's shores anarchically inclined after "having suffered injustices under European governments." Both writers lamented the Old World forces that were permeating American society rather than the other way around.¹¹

Evangelicals conveyed a more subtle form of American exceptionalism in their apocalyptic prophecies about the tribulation. European nations and actors figured prominently in an end-times storyline that featured unholy alliances and cataclysmic wars. An interpretation that circulated widely within the evangelical subculture predicted the antichrist's reconstruction of the Roman Empire from a confederation of ten nations. They crafted this prophecy from vague

¹⁰ Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More*, 101; Timothy P. Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875-1982* (Grand Rapids, MI: Academie Books, 1983), 130-37.

¹¹ "Attempts to Overthrow Our Government," *Our Hope*, January 1920, 414; Grant Stroh, "Anarchism in America or, The 'Reds' and Their Relatives," *The Christian Workers Magazine*, July 1920, 869-70.

biblical passages found in the books of Daniel and Revelation.¹² Predictably, when Italian dictator Benito Mussolini began pompously declaring his Fascist state the new Roman Empire, a frenzy of premillennial speculation took place over whether he was the antichrist.¹³

Russia in End Times Prophecy

The only other Western country to receive more scrutiny from fundamentalists during the interwar period was the Soviet Union. Russia attained a prominent position in premillennial eschatology starting in the tsarist era. Millennial writers for centuries had contemplated a passage in Ezekiel 38 prophesying that a king named Gog, from the land of Magog, who was chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, would form an alliance of northern nations and descend upon Israel in an eschatological war against the Jews. The prophecy further stated that God would shield Israel from harm and vanquish Gog's satanic army.¹⁴

Russia's geopolitical rivalry with Britain in the nineteenth century had much to do with the construction of this interpretation as did journalistic accounts depicting tsarist despotism against the Jews. Before the nineteenth century, millenarians most frequently identified the Ottoman Empire as Gog. But by the twentieth century, dispensationalists in the U.S. and Britain routinely associated Gog with Russia. This interpretation took on an fascinating twist when

¹² Scofield's interpretation on the revival of the Rome came primarily from Daniel 7:24 and Revelation 13:1. The passage found in Daniel stated, "And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings" (KJV). The eschatological passage found in Revelation 13:1 stated, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy" (KJV).

¹³ C.I. Scofield, *The Scofield Reference Bible: The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1909), 1341; James M. Gray, *Prophecy and the Lord's Return: A Collection of Popular Articles and Addresses* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1917), 109-10; Sutton, "Was FDR the Antichrist?" 1059.

¹⁴ Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More*, 153-56; Dwight Wilson, *Armageddon Now! The Premillenarian Response to Russia and Israel Since 1917* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1977), 24-26; Weber, *Living In the Shadow of the Second Coming*, 131-37.

premillennialists pointed out that the term “chief prince” found in Ezekiel 38:2 was a translation of the Hebrew word Rosh. They argued, therefore, that the term Rosh together with the place names of Meshech and Tubal, which were also found in the same verse, were cognates for the nation of Russia and the cities of Moscow and Tobolsk. Cyrus Scofield popularized this interpretation in his *Reference Bible* when he wrote:

That the primary reference is to the northern (European) powers headed up by Russia, all agree.... ‘Gog’ is the prince, ‘Magog,’ his land. The reference to Meshech and Tubal (Moscow and Tobolsk) is a clear mark of identification. Russia and the northern powers have been the latest persecutors of dispersed Israel, and it is congruous both with divine justice and with the covenants that destruction should fall at the climax of the last mad attempt to exterminate the remnant of Israel in Jerusalem.¹⁵

When Russia’s tsarist regime succumbed to revolution in 1917, dispensational writers began pondering the meaning of this event in relation to biblical prophecy. None of them shed any tears for the overthrow of the tsarist regime. Yet at the same time they regarded the new Bolshevik regime with intense apprehension.¹⁶ Writing in *The Christian Workers Magazine* in late 1918, New Jersey evangelist F.C. Jennings contended that the Bolshevik Revolution substantiated the apostle Paul’s warning in the book of Second Timothy about social chaos and lawlessness consuming earthly society in the last days.¹⁷ *Our Hope* editor Arno Gaebelein expressed a similar sentiment when he cautioned readers in the midst of the First Red Scare to

¹⁵ Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More*, 156; Wilson, *Armageddon Now*, 49; Scofield, *Scofield Reference Bible*, 883.

¹⁶ “What Russia Needs,” *The King’s Business* (October 1918), 833-35; Stroh, “Anarchism in America,” 869-70.

¹⁷ F.C. Jennings, “Atheistic Democracy and Religious Autocracy,” *The Christian Workers Magazine* (November 1918), 179. The passage from II Timothy reads: “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (KJV, II Timothy 3:1-5).

brace themselves for an increase in violent radicalism, “New acts of violence may be expected from the same source. Lawlessness will not down; it will increase. The Bible says so.”¹⁸

During the Russian Civil War, Gaebelstein expressed his opinion that the Bolsheviks were too anarchical to retain power for long, and he anticipated the reestablishment of the tsarist monarchy in order for biblical prophecy to be fulfilled.¹⁹ But in the wake of the Red Army’s consolidation of power, he and other dispensationalists modified their apocalyptic predictions to accommodate the realities of Soviet communism. In the process fundamentalists assigned it a much more ominous role than the old tsarist regime when they asserted that the Soviet regime was hastening the slide towards the apocalypse by spewing atheistic communism on the rest of the world. In a 1931 article for *The Voice*, which was the monthly publication of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America, laywoman Elizabeth Knauss contended that Soviet communism represented the means by which the “Man of Sin” will arise to establish his world dictatorship:

The growing wave of atheism and lawlessness, and the breaking down of authority in the HOME, the CHURCH, the GOVERNMENT and the SCHOOLS, is directly traceable to the plans laid and carried out so successfully from Moscow. The supreme objective of the Soviet government is to destroy our present form of civilization, and then upon the ruins to build what is termed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics throughout the world. Back of all this hideous propaganda there stands the shadow of that world ruler who will surely come, the Man of Sin.²⁰

Knauss’s warning came on the heels of Joseph Stalin’s consolidation of power as Soviet dictator. She and other fundamentalists expressed awareness of the human suffering and repression of individual liberty resulting from Stalin’s imposition of “Socialism in One

¹⁸ “The Beast Lifts the Head in Our Land,” *Our Hope* (July 1919), 51-52.

¹⁹ “More Light on Russian Conditions,” *Our Hope* (October 1919), 240-42.

²⁰ Elizabeth Knauss, “The Communist Menace,” *Pioneers of a New Era* (April 1931), 19-20.

Country.” However, nothing revealed to them the dark nature of Soviet communism more than repression of religion. The minister of Chicago’s Moody Memorial Church, H.A. Ironside, warned in 1931 that Stalin’s crusade against Christianity was “simply the beginning of what may soon prevail all over the world.” After Stalin decreed a five-year plan in 1932 to eradicate religion from Soviet society, Long Beach, California, dispensationalist writer Louis S. Bauman called the Soviet dictator’s declaration a sign of Bible prophecy fulfillment. In a three-part series he wrote for *The King’s Business* in 1933 titled “God, Gog, and 1937(?)” Bauman labeled Soviet communism the most insidious threat to modern world society. “Whatever it touches, it befouls – physically, mentally, morally, spiritually,” he stated.²¹

The menace of Soviet communism together with the march of European dictators in the 1930s influenced fundamentalists’ prophetic understanding of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal. Dispensationalists revealed a strong undercurrent of American exceptionalism in their eschatological assessments of New Deal liberalism. Long Beach, California, evangelist W.E. Pietsch, who was one of Louis Bauman’s friends, wrote numerous articles for the IFCA’s *Voice* accusing Franklin Roosevelt of attempting to sovietize the nation. He placed the President in the same company as Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini, arguing that each leader was preparing his people for the coming world dictator in his own way.²²

²¹ *The King’s Business* was a monthly magazine published by the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More*, 166; H.A. Ironside, “All Signs Point to What?” *The King’s Business* (August 1931), 346-48; Louis S. Bauman, “God, Gog, and 1937(?)” *The King’s Business* (January 1933), 5-6; Bauman, “God, Gog, and 1937(?)” *The King’s Business* (February 1933), 53.

²² Pietsch speculated that the coming world dictator would undoubtedly be an “apostate Jew.” Remarks like this were not uncommon to the first generation of fundamentalists. Some fundamentalists such as Pietsch separated Jews into two categories: religious and secular. They directed their anti-semitic remarks at secular Jewish financiers and radical political leaders whom they accused of subverting Christian society. W.E. Pietsch, “Uncle Sam the Prodigal,” *Voice* (October 1935), 4-5. For more background on antisemitism in fundamentalism see Leo Ribuffo, *The Old Christian Right: The Protestant Far Right from the Great Depression to the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983); William Vance Trollinger, *God’s Empire: William Bell Riley and Midwestern Fundamentalism* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990); Timothy P. Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875-1982* (Grand Rapids, MI: Acadamie Books, 1983).

Apocalyptic predictions about Roosevelt and the New Deal first surfaced after the President created the National Recovery Administration in 1933. Dispensationalists speculated whether the National Recovery Association's blue eagle logo stood for the mark of the beast prophesied in Revelation 13:16-17, which stated that all would be forced to receive the antichrist's seal on their hand or on their forehead in order to buy, sell, or trade in the marketplace. Several prophecy writers dismissed this argument, arguing that the blue eagle merely prefigured the antichrist. IFCA minister L Brooks Laumann, for instance, pointed out that the Bible clearly stated the mark of the beast would be received on the hand or forehead and not on a store's front window.²³

The Social Gospel Challenge

Liberal Protestantism consisted of number of intellectual currents that in general emphasized human reason and logic, the moral progress of society, and the application of Christian ethics. From the early twentieth century onward, much of its attention went towards a social gospel mission. Yet fundamentalists paid little attention to this social reform impulse before World War I, focusing instead on halting the incursion of biblical higher criticism and Darwinian naturalism in American religion. But by the 1930s, they reacted against the social Christianity much more intensely due to its identification with New Deal reform politics and its institutionalization in the mainline Protestant churches.²⁴

²³ Sutton, "Was FDR the Antichrist?" 1064; L. Brooks Laumann, "The Fatal Seal," *Voice* (May 1934).

²⁴ William McGuire King, "The Reform Establishment and the Ambiguities of Influence," in *Between the Times: The Travails of the Protestant Establishment in America, 1900-1960*, ed. William R. Hutchison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 122-140; Gary J. Dorrien, *The Making of American Liberal Theology: Idealism, Realism, and Modernity, 1900-1950* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 147; Peter J. Thuesen, "The Logic of Churchliness Mainline Historical Background since the Reformation," in *Quiet Hand of God : Faith-Based Activism and the Public Role of Mainline Protestantism*, ed. Robert Wuthnow and John H. Evans (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 40-41.

The social gospel began in the late nineteenth century as an impulse among a scattered number of ministers and theologians who addressed the moral and social problems of urban industrialization. Religious historian Sydney Ahlstrom referred to this movement in his own shorthand as the “praying wing of Progressivism.” Social Christians contended that sin had both an institutional and a personal dimension, and they sought social reforms that precluded the spiritual realization of a postmillennial Kingdom of God on earth. Some social gospel reformers concentrated on stamping out moral evils like alcoholism and prostitution. But the movement primarily focused on remediating economic and social injustices caused by industrial capitalism. The solution to this problem, according to many social gospelers, hinged on rescuing capitalism from individual private interests and making it serve society at large. Walter Rauschenbusch had much to do with this development by giving the social gospel philosophical grounding with his seminal works *Christianity and Social Crisis* (1907) and *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917). Rauschenbusch viewed capitalistic greed and economic inequality as the main sources of urban poverty and squalor. He promoted the reform of society through such measures as protective labor legislation and public ownership of utility and transportation systems. While not a doctrinaire socialist, he did regard socialism as an evolutionary process that harnessed private industry to serve the common good.²⁵

Rauschenbusch’s views significantly influenced the social gospel’s institutional development in mainline Protestantism. By the late 1910s, several denominations had special commissions or agencies that connected the church to progressive reforms. Reform-minded clergy and laity in the Methodist Episcopal Church led the way with this type of programmatic

²⁵ Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 802; ²⁵ Robert T. Handy, *The Social Gospel in America, 1870-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 308; Paul T. Phillips, *A Kingdom on Earth: Anglo-American Social Christianity, 1880-1940* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 200-203.

initiative when they created the Methodist Federation for Social Service in 1907 as an extra-church agency dedicated to social activism. The MFSS formulated an eleven-point social creed that promoted the rights of labor to organize, safe workplace conditions, a living wage, abolition of child labor, regulation of workplace conditions for women, and the suppression of sweat factories.²⁶

The mainline churches institutionalized the social gospel as an ecumenical endeavor a year later when delegates from thirty-three denominations created the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. The FCCCA sprang from an ambition for the Christian churches to rationalize their resources by coordinating and collaborating on mission activities of mutual interest. And the desire to Christianize society through a social gospel mission represented a major impulse. The Federal Council adopted many of the points contained in the Methodist Social Creed when it drafted its own Social Creed of the Churches in 1908. The council, therefore, established early on a tradition of achieving its social objectives through the political process. It strengthened its commitment to the social gospel in the decades that followed as the organization became more liberal in its composition. By the 1930s, the council had established numerous departments and commissions that made public policy recommendations on a range of social, economic, and political issues.²⁷

²⁶ Donald K. Gorrell, "The Social Creed and Methodism Through Eighty Years," in *Perspectives on American Methodism: Interpretive Essays*, ed. Russell E. Richey, Kenneth E. Rowe, and Jean Miller Schmidt (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1993), 388-89; William McGuire King, "The Emergence of Social Gospel Radicalism: The Methodist Case," *Church History* 50 (December 1981), 439.

²⁷ Robert A. Schneider, "Voice of Many Waters: Church Federation in the Twentieth Century," in *Between the Times: The Travail of the Protestant Establishment in America, 1900-1960*, ed. William R. Hutchison (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 97, 105; "The Federal Council of Churches," *The Outlook*, 12 December 1908, 807; Martin E. Marty, *Modern American Religion, Volume 3, Under God, Indivisible, 1941-1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 34.

Although enthusiasm for the social gospel waned in the 1920s, those individuals who remained committed to its progressive principles persisted in calling for a thoroughgoing reform of the capitalist system. Their vision for a new world order entailed a broadened scope of social concerns that included the eradication of colonialism, racism, and militarism. Although these concerns stood at the vanguard of Protestant social thought in the 1920s, they became an entrenched part of institutional church life in the 1930s in response to the crises of the Great Depression and the rise of authoritarian militaristic regimes abroad.²⁸

The Social Gospel of G. Bromley Oxnam

An examination of G. Bromley Oxnam's early career as minister of the Church of All Nations in east central Los Angeles in the 1920s provides an apt illustration of social Christianity's values and the conservative reaction it received from local business and church leaders. While Oxnam was not the most prominent social gospel proponent of the 1920s, he became a lightning rod for controversy throughout his career. As a champion of Protestant ecumenism's social ethic, he rose to become president of the Federal Council of Churches in 1944 and the North American president for the World Council of Churches at its inaugural meeting in 1948. Oxnam's career trajectory corresponded with the social gospel's shift from a local undertaking to a bureaucratized project of the mainline churches. Moreover, the criticisms leveled against him as the minister of Church of All Nations in 1920s Los Angeles would repeat themselves on a national scale in the decades that followed. After World War II, Carl McIntire and other fundamentalists made him a primary target in their redbaiting campaigns against Protestant ecumenism. Given Oxnam's centrality to those later events, an exploration of his early

²⁸ King, "The Reform Establishment and the Ambiguities of Influence," 125.

career sheds light on how the social gospel became a target for redbaiting by anticommunist crusaders.

Oxnam became fascinated with the idea of a civically engaged Christian ministry as a teenager growing up in Los Angeles and nurtured that interest in college and seminary. As an undergraduate at the University of Southern California he gravitated towards classes taught by Emory Bogardus, who was a pioneer in the budding field of urban sociology. After graduating from USC, he traveled east to attend seminary at Boston University, which by the 1910s served as a hub for social Christian thought within Methodism. One of the faculty members at Boston who helped shape his activist outlook was Harry F. Ward, who authored the Methodist Social Creed and was the long-serving general secretary of the Methodist Federation for Social Service.²⁹

In 1918, a little more than a year after his ordination, the church assigned Oxnam to a moribund congregation located in an ethnically and racially diverse lower-class district in east central Los Angeles. With the blessing of his superiors, Oxnam renamed the congregation the Church of All Nations and merged its traditional role as a church with that of a settlement house.³⁰ He launched a number of adult and youth programs for the purpose of Americanizing foreign immigrants from the surrounding community and instilling in them a civic consciousness. His social reform instinct became evident in a 1921 sociological study he published in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* that outlined the deplorable wage and living conditions of recent Mexican immigrants to Los Angeles. His

²⁹ Robert Moats Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam: Paladin of Liberal Protestantism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 76, 85; Doug Rossinow, "The Radicalization of the Social Gospel: Harry F. Ward and the Search for a New Social Order, 1898-1936," *Religion and American Culture*, 15 (Winter 2005), 64-65.

³⁰ Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 70-76; Mark Wild, *Street Meeting: Multi-Ethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 75-77.

remedy called for active collaboration between church and municipal officials to upgrade municipal housing codes, improve adult literacy, and eradicate disease.³¹

Oxnam also demonstrated great interest in the quest for international peace during his tenure as pastor of Church of All Nations. Like many of his post-World War I contemporaries, he attempted to nurture a global perspective in the church through an internationalist social gospel. A telling example of his internationalism took place in 1926 when he participated in a seminar tour of the Soviet Union led by his friend Sherwood Eddy, who was a philanthropist, missionary, and YMCA national secretary. As the first delegation of Americans to tour the Soviet Union after its revolution, Oxnam along with the other members of this group were quite eager to discover the realities of daily life in communist Russia, the effectiveness of its New Economic Policy, and most importantly what lessons could be applied to American society.³²

He offered his impressions of the Soviet Union afterwards in a series of lectures, which he later published as a book. He found several things admirable in the Soviet experiment, particularly its extraordinary progress in improving public education, and lauded its objective of abolishing capitalist exploitation. But he also condemned the Soviet government's use of dictatorial methods used to achieve a new social order.³³ On the whole, he thought that there were a number of things that each nation could learn from one another. For one, he argued that

³¹ Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 81; William Deverell and Mark Wild, "Going Against the Grain: Multiracialism and the Fate of the Social Gospel in 1920s Los Angeles," in *Race, Religion, Region: Landscapes of Encounter in the American West*, ed. Fay Botham and Sara M. Patterson (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2006), 24.

³² After returning to the United States from their month-long tour of the Soviet Union, the twenty-four participants in this seminar signed their names to a letter beseeching President Calvin Coolidge to recognize the Soviet Union. They thought that U.S. investment and trade would benefit both nations. See G. Bromley Oxnam, *Russian Impressions* (Los Angeles, 1927) 79-80; "Favor Recognition of Soviet by U.S.," *New York Times*, 13 September 1926, 21.

³³ Oxnam, *Russian Impressions*, 88-92; Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 99.

Soviet communism arose in reaction to tsarist autocracy and indicated that the same circumstances could arise in the United States should capitalist power continue to force maintenance of the status quo at the expense of the common good. He also drove home the point that communism could not be banished from society by red scares or edicts from above. “The only way to drive out communistic thinking,” he argued, “is to present better thinking to the populace, and let the better win by its intrinsic worth.” The views he expressed were common among social Christians during the 1920s, who often disapproved of the Soviet government’s rule by dictatorship but remained hopeful that it might yet achieve its goal of eliminating capitalist exploitation of the laboring classes.³⁴

Los Angeles in the early decades of the twentieth century modeled a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ruling-class ethos. A large percentage of the population consisted of conservative Midwestern transplants who wanted to ensure that the city’s white middle-class values stayed that way. Oxnam’s views and actions did not sit well with many of the city’s business and religious leaders. A cloud of suspicion hung over him during the First Red Scare when he came under surveillance by the Bureau of Investigation (renamed the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1935). The Better America Federation (BAF) labeled Oxnam “a radical soapboxer” and took active steps to contain his influence. The BAF got its start as the Commercial Federation of Los Angeles before World War I. But during the First Red Scare in 1920, its members refashioned it into a patriotic organization dedicated to stamping out labor radicalism. For its part, the BAF

³⁴ Oxnam, *Russian Impressions*, 92-95; Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 99-101; Gary Dorrien, *Social Ethics in the Making: Interpreting an American Tradition* (Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2009), 117-18.

deemed most labor reform proposals as radical and opposed any efforts to regulate labor conditions.³⁵

One of the most contentious confrontations between Oxnam and the BAF took place in 1923 when Oxnam ran as a candidate for the Los Angeles school board. Members of the High School Teachers Association recruited him for that race because of his progressive outlook. They wanted a voice in curricular and school governance decisions and thought that the conservative faction controlling the school board stymied the education system by catering to the whims of the business establishment. As a candidate on the “teachers’ ticket,” Oxnam viewed this race as a contest between big business and the people.³⁶

The BAF accused the Teachers Association and its supporters of trying to sovietize the school system and decried the notion of giving the teachers a stake in the school system’s operation. Oxnam became the principal target for the BAF in the school board race, and his last place finish in that race owed much to its campaign against him. Harry Chandler, who published the *Los Angeles Times* and was a one of the group’s charter members, played a leading role in attacking him. The *Times* repeatedly depicted Oxnam as a radical and a fellow traveler of the Industrial Workers of the World. Oxnam refuted this accusation and publicly repudiated the IWW for its willingness to undertake violent action to resolve labor disputes. However, he did little to restore the confidence of the voting public when he gave the opening prayer at a free

³⁵ The BAF’s president during this time was Harry Haldeman, whose grandson H.R. Haldeman would serve as President Richard Nixon’s chief of staff. Kevin Starr, *Material Dreams: Southern California Through the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 120-36; William Deverell, “My America or Yours? Americanization and the Battle for the Youth in Los Angeles,” in *Metropolis in the Making: Los Angeles in the 1920s*, ed. Tom Sitton and William Francis Deverell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 280-83; Edwin Layton, “The Better America Federation: A Case Study of Superpatriotism,” *The Pacific Historical Review* 30:2 (May 1961), 137-40; Better America Federation of California, *A Brief Outline of Arguments Against the Programme for Industrial Reforms Which Is Being Submitted to Various Social and Industrial Organizations* (Los Angeles: Better America Federation of California, ca. 1920).

³⁶ Deverell, “My America or Yours?” 284; Oxnam diary entry, Box 4, 1923 Diary, Papers of G. Bromley Oxnam, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

speech rally organized by socialist rabble-rouser Upton Sinclair just two weeks before the school board election. Sinclair organized the rally in response to the Los Angeles Police Department's use of force to break a longshoremen's strike and its arrest of him and dozens of other demonstrators during a subsequent waterfront protest denouncing the police department's strike-breaking methods.³⁷

The campaign against Oxnam's school board candidacy opened a religious rift when a few influential clergymen added their voices to business forces lined up against him. Conservative Baptist minister J. Whitcomb Brougher took the opening shot when he told his congregants that he disapproved of Oxnam's social views and thought that his election would inject both politics and religion into the Board of Education. Westlake Presbyterian Church minister Gustav Briegleb came out against Oxnam next after the Sinclair rally, accusing him of sympathizing with radical forces that "represent an attitude inimical to the highest welfare of America."³⁸ Trinity Methodist Church preacher "Fighting" Bob Shuler followed with a similar indictment a few days later. In addition to Oxnam's appearance at Sinclair's rally, Shuler expressed outrage over his answer to a question on a Sons of the Revolution candidates' survey that asked, "Do you approve use of histories in our schools written from the American standpoint without unfairness to other countries?" Oxnam replied:

I do not believe in writing history from the viewpoint of any nation. History should be written from fact. Intellectual honesty is imperatively needed in this hour. Propaganda is a distinct menace. Americans need fear no history written from the fact. Our record is one Americans may well be proud of. But to suggest that history should be written for the advantage of any nation suggests an attitude that is wrong.³⁹

³⁷ Deverell, "My America or Yours?" 290.

³⁸ Ibid. 285-91; Brougher to Oxnam, 4 May 1923, Box 4, 1923 Diary, Oxnam Papers; "Oxnam Goes Overboard," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 May 1923, III.

³⁹ "Scores Oxnam from Pulpit," *Los Angeles Times*, 04 June 1923, 1-2; Oxnam to Sons of the Revolution, 24 April 1923, Box 4, 1923 Diary, Oxnam Papers.

Shuler, who served as president of the Los Angeles Ministerial Union in 1923, retorted that with an alliance of Roman Catholics and foreign radicals trying to pollute “the fountains of our history,” public schools needed to teach children about the Protestant heritage that made America a great nation. Although Shuler’s Trinity Methodist Church stood less than a mile from Oxnam’s Church of All Nations, the two Methodist ministers stood at opposite ends of the religious and political spectrum. Shuler moved to Los Angeles from Texas in 1920 to serve as pastor of the largest Southern Methodist congregation in California and brought with him a populist and stridently evangelical faith that historian Darren Dochuk dubbed a Texas theology. The divergent worldviews between Shuler and Oxnam characterized a growing split within Protestantism over issues pertaining to social reform, internationalism, and social Christians’ growing reliance on the political process to achieve their goals.⁴⁰

Social Gospel Revival and Reaction During the Great Depression

The Great Depression had a wide-ranging effect on politics and religion in the United States. The sobering reality of a twenty-five percent national unemployment rate in the early 1930s led Franklin D. Roosevelt to expand the federal government’s role in society. His New Deal prescription for relief, recovery, and reform charted a new course for government in regulating the economy and providing a social safety net for ordinary citizens. Social Christians in several different denominations applauded Roosevelt’s New Deal measures. Conservatives, on

⁴⁰ “Did the Editor Lie?” *Bob Shuler’s Magazine*, Box 4, 1923 Diary, Oxnam Papers; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt*, xvii, 44-45.

the other hand, assailed both the New Deal and the social gospel for prescribing socialism as the antidote to the nation's economic plight.⁴¹

Social Christianity had always exhibited a political spirit. Social gospel pioneer Washington Gladden, who won election to the city council in Columbus, Ohio, in 1900, famously remarked, "if the city of God comes to your city, it will come through the city hall."⁴² While Gladden looked to municipal government to help establish Christ's kingdom on earth, social Christians in the 1930s looked to the federal government to achieve that goal. Reform-minded clergy in a number of denominations pushed through declarations and resolutions calling for government regulation of the capitalist system. At the 1932 meeting of the Northern Baptist Convention, for example, delegates adopted a Social Service Commission report condemning competitive capitalism for exalting "personal possessions, privileges and power," and pled for federal control and coordination of the nation's economy. The Methodist Episcopal Church approved a comparable statement at its annual conference that same year. Religious historian Robert Moats Miller argued that those types of statements and resolutions were common during the Great Depression and often represented the sentiments of a minority of progressive clergymen who sought to inculcate the church's members with a social consciousness.⁴³

Because the Federal Council of Churches represented the collective interests of the mainline churches, it played a key role in the social gospel's political thrust. The council's leaders attempted to shape national culture by acting as a liaison between the Protestant

⁴¹ Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 921-26; Miller, *American Protestantism and Social Issues*, 89-90; 113-26; Sutton, "Was FDR the Antichrist?" 1070.

⁴² Quoted in Ronald Cedric White and C. Howard Hopkins, *The Social Gospel: Religion and Reform in Changing America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976), xvi; Susan Curtis, *A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 130.

⁴³ Paul A. Carter, *The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel* (Hamden, CT: Archon Press, 1971), 152-53; Miller, *American Protestantism and Social Issues*, 113-14.

establishment and the federal government. In 1932, the Federal Council updated its social creed to reflect the realities of the Great Depression. A striking feature of this seventeen-point statement of ideals was its promotion of numerous reforms that only the federal government had the power to implement. Its proposals for a planned economy, government control of credit, and social security legislation anticipated policies that Roosevelt would incorporate into the New Deal. Roosevelt once responded to the charge of being a radical in a 1932 campaign speech by stating that he was only “as radical as the Federal Council of Churches.” His remark served as an apt indication of how closely the Protestant reform establishment identified itself with modern political liberalism by the 1930s.⁴⁴

The social gospel’s revival and its political thrust produced an antiliberal reaction from both clergy and laity. One of the most prominent indictments of the social gospel came from Chicago Episcopal laywoman Elizabeth Dilling, whose circle of professional acquaintances included several prominent fundamentalists. Dilling compiled a comprehensive catalog of communist-front activities in the U.S. in her 1934 book *The Red Network*. Her who’s who list of radical influences in America included dozens of Protestant groups and individuals. Among them were the Federal Council of Churches, the Methodist Federation for Social Service, Harry F. Ward, G. Bromley Oxnam, and Reinhold Niebuhr. Dilling claimed that she threw herself into the cause of anticommunism after visiting the Soviet Union in 1931, where she noticed the pervasiveness of poverty, corruption, and moral disarray that resulted from life under communism. She especially abhorred the Soviet government’s campaign to stamp out religion and construct a new morality in which carnal sins such as sexual promiscuity and abortion carried no shame. For Dilling, these issues struck at the sanctity of the family and compelled her

⁴⁴ Marty, *Modern American Religion, Volume 2, The Noise of Conflict, 1919-1941* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 35; Schneider, “Voice of Many Waters,” 109-11; Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 922; Cavert, *The American Churches in the Ecumenical Movement*, 143.

to devote a significant amount of space in her book to exposing red-directed subversion of religion and traditional morality.⁴⁵

Social Christianity's resurgence also produced varying degrees of backlash within several denominations. One of the most contentious reactions took place in the Methodist Episcopal Church, where clergy and laity sought to reign in the Methodist Federation of Social Service. Groups such as the Layman's Religious Movement and the Conference of Methodist Laymen arose to counter the political activism of the MFSS. They agitated for the church to repudiate the MFSS and force the organization to remove the word Methodist from its name. They also proposed establishing a social service commission within the church to draw support away from the organization. However, neither of these initiatives succeeded.⁴⁶ Southern Methodist minister Rembert Gilman Smith stood out as one of the most prominent critics of Methodist radicalism during this period.⁴⁷ Excerpts from his pamphlets appeared in newspapers across the country, including in the *Chicago Tribune* and in the Hearst newspapers. After the 1936 Methodist General Conference Smith published *Moscow Over Methodism*, in which he denounced the MFSS as the "spearhead of church socialism in the United States" and suggested that it should rename itself the "Marxist Federation for Social Strife." Among the events from the general

⁴⁵ Elizabeth Dilling, *The Plot Against Christianity*, (Lincoln, NE: Elizabeth Dilling Foundation, 1964), 11; Elizabeth Kirkpatrick Dilling, *The Red Network: A "Who's Who" and Handbook of Radicalism for Patriots* (Kenilworth, IL: the Author, 1935), 9-10, 22; Richard Gid Powers, *Not Without Honor: The History of American Anticommunism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 129.

⁴⁶ "Methodist Federation for Social Service," *Our Hope* (November 1932), 300-02; "Socialism and the Churches," *Moody Bible Institute Monthly* (October 1934), 76; Rossinow, "The Radicalization of the Social Gospel," 92.

⁴⁷ Miller, *American Protestantism and Social Issues*, 125; Smith formed the anti-liberal Methodist League against Communism. See Marty, *Modern American Religion*, Vol. 2, 300.

conference that Smith objected to was G. Bromley Oxnam's elevation to bishop, which, Smith contended, "gave great aid to socialism-communism."⁴⁸

The Northern Baptist Convention experienced turmoil over the resurgence of the social gospel as well. Fireworks erupted at the 1935 annual convention over a report by the Christian Social Action Committee that urged the church to focus more on education, political suffrage, and consumer empowerment as the means to combat modern injustice.⁴⁹ Liberal Baptists praised the document for its comprehensiveness in addressing existing social conditions and for its farsightedness in recommending a course of action. Conservatives, on the other hand, thought the committee's report impaired the church's spiritual calling by wading into politics. Some of them went so far as to call the report un-Christian and un-American. One California minister remarked that the committee's report represented the "cats-paw in the hands of the dictator of Moscow." Minneapolis fundamentalist preacher William Bell Riley assailed it as "bloodless but red" and contended that it promoted the "crimson of Communism, without one touch of the blood of Christ." J. Frank Norris used the social action report as the pretext for withdrawing his Detroit congregation from the Northern Baptist Convention. Ever the showman, Norris timed his announcement to serve as a promotional teaser for an anticommunist tent revival a few weeks later. This rally became the launching pad for a nationwide crusade against "modernistic communism" in the Baptist denomination.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Rembert Gilman Smith, "Methodist Reds," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 12 January 1936, 14; Miller, *American Protestantism and Social Issues*, 124; Rembert Gilman Smith, *Moscow Over Methodism* (St. Louis: John S. Swift & Co., 1936), 40, 206.

⁴⁹ Barry Hankins, *God's Rascal: J. Frank Norris and the Beginnings of Southern Fundamentalism* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1996), 198; William Bell Riley, *Bloodless but Red was the Report of the Baptist Committee of Nine on Social Action* (Minneapolis, L.W. Camp, 1935), 8.

⁵⁰ "Baptists Hail Plan for Political Step," *New York Times*, 23 June 1935, 27. Riley, *Bloodless but Red*, 20; Temple Baptist Church Withdraws from Northern Baptist Convention," *The Fundamentalist*, 28 June 1935, 4; "Fundamentalist Baptists Start Nation-Wide Communistic Crusade," *The Fundamentalist*, 19 July 1935, 1, 3;

For clergy in the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, the advance of social gospel radicalism in the Northern Baptist Convention provided them with an opening to solidify their separatist identity and win new churches to their cause. The 1935 social action report stirred GARBC President Robert T. “Fighting Bob” Ketcham to strike back against social liberalism in the Northern Baptist Convention. Ketcham published a series of pamphlets in the wake of the social action committee’s 1935 report that he released as a short book titled *Facts for Baptists to Face*.⁵¹ He contended that there was “a growing tendency in Convention circles toward a radical Socialism and a sort of ‘pink’ Communism” and presented specific cases to back up his claim.⁵² One episode he cited involved a speech by Fellowship of Reconciliation Secretary Charles C. Weber to students of Rochester-Colgate seminary where he stated that the future of church mission work lay in direct participation in workers’ protests. He cited another incident where the director of the Baptist mission settlement house in Hammond, Indiana, permitted a local communist group to use the auditorium to commemorate the eleventh anniversary of Lenin’s death. Ketcham’s book chronicled three dozen other examples of apostasy in an effort to reveal the rampancy of modernism and socialism in the Northern Baptist Convention.⁵³

A large proportion of the laity, perhaps the vast majority, preferred their church to stick to preaching the gospel and limit its public role to curbing moral vices that undermined family

“Northern Baptist, Flint; and Temple Church, Detroit, Sever Relations with Convention,” *Baptist Bulletin* (August-September 1935), 3.

⁵¹ Joel A. Carpenter, “Introduction,” in *Fighting Fundamentalism: Polemical Thrusts of the 1930s and 1940s*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter (New York: Garland Publishing, 1988), 4-5.

⁵² Robert T. Ketcham, “Facts for Baptists to Face,” in *Fighting Fundamentalism: Polemical Thrusts of the 1930s and 1940s*, ed. Joel A. Carpenter (New York: Garland Publishing, 1988), 2.

⁵³ Ketcham, *Facts for Baptists to Face*, 43-47.

and community life such as liquor, prostitution, and gambling.⁵⁴ The social gospel's placement of collective sin over individual sin antagonized conservative Protestants, and the fact that economic reform undergirded much of its message made fundamentalists and critics on the political Right natural allies in attacking it. Both groups shared a civic consciousness that was protective of both capitalism and religious traditionalism. In his examination of reactions to the social Christian thrust during the inter-war period, Robert Moats Miller confirmed this connection when he stated, "the courtship of the capitalist and the premillenarian was an affair of the purse as well as of the heart."⁵⁵

Fundamentalists and the New Deal

While fundamentalists lambasted liberal churchmen for mixing politics and religion, they articulated a well-developed political worldview themselves. Their premillennial interpretations of international and domestic political events revealed intellectual engagement with contemporary politics and culture. Fundamentalists constantly elicited a sense of proprietary guardianship over American culture and a willingness to defend traditions they considered sacrosanct. Even in the 1930s, amid prophecies of imminent judgment, they never lapsed into passivity and expressed strong desire to restore the nation to its Christian heritage. They projected themselves not only as a faithful remnant of God's true church but also a remnant faithful to a true heritage of Americanism that linked piety and individualism with liberty.

⁵⁴ Handy, *The Social Gospel in America*, 14.

⁵⁵ Miller, *American Protestantism and Social Issues*, 18.

Fundamentalist preachers throughout the decade repeatedly reminded their flocks that communism and socialism represented political systems antithetical to that tradition.⁵⁶

Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal administration elicited hostile reaction from fundamentalists. They accused FDR of transforming the presidency into a dictatorship and branded the New Deal an exercise in communist collectivism. However their prescriptions for action varied. Dispensationalists' apocalyptic interpretations about the Roosevelt administration frequently came with an admonition for believers to remain spiritually pure and evangelize to the unsaved. IFCA evangelist W.E. Pietsch in 1935 argued that Roosevelt's defilement of the Constitution represented a sign of the times. But he reminded readers, "We are not here to clean up the Devil's territory but to rescue men and women and bring them to Christ." Some preachers, however, encouraged fellow believers to enlist as warriors in the mission to redeem culture. This second response seemingly stood in contradiction to the logic of premillennial dispensationalism, which held that the march towards the tribulation was immutable.⁵⁷ George Marsden averred that this conflicting reaction between millenarian despair and cultural activism has been a prominent characteristic among premillennial fundamentalists.

David Otis Fuller, who was a leader in the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches and pastor of Wealthy Street Baptist Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, periodically exhorted members of his congregation to do their part in restoring society to its place of greatness. A jeremiad he delivered in 1938 on the crisis in modern education provides an understanding of this apparent contradiction between apocalyptic despair and cultural redemption. Fuller asked rhetorically, "Will this, the ONLY nation in the world begun as a Christian nation, go the way of other empires?" He answered, "My only hope as the shadows

⁵⁶ Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 5; Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 237.

⁵⁷ Pietsch, "Uncle Sam the Prodigal," 4-5.

lengthen and night falls on civilization, is the Return of my Lord Jesus Christ. But, if He tarries then the only hope for America is to return to the God of our Fathers.” Fuller, in essence, urged congregants to live as if Christ would return tomorrow but also reminded them of their civic obligation as Christian citizens of this world.⁵⁸

Other fundamentalists issued calls similar to Fuller’s during the New Deal era. Minneapolis Baptist minister William Bell Riley periodically delivered jeremiads from his pulpit against the President’s political initiatives. Riley recognized that he was veering into partisan politics but justified his actions by stating:

The Bible is the soundest treatise to be found upon all subjects of social concern; yea even all themes of state interest. The man who is not interested in the course his country takes is unworthy of his citizenship; and the minister who does not dare oppose the politician has little kinship with the Old Testament prophets or the New Testament apostles, or even with the son of God Himself. A careful study of the Scripture will show that in all ages the prophet has been compelled from time to time to take exception to ‘wickedness in high places, and, as led by the Spirit, has not been silent at the sight of Satanic triumph.’⁵⁹

Even Moody Bible Institute President James M. Gray remarked that citizens needed to take interest in the affairs of government. “No man has a moral right to ask protection from a government,” he remarked, “to which he is indifferent, and for which he will not use his influence to make it as good as possible.”⁶⁰ Gray, like many other fundamentalists, expressed disdain for the institutional church’s involvement in politics, yet he endorsed the Christian’s

⁵⁸ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 211; Sutton, “Was FDR the Antichrist?” 1069; David Otis Fuller Sunday evening sermon, “Crisis and Chaos in Modern Education,” 8 December 1938, Box 10, Folder Education 1932-1949, Wealthy Street Baptist Church Records, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

⁵⁹ William Bell Riley, “Will President Roosevelt Paint the United States Red?” sermon preached March 1939, William Bell Riley Collection, Special Collections, Berntsen Library, University of Northwestern – St. Paul, Roseville, MN.

⁶⁰ Quoted in Robert Elwood Wenger, “Social Thought in American Fundamentalism” (Ph.D. diss.: University of Nebraska, 1974), 236-37.

individual responsibility to influence the political process positively. The role of government, in the estimation of most evangelicals, was to make and enforce laws that restrained individuals from vice and immorality. At the same time, a genuine reformation of society proceeded from the individual and was only possible through personal salvation.⁶¹

Sporadic episodes of religious right activism took place during the 1936 presidential campaign when some fundamentalist preachers exhorted their fellow Christians to repudiate President Roosevelt at the polls. The strong historic connections between northern Protestantism and the Republican Party predisposed fundamentalists to disapprove of FDR's Democratic administration before he entered office. His aggressiveness in using the power of the presidency to carry out liberal reforms during his first term merely aggravated that aversion. They voiced disdain at FDR for his activism in repealing of prohibition, granting diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union, implementing the National Recovery Administration, and signing Social Security into law. As the election of 1936 drew near, David Otis Fuller accused the "Roosevelt regime" of following a Marxist formula for establishing a communist dictatorship in the United States and beseeched his flock to help deliver the nation from its bondage. "Unless the voters put a stop to this movement Nov. 3, they may be too late. They may never have another chance," he declared. In a similar manner, J. Frank Norris urged congregants to repudiate Roosevelt and his New Deal band of "uncircumcised Philistines" at the polls. Fuller and Norris were not alone in reminding fellow believers of their Christian duty to vote Roosevelt out of office. Yet their appeals relied on individual voluntary action rather than organized and concerted action.⁶²

⁶¹ Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 101; Wenger, 240; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 118.

⁶² David Otis Fuller, "The Red Terror – Spain Now! America Next?" sermon preached at Wealthy Street Baptist Church, 20 September 1936, Box 10, Folder Communism, Wealthy Street Baptist Church Records; David Otis Fuller, untitled sermon, no date, *ibid.*; Hankins, *God's Rascal*, 103; Sutton, "Was FDR the Antichrist?" 1066.

When Roosevelt took the 1936 election in a landslide, fundamentalists fell back on apocalyptic prophecy to explain this setback. They consoled themselves with the argument that it was God's will. W.E. Pietsch captured this sentiment best when he remarked:

President Roosevelt is God's man of the hour, in the same sense that Nebuchadnezzar, Pharaoh, Herod and Pilate were raised for their respective years – in that he was raised up of God to do the work that God desires to be done, the work which must be done to prepare the United States for the coming world dictator and the Antichrist.⁶³

God's plan or not, Pietsch and other fundamentalists refused to roll over and surrender to the end times. Dispensationalists continued to issue jeremiads against the Roosevelt administration's policies during his second term in office. Philadelphia evangelist Russell Taylor Smith, for instance, who wrote a monthly prophecy column for the IFCA's *Voice*, characterized Social Security as a fraudulent misappropriation of money, the Works Progress Administration as a boondoggle, and Roosevelt's Supreme Court-packing scheme as evidence of a dictatorship in the making.⁶⁴ His views were the norm within the fundamentalist subculture. Smith's columns, like most other dispensational writings, did not promote political action. But they were political in the sense that contesting the meaning of Roosevelt's presidential policies offered a form of cultural resistance.⁶⁵

One issue in particular that raised the hackles of fundamentalists was FDR's quiescent response to the wave of CIO-led sit-down strikes that rocked the automobile industry in 1936

⁶³ W.E. Pietsch, "The Prophetic Significance of the Presidential Election," *Voice* (January 1937), 5.

⁶⁴ Russell Taylor Smith, "Communism, Fascism, Nazism, and the Expansion of the Supreme Court in the U.S.A. All Heading to One-End Dictatorship," *Voice* (April 1937), 18; Russell Taylor Smith, "Social Security a Cruel Hoax," *Voice* (July 1938), 17; Russell Taylor Smith, "Thirty Dollars Every Thursday Night," *Voice* (November 1938), 15; Russell Taylor Smith, "Is Social Security a Swindle?" *Voice* (April 1939), 18.

⁶⁵ Susan Harding, "Imagining the Last Days: The Politics of Apocalyptic Language," in *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamics Character of Movements*, ed. R. Scott Appleby and Martin Marty (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 60.

and 1937. Fundamentalists in general evinced wariness of labor unions and the principle of collective bargaining rights. But they did not speak out against those activities so long as the methods remained lawful and organizers did not provoke class conflict.⁶⁶ The disruptive actions by the United Auto Workers, however, elicited harsh words from fundamentalists, who deemed the CIO a pernicious threat to free market capitalism for its wanton violation of property rights and its incitement of economic class conflict.

Dispensationalist Arno Gaebelin warned that the CIO represented the vanguard of a communist-inspired revolution against civil government in America. “It is the solemn duty of every Christian citizen,” he proclaimed, “not only to read, but to circulate the information of [this] threatening menace that through the mercy of God our liberties, including religious liberty, might be saved.” David Otis Fuller leveled a similar charge against the CIO in a Sunday evening sermon he delivered on July 4, 1937. He declared, “Without any reservation this CIO organization, backed as it is by Moscow and Stalin and the other Russian demons from hell, constitutes the most dangerous threat to the very life of our nation in all its history.” Fuller furthermore flayed Roosevelt for deliberately allowing labor radicalism to spread after CIO boss John L. Lewis bought him with a \$500,000 political campaign contribution in 1936.⁶⁷

Fuller’s Wealthy Street Baptist Church drew its membership largely from the surrounding neighborhood in Grand Rapids, which was characteristically inhabited by shopkeepers and blue-collar laborers from the lower-middling economic classes.⁶⁸ Given the

⁶⁶ For a clear statement of the fundamentalist position on labor unions, see “Separation from Labor Unions,” *Moody Monthly* (June 1937), 580.

⁶⁷ “Communism’s Grip on the C.I.O.,” *Our Hope* (September 1937), 188-89; David Otis Fuller, “Scripture, Communism and the C.I.O.,” Box 10, Folder Communism, Wealthy Street Baptist Church Records.

⁶⁸ James D. Bratt and Christopher H. Meehan, *Gathered at the River: Grand Rapids, Michigan, and its People of Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 109.

manufacturing base of Grand Rapids' economy as well as the social class composition of the Wealthy Street congregation, Fuller's tirades against the CIO represented an effort to inoculate his parishioners against union radicalism. Fundamentalism had its deepest roots in the urban, industrial North and in general tended to attract economic strivers and cultural outsiders from the lower-middle and respectable laboring classes. Therefore, the CIO's methods of labor organizing elicited strong reaction from fundamentalist churchmen because those activities struck close to home for many of them.⁶⁹

Conclusion

To understand why fundamentalists mobilized behind the American Council of Christian Churches in the 1940s, it is necessary to recognize the political and cultural trends that caused them angst during the previous decade. Historical treatments of the early twentieth century fundamentalist movement have tended to concentrate on the antievolution crusades and denominational battles that took place during the 1920s, while ignoring its development during the 1930s. Domestic international political events especially played a crucial role in further shaping their political worldview. As historian Matthew Sutton noted, "Fundamentalists in the depression decade for the first time developed an explicit, conservative, antiliberal political

⁶⁹ Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 9-10; Moore, *Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans*, 165-66; James Davison Hunter, *American Evangelicalism: Conservative Religion and the Quandary of Modernity* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983), 53-55. A few historical studies that examine fundamentalism's social class dynamics include: Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010); William Vance Trollinger, *God's Empire: William Bell Riley and Midwestern Fundamentalism* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990); Walter Edmund Warren Ellis, "Social and Religious Factors in the Fundamentalist-Modernist Schisms among Baptists in North America, 1895-1934" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1974). Douglas James Curlew, "They Ceased Not to Preach: Fundamentalism, Culture, and the Revivalist Imperative at the Temple Baptist Church of Detroit" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2001); James D. Bratt and Christopher H. Meehan, *Gathered at the River: Grand Rapids, Michigan, and its People of Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993).

philosophy.” Their antiliberal thought arose in direct response to liberalism’s prevalence in national politics and mainline Protestantism.⁷⁰

Anticommunism became a salient feature of this political philosophy. The menace of communism represented a secondary concern among fundamentalists during much of the 1920s. But in the Depression decade, they fanned the flames of anticommunism with much greater intensity in response to the revival of social Christianity and the ascendancy of New Deal liberalism. Their critiques paralleled those made by political conservatives, and the two groups became mutual allies in seeking to arrest the influence of modern liberalism. Yet fundamentalists added the element of apocalyptic prophecy to their critiques of New Deal reform. They claimed that by carrying out the communistic program of Satan both the church and the state were preparing the United States for the one-world reign of the antichrist. Anticommunism, therefore, became an operative discourse that fundamentalists used to maintain their religious identity during the 1930s and a platform for organizing for public action in the decades that followed.

⁷⁰ Sutton, “Was FDR the Antichrist?” 1069.

IV. “Here is a Banner. Here is a Cause. What a Battle!”

Carl McIntire, the ACCC, and the Radio Airwaves

On March 15, 1945, 14,500 people packed Philadelphia’s Convention Hall for a rally opposing the decision of local radio station WPEN to remove sixteen paid-time religious programs from its weekend schedule and replace them with free-time religious programs of its own choosing. This protest took place under the auspices of the Association of Philadelphia Gospel Broadcasters, an ad-hoc group of area evangelists whose contracts had been cancelled by WPEN. Carl McIntire, who chaired this association, delivered the main address of the evening. He declared that the station violated the group’s First Amendment rights when it cancelled their radio programs and awarded free time to the Philadelphia Federation of Churches, which represented the city’s mainline Protestant congregations. McIntire called attention to the fact that other stations across the nation were doing the same thing, and he exhorted Christians to arise in protest against this violation of religious liberty. Decisions about religious programming, he argued, should be determined by the invisible hand of economic supply and demand and not by the arbitrary choice of radio executives.¹

WPEN’s management disagreed with the position of the Philadelphia Gospel Broadcasters. Its acting manager, G. Bennett Larson, indicated that the station’s religious programming was too narrowly evangelical and contended that the shift to free time best served the public interest by making time available for the great majority of Protestant churches as well as the Catholic and Jewish faiths. He said that the people ultimately would determine the programs broadcast by the station and added, “there is going to be no discrimination against any

¹ “Philadelphia’s Radio Protest,” *Sunday School Times*, 31 March 1945, 233-34; “Philly Gospel Reps Protest WPEN Contract Nixing,” *Billboard*, March 10, 1945, 4.

groups.” To underscore his argument that this new policy was in the best interest of the listening public, Larson pointed out that the station stood to lose \$150,000 annually as a result of this change.²

Brisk reaction against its policy change, however, induced WPEN’s management to hold out a peace offering. Larson proposed a format that included a mix sustaining-time broadcasts as well as some individual paid-time programs. This new plan failed to assuage members of the Philadelphia Gospel Broadcasters, and McIntire contended that it represented a divide-and-conquer strategy. He and other members of the group filed a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission, arguing that WPEN failed to serve the “public interest, convenience, and necessity” as mandated by the 1934 Communications Act when it selected religious programs based on a decision made by management rather than public demand.³

This episode exemplified evangelicals’ struggle to maintain a viable presence on commercial radio during the 1940s. The advent of commercial radio in 1920 offered evangelists a medium to take the gospel directly to the people, thereby redeeming the Christian faith from modernist influences emanating from the established Protestant churches. But some revivalists found their access to the airwaves curtailed by an unholy alliance between broadcast licensees and mainline Protestant groups. By the mid-1930s, the big three radio networks (NBC Red, NBC Blue, and CBS) all produced religious programs in close collaboration with the Federal Council of Churches. Each of those networks donated broadcast time to clergymen represented by the FCCCA on a free, or sustaining-time, basis as a public service to its listeners rather than selling

² “Philly Gospel Reps Protest WPEN Contract Nixing,” 4.

³ Philadelphia’s Radio Protest,” 234; Petition to the Federal Communications Commission, *Carl McIntire et al., v. Wm. Penn Broadcasting Company of Philadelphia*, McIntire Collection, Box 645, Folder 32.

time to individual preachers. A number of independent radio stations throughout the U.S. adopted this model and offered sustaining-time to local mainline groups.

This arrangement benefitted both parties. It gave established religious groups free time on a limited-access mass communication medium, while offering broadcasters the convenience of dealing with one central agency rather than a multitude of churches or independent preachers. More importantly, it allowed broadcasters to act as gatekeepers to control the religious message that went out over the airwaves. Part of this gatekeeping function involved broadcasters' obligation to air religious programs as a public service to its listeners. Therefore, they chose to air programs broadly representative of the three major faith groups: Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish. A second, and more furtive reason, had to do with the handful of religious mavericks that roamed the airwaves during commercial radio's frontier era, some of whom caused legal headaches for broadcasters. The on-air jeremiads delivered by Detroit radio priest Charles Coughlin stood out as a worst-case example of what could happen when broadcasters sold time for religion.⁴

Fundamentalists projected a stridently antiliberal political consciousness during the 1930s in response to the revival of the social gospel and the ascendancy of modern liberalism in political culture. Despite their adverse reaction to those developments, the need to organize for public action did not materialize until broadcasters began suppressing their gospel message on a government regulated medium intended to serve the public interest. This infringement upon religious liberty became a galvanizing force for public action. McIntire and the other members of the ACCC constructed a protest culture in response to the discriminatory practices associated

⁴ Voskuil, "The Power of the Air: Evangelicals and the Rise of Religious Broadcasting," 75-76; Schultze, *Christianity and Mass Media in America*, 156-57; Stewart M. Hoover and Douglas K. Wagner, "History and Policy in American Broadcast Treatment of Religion," *Media, Culture and Society* 19 (January 1997), 13-14.

with the distribution of sustaining time. Their campaigns for radio time sought to protect the minority rights of fundamentalists by advancing the argument that the public interest was best served by allowing free speech to take place over the airwaves.

Evangelical Broadcasting Before 1940

Fundamentalists recognized the potential for the electronic church to stir religious revival much more readily than their counterparts in the mainline churches and staked a sizeable claim to the airwaves during commercial radio's first few decades. Literally hundreds of gospel radio programs populated the radio dial by the early 1930s. This new medium suited their individualistic ethos perfectly by enabling them to move beyond the confines of the local church or tabernacle and take their message directly to the people in their own homes, thereby subverting the religious authority of established churches. Entrepreneurial evangelists became savvy at marketing their message for a commercial mass audience and in the process helped fundamentalism extend its reach into popular culture.⁵ McIntire himself attributed the timing of radio's development to a divine plan and remarked in 1936, "The radio, a vehicle for so much trash and nonsense, actually is being used for the extension of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."⁶

Religious radio's early pioneers had two essential options for delivering the gospel message. Some evangelicals chose to start their own radio stations in order to enhance their own local church ministries. For the sum of about \$1000 they could purchase a transmitter, obtain a broadcast license, and beam the gospel over the commercial airwaves with relative ease. Nearly six dozen churches and religious institutions launched their own radio stations during the first

⁵ Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial*, 11-12; Schultze, *Christianity and Mass Media in America*, 141-43; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 131-32.

⁶ "Radio," *Christian Beacon*, 13 February 1936, 4.

few years of commercial radio's existence, with the majority of them being fundamentalist enterprises. More commonly, evangelicals purchased airtime on local stations and recouped their investment through on-air monetary solicitations. Some intrepid revivalists constructed their own informal radio syndicates by strategically purchasing airtime on stations in different cities. And a very select few managed to make the leap to network radio. In 1928, the fledgling Columbia Broadcasting System, desperate for revenue, began selling network time for religion. Its lineup of evangelical programs included Donald Grey Barnhouse's *Bible Study Hour* and Walter Maier's *The Lutheran Hour*. It also sold time to Father Charles Coughlin, who caused the network much embarrassment in 1931 when he trod into the morass of political controversy during the depths of the Great Depression.⁷

Mutual Broadcasting System, formed in late 1936, became the only other network to sell time for religion. Its lineup of evangelical programs included Maier's *The Lutheran Hour*, Percy Crawford's *Young People's Church of the Air*, and Martin DeHaan's *Radio Bible Class*. However, it was Charles Fuller and his wife Grace who became fundamentalist celebrities *par excellence* on Mutual with their Los Angeles-based program *The Old Fashioned Revival Hour*. The Fullers' heartfelt yet folksy presentation of the gospel assured listeners of God's mercy as they called the unsaved to accept Christ's salvation. By 1945, *The Old Fashioned Revival Hour* had become Mutual's most listened-to program. Airing on more than five hundred stations, it drew an estimated 20 million listeners each week.⁸

Yet a number of developments helped to constrain gospel radio's unchecked growth. Chief among them was the regulation of the commercial airwaves by the Federal Radio

⁷ Schultze, *Christianity and Mass Media in America*, 145; Quentin J. Schultze, "Evangelical Radio and the Rise of the Electronic Church, 1921-1948," *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* 32 (Summer 1988), 292.

⁸ Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 130-39; Voskuil, "The Power of the Air," 83-84; Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial*, 80, 89.

Commission and its successor agency the Federal Communications Commission. Commercial radio went through a frontier phase with few restrictions during the early and mid-1920s, which resulted in chronic problems with signal interference in several locations. Congress responded by passing the Radio Act in 1927, establishing the Federal Radio Commission and authorizing it to bring order to the airwaves. Significantly, the Radio Act mandated that commercial broadcasters operate on behalf of “public interest, convenience, and necessity.” This public interest clause required broadcasters to offer a well-rounded program schedule suitable for a general listening audience. Congress reiterated this principle in the Communications Act of 1934, which transformed the Federal Radio Commission into the Federal Communications Commission.⁹

The FRC considered religion an important aspect of public interest programming but only to the extent that it was part of a well-rounded schedule. It regarded stations that devoted time exclusively to religion to be serving the private interest of a specific group rather than the public interest and tended to classify them as “propaganda stations.” Stations that fell into this category were shunted to inferior channels at the margins of the radio dial or made to share time on a frequency with another station. This regulatory process took its toll and by 1933 the number of religious broadcasters had dwindled from about seventy to thirty.¹⁰

Fundamentalists who purchased time on a radio station encountered a slightly different problem that centered on the broadcast industry’s obligation to uphold a vaguely defined public interest standard. While the 1927 and 1934 communication acts mandated that broadcast licensees serve the public interest, neither of those acts explained the meaning of that term.

⁹ Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial*, 24; Frank J. Kahn, ed., *Documents Of American Broadcasting*, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984), 40-43, 46; Louise M. Benjamin, *Freedom of the Air and the Public Interest: First Amendment Rights in Broadcasting to 1935* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2001), 88-89; Charles H. Tillinghast, *American Broadcast Regulation and the First Amendment: Another Look* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 2000), 46-47.

¹⁰ Voskuil, “The Power of the Air,” 74-75; Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial*, 24.

Rather, Congress gave federal regulators discretionary power to determine that standard. At the same time, regulators were barred from directly censoring or interfering with freedom of speech on the airwaves. A clearer picture of what the FCC considered the public interest emerged during the 1930s thanks to a handful of precedent-setting cases. One episode involved “Fighting Bob” Shuler, who lost his license to operate Los Angeles station KGEF after the FRC in 1931 deemed his vitriolic rants against Catholics, Jews, and corrupt public officials noxious to the public good.

Detroit Catholic priest Charles Coughlin was at the center of another major radio controversy. Coughlin constructed his own informal network of about two-dozen radio stations after CBS showed him the door in 1931. His blistering attacks against Franklin Roosevelt and the international Jewish conspiracy resulted in FCC Chairman Lawrence Fly’s pressuring the National Association of Broadcasters to take self-regulating action in 1939. Without naming Coughlin directly, the association inserted a provision into its broadcast code stating that the radio “may not be used to convey attacks upon another’s race or religion.” Rather, it stated, religious broadcasts should “promote the spiritual harmony and understanding of mankind and to administer broadly to the varied religious needs of the community.” The FCC codified this principle in its 1941 Mayflower ruling that banned on-air editorializing by licensees. This guideline in essence prohibited the sale of airtime for controversial issues and became the prevailing interpretation on the meaning of the term “public interest” as it related to broadcasting during the 1940s.¹¹

These circumstances made broadcast licensees more amenable to collaborating with mainline groups to offer religious programs free as a public service. This sustaining-time policy

¹¹ James A. Brown, “Selling Airtime for Controversy: NAB Self-Regulation and Father Coughlin,” *Journal of Broadcasting* 24 (Spring 1980), 210-11. Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial*, 34; Schultze, *Christianity and Mass Media in America*, 158; Kahn, *Documents of American Broadcasting*, 71-72; Christopher H. Sterling, ed., *The Concise Encyclopedia of American Radio* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 272.

originated with the National Broadcasting Company. From its very inception in 1926, NBC offered religious programs as a public service to its listeners and divided program time between the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths. NBC executives specifically wanted religious speakers who could present inspirational sermons that avoided “matters of doctrine and controversial subjects.” The network established an exclusive relationship with the Federal Council of Churches from the outset to produce its Protestant religious broadcasts and continued this relationship for the next few decades. Its initial schedule of Protestant programs featured *National Radio Pulpit* hosted by S. Parkes Cadman and Harry Emerson Fosdick’s *National Vespers*.¹² CBS followed NBC’s example and adopted a sustaining-time time format in 1931 after the problems it experienced with Coughlin. It began *Church of the Air* as a sustaining-time program that featured a rotation of speakers from the largest denominations in the nation.¹³

Media studies scholars Stewart M. Hoover and Douglas K. Wagner pointed out that sustaining-time broadcasts conveyed an understanding that religious programs should promote religious harmony and broad truths common to all faiths. Concurrently, this policy allowed broadcasters to avoid airing programs produced by fundamentalists that many listeners perceived as intolerant and divisive. Important as well, sustaining-time programs obviated the need for on-air solicitations of funds, which broadcast licensees often regarded as a bane to respectability and many listeners viewed as a financial racket. Sustaining time in essence enabled stations to control the religious messages that they broadcast. By allying with agencies from the Protestant,

¹² Owen Young to Charles McFarland, 26 November 1926, RG 18, Box 17, Folder 24, Records of the Federal Council of Churches in America, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA; “Report of the Committee on Religious Activities to the Advisory Council of the National Broadcasting Company,” (1930), *ibid.*; Dennis N. Voskuil, “Reaching Out: Mainline Protestantism and the Media,” in *Between the Times: The Travails of the Protestant Establishment in America, 1900-1960*, ed. William R. Hutchison (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 83-84.

¹³ Voskuil, “The Power of the Air,” 83; Voskuil, “Reaching Out,” 84.

Catholic, and Jewish faiths that upheld the same concept of tri-faith pluralism, radio stations balanced public service with propriety. Promoting religious pluralism, in short, became a corollary of public interest broadcasting.¹⁴

The Campaign for Radio Time on NBC

Fundamentalists viewed the monopoly of free network time by mainline Protestant groups as manifestly discriminatory. When he announced the creation of the American Council in September 1941, Carl McIntire thanked God that true gospel preachers such as Walter Maier and Charles Fuller could still be heard from coast-to-coast on the Mutual. But he asked why those preachers had to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars to air their programs each year, while ecumenists from the Federal Council received network time for free. “All we need is to get a few of the good old-fashioned believers in the Bible in America aroused,” he declared. “Here is a banner; here is a cause. What a battle! We can go to the Federal Communications Commission in Washington, and we can go to the large chains in New York and say, ‘We represent these people. We want our share of free radio time.’”¹⁵

In September 1942, McIntire sent a letter to each of the four major networks (NBC, Blue Network, CBS, and Mutual) on behalf of the American Council requesting a share of broadcast time. In each letter he explained that a “clear line of demarcation” separated the American Council from the Federal Council. Although he declined to expound upon those differences, he

¹⁴ Stations adopting a sustaining-time policy generally prescribed a much more limited role for religion in the overall schedule than those that sold time, therefore broadcasters tended to air free-time programs during hours that brought in the least amount of revenue. Stewart M. Hoover and Douglas K. Wagner, “History and Policy in American Broadcast Treatment of Religion,” *Media, Culture and Society* 19 (January 1997), 13-14; Schultze, “Evangelical Radio and the Rise of the Electronic Church, 299; Schultze, *Christianity and Mass Media in America*, 155-57; Voskuil, “The Power of the Air,” 83.

¹⁵ Carl McIntire, *The Purpose and Testimony of the American Council of Christian Churches* (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1941), 9.

did state that his organization represented “a distinct element of American evangelicalism” and requested the opportunity to present that testimony over the airwaves. To allay any concern that the American Council might seek to engage in religious controversy, McIntire added that his purpose in seeking broadcast time was to provide “a constructive presentation of the great spiritual truths of God’s Word.”¹⁶

All four networks rebuffed the American Council’s overture outright. But McIntire persisted. He also sought help from FCC Commissioner James L. Fly to help break this deadlock. When he and American Council Secretary H. McAllister Griffiths met with Fly in March 1943, the FCC commissioner informed them that he had no authority to force the networks to provide broadcast time to their organization. But he did express interest in seeing the American Council obtain a share of sustaining time and counseled them to continue their appeals to the networks and keep him abreast of developments.¹⁷

NBC’s formidable standing among network broadcasters made it decidedly resistant to McIntire’s overtures. Executives at NBC did not see any benefit in dealing with a fundamentalist organization like the ACCC. Nor did they see any reason to alter the network’s monopolistic arrangement with the Federal Council of Churches. McIntire addressed his initial inquiry to NBC President Niles Trammell, who declined his request for broadcast time by explaining that the network could not possibly serve all Protestant denominations. Therefore it chose to work only with the Federal Council because it represented the largest percentage of Protestant worshippers. During the next year both McIntire and Griffiths tried unsuccessfully to meet with Trammell and discuss this matter further. NBC’s recalcitrance compelled McIntire to increase the pressure in

¹⁶ Robert J. Mulholland, “Carl McIntire: The Early Radio Years (1932-1955)” (Ph.D. diss., Bowling Green State University, 1984), 108-09.

¹⁷ Ibid., 115.

late 1943. He informed Trammell of the ACCC's intent to bring this matter to the FCC and mentioned his previous conversations with Chairman Fly. NBC at this point relented to McIntire's request for a face-to-face conference.¹⁸

McIntire and Griffiths met with NBC's Vice-President and General Manager Frank Mullen in December 1943 and again in February 1944. But the two sides failed to find common ground. Mullen initially insisted that the American Council work through the Federal Council to get on the air. McIntire subsequently explained to him that the theological differences between the two groups precluded such collaboration. He quickly wound up on Mullen's wrong side when he accused Ralph Sockman, host of NBC's *National Radio Pulpit*, of being one of the FCCCA's main spokesmen for pacifism. Summarizing his meeting with Mullen to FCC Chairman James L. Fly, McIntire wrote that Mullen "turned and launched into a terrific and blasphemous attack upon me." Following that outburst McIntire mentioned to Mullen that he had already spoken about this matter to chairman of the FCC, who had suggested that the ACCC should take its concern directly to Trammell. In an obvious attempt to win Fly's sympathy, McIntire reported Trammell's reaction to this statement:

He turned then, and to my utter amazement, consigned you to hell and other places. He said he was not interested in what you thought or what I thought, and that they did "not give a G—damn" what anybody thought, and that the network was theirs to do with what they wanted.¹⁹

The only silver lining McIntire and Griffiths took away from their meeting with Mullen was that he promised to give this subject some more thought. But that hope dissipated in the second meeting when Mullen refused the ACCC's request for broadcast time. A subsequent exchange of letters between McIntire and Mullen revealed great antagonism between the two.

¹⁸ Mulholland, "Carl McIntire," 152.

¹⁹ Ibid., 153-54.

After seeing a copy of the report that McIntire sent to Fly, Mullen got the distinct impression that McIntire was trying to force him to give the ACCC network time. He wrote McIntire, “It is clear that you now seek by intimidation and misrepresentation to create a situation by which you can force yourself on the air.” He added, “If you pursue such methods of vilification any further, I shall take immediate steps to protect myself.” Mullen moreover conveyed great apprehension that if he gave the ACCC time on NBC, the organization would use it to disseminate the “type of propaganda” that the network frowned upon.

McIntire responded by accusing Mullen of making “defamatory and threatening” remarks and not remaining impartial. He assured Mullen that the American Council sought time on NBC to broadcast “constructive Bible messages in the great tradition of historic Protestantism” and not to spread propaganda. McIntire also refuted Mullen’s allegation that this conflict was simply about forcing NBC to give the American Council a share of sustaining time. He stated that he was only attempting to persuade NBC to recognize that its partisan actions did not demonstrate responsibility to the public interest.²⁰

The FCC remained on the sidelines in this dispute as it did with all other disagreements regarding the apportionment of public service time. Fly informed McIntire that the failure of a broadcaster to afford any time at all for religion might constitute a breach of public interest, but “the failure to make time available to a particular group for such purpose cannot alone be so regarded.” He pointed out that under the Communications Act of 1934, the FCC could compel a broadcaster to provide equal time only in instances involving candidates for political office. Fly in essence affirmed Trammell’s argument that the large number of denominations in the nation

²⁰ Ibid., 157-58.

made it impossible to provide time to each. “Every religious group does not possess the right to be heard over every station in the country,” he stated.²¹

The ACCC and the Blue Network

In contrast to the contentious relations with NBC, McIntire’s appeals to the Blue Network for a share of sustaining time produced a more favorable outcome.²² Initially, however, network President Mark Woods informed McIntire that even though his company had recently become independent from NBC, it still adhered to that network’s policy of “dealing with central organizations which are generally recognized as officially representing the three major religious faiths in this country – Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish.” To give time to every religious group, he explained, “simply isn’t possible.” Woods further emphasized:

We feel that religious broadcasts should not present or even suggest elements of religious controversy but should present those religious principles which are universal. Consequently, as broadcasters we can make no distinction between doctrinal or denominational groups.²³

Griffiths parsed Woods’s reply and believed it gave the America Council the ammunition to “force him to be concessive.” He fumed at Woods’s comment that the network recognized the FCCCA as officially representing the Protestant faith, a claim that routinely incensed fundamentalists. Griffiths contended that the network indeed did make doctrinal distinctions between denominational groups in its decision to broadcast only one theological

²¹ Ibid., 158-59.

²² NBC operated two divisions between 1926 and 1941 known as Red and Blue. In 1941, the FCC ruled that NBC could only operate one network service, which forced NBC to divest itself of its Blue division. Between 1942 and 1943, NBC Blue was simply called the Blue Network. In 1945, it became the American Broadcasting Company when the FCC approved Life Savers candy mogul Edward J. Noble as the new owner. See Sterling, *Concise Encyclopedia of American Radio*, 110.

²³ Mulholland, “Carl McIntire,” 110.

perspective. After a further exchange of missives, Woods finally agreed to meet with a delegation from the American Council in December 1942. According to McIntire's account of that meeting, Woods conceded that there was no reason why the American Council should not receive a share of sustaining time but stated that the Blue Network did not have any to offer. However, he did promise to contact the Federal Council of Churches to see if an arrangement could be made to share time, which provided McIntire with an opening to pursue this matter further.²⁴

McIntire expected the Federal Council would refuse Woods's proposal and declared that "the enemy will bring forth all the power he has now" to prevent the ACCC from receiving time. His prediction proved accurate. The Federal Council's leadership vigorously objected to the Blue Network's giving the American Council any time whatsoever. When William Barrow Pugh, the stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., caught word of the American Council's quest for time on the Blue Network, he remarked to Frank R. Goodman, who chaired the Federal Council's Radio Commission, "I know of nothing that would disturb the religious situation quite so much as any granting of privileges to the men in question." Goodman relayed this information to Woods and added that the American Council was not a council of denominations but rather an organization of individuals who "spend most of their time in denunciation and violent criticism of everyone who is not in their tiny fold."²⁵

The Federal Council's resistance to sharing time with the ACCC left Woods with no alternative but to deny the American Council's request for time. Undeterred, McIntire pursued another approach to this problem. He and Griffiths appealed directly to the president of the

²⁴ Ibid., 112.

²⁵ Ibid. 113; Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial*, 126.

FCCCA, Episcopal Bishop Henry St. George Tucker, with a request for a division of sustaining time. He emphasized to Tucker that the American Council represented a minority religious group and reminded him that the Federal Council had long expressed “concern for the rights of minorities.”

The American Council stood to benefit from this move regardless of Tucker’s response. If he turned down McIntire’s request, it would offer evidence that the FCCCA refused to negotiate in good faith, which might compel Woods to take action to break the deadlock. Interestingly, Tucker never received the letter. Rather, it fell into the hands of the Federal Council’s General Secretary Samuel McCrea Cavert, who expressed astonishment at McIntire’s temerity: “I must confess to amazement at your suggestion of March 12 that the Council should turn over some of the radio facilities now used for programs which it sponsors – and thus enable you to attack more widely the churches in the Council.” McIntire forwarded both his letter and Cavert’s reply to Woods with a promise that if the ACCC received time on the Blue Network it would neither attack the Federal Council nor its churches.²⁶ McIntire also turned to public opinion to pressure the Blue Network. Until now, he refrained from publicizing the American Council’s difficulties in obtaining free time. But in the *Christian Beacon* on April 1, 1943, he excoriated the Federal Council for obstructing the ACCC’s right to free time. With hyperbolic flair McIntire announced, “Mr. Woods on his own initiative called in the representatives of the Federal Council to tell them of his plan, he met a barrage, a cannonade of the first magnitude.”²⁷

He also launched a petition drive to pressure the Blue Network into giving the ACCC a share of network time. The council factored the names of petition signers into its total membership by categorizing them as auxiliary members, which boosted the number of people it

²⁶ Mulholand, “Carl McIntire,” 116-18.

²⁷ Ibid., 119.

claimed to represent from about 100,000 to more than 500,000. The ACCC's method of enumerating those signatures and enrolling them as members would later become a source of controversy when McIntire's critics accused him of grossly inflating the council's numerical strength to gain network time.²⁸ Moreover, the council's petition contained muddled language that gave no clear indication that signatories would be enrolled as members. It stated in part:

We do not want the modernist, pacifist Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America to represent us; but, approving the FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH maintained by the American Council of Christian Churches...desire to unite with the American Council in its witness to the faith of our fathers, and hereby designate it to represent us in the securing of free time for the preaching of the Gospel on the radio.²⁹

The Blue Network finally consented to giving the American Council sustaining time in late 1943. McIntire's persistence in this matter accounted in part for this breakthrough. Crucial as well was a letter from FCCCA President Henry St. George Tucker that gave the Blue Network his blessing to assign time to the ACCC. McIntire had written Tucker at his home address after Cavert intercepted his first letter. Because Tucker's Episcopal Church only recently joined the Federal Council, he seemed to have no awareness about who McIntire was or the ACCC's deeply antagonistic attitude towards the FCCCA. He apologized to McIntire that he had not seen the first letter and indicated that the decision to grant sustaining time was not the Federal Council's to make. He stated, "If no time in addition to that allotted to the Federal Council were available, the Blue Network would have full authority to redistribute time. The Federal Council's responsibility is limited to seeking time for its own members." Tucker apparently learned of his

²⁸ Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 34; Donald J. McNair, "The A.C.C.C. Situation," *Bible Presbyterian Observer* (December 1955), 6.

²⁹ Mulholland, "Carl McIntire," 119.

blunder afterwards and reversed himself. But his subsequent appeal to Woods asking him to repudiate the ACCC's request for network time had no effect.³⁰

The network created a new fifteen-minute weekly slot in February 1944 that it dedicated to the message of evangelical Protestantism. The Blue Network awarded the American Council the first thirteen weeks. It gave the following thirteen weeks to the National Association of Evangelicals, which had also appealed for network time. When Woods agreed to put the American Council on the air, he emphasized to McIntire that he would not tolerate his organization dragging the Blue Network into a religious dispute. McIntire construed this directive as only pertaining to pronouncements made during network broadcasts. After he gloated in the *Christian Beacon* that for the first time the gospel would be heard on network radio, Woods warned him "not to use NBC Blue as a sledgehammer against the Federal Council." He likely found it necessary to put McIntire on notice as a result of the flack he received from ecumenists who were not pleased at his decision to award time to the ACCC.³¹

CBS and Mutual Broadcasting System

Although McIntire devoted less energy to requests for network time from CBS and Mutual, he nonetheless made repeated appeals to each of them. CBS selected religious speakers for its *Church of the Air* using a proportional quota system based upon a denomination's numerical strength. CBS's executives turned down McIntire's request because the American Council was not a denomination nor were any of the individual sects belonging to it large enough

³⁰ "Blue Network Head Grants Free Radio Time to American Council of Christian Churches," *Christian Beacon*, 2 December 1943, 1; W.B. Spofford, "Fundamentalists Broadcasting in Federal Council Spot," *Christian Beacon*, 6 April 1944, 1 (photographically reproduced from *The Witness*, 23 March 1944); Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial*, 126.

³¹ "Blue Network Religious Programs," *Christian Beacon*, 6 April 1944, 2; "Historic Moment in Protestantism as American Council Opens Series of Bible Messages on Blue Network," *Christian Beacon*, 10 February 1944, 1; Mulholland, "Carl McIntire," 129.

to qualify for time. This policy discriminated against fundamentalists much more surreptitiously than did NBC's.³² The ACCC raised this point in a FCC complaint it filed against CBS in October 1949, when it argued that CBS discriminated against "minority denominations and minority opinions." Ultimately, the FCC declined to act on its complaint.³³

As for McIntire's efforts to gain time on Mutual, a network official responded to his initial inquiry for broadcast time by stating that it already sponsored several evangelical programs. McIntire replied that those evangelical programs were paid-time broadcasts, and he insisted that the American Council should receive free time on Mutual's fifteen-minute weekly *Radio Chapel* program. Although the network at first declined his request, his persistence eventually bore fruit. In mid-1945, the director of religious programming at Mutual awarded the American Council two slots on its new fifteen-minute weekly program *Faith in Our Time*. The next year Mutual increased the ACCC's share to four broadcasts. And in 1947, it received an additional two weeks of time.³⁴

WPEN and the Philadelphia Gospel Broadcasters

Carl McIntire began experimenting with church radio ministry when he was barely out of seminary. As pastor of Chelsea Presbyterian Church in Atlantic City, New Jersey, from 1931 to 1933, he hosted a fifteen-minute weekly program on one of the city's stations. After becoming minister at Collingswood Presbyterian Church he began broadcasting its Sunday evening

³² Mulholland, "Carl McIntire," 180-82.

³³ "Programming – Religious Broadcasts (American Council of Christian Churches v. Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc)," *Journal of the Federal Communications Commission Bar Association* 10 (Winter 1949), 252; Petition to the Federal Communications Commission, *American Council of Christian Churches v. Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc. (WCBS)*, McIntire Collection, Box 645, Folder 5; "FCC Studies Ad Ruling after Clearing CBS," *Billboard*, 29 July 1950, 9.

³⁴ Mulholland, "Carl McIntire," 213-16.

services on Philadelphia station WPEN in October 1935. Interestingly, McIntire began preaching on WPEN a month after the West Jersey Presbytery ordered his suspension as a minister in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Nearly twenty years later he would start the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* radio program in the midst of a highly contested Bible Presbyterian Church schism. In both episodes, he turned to the radio as a means of overcoming ecclesiastical setbacks and getting the facts out as he saw them.³⁵

Although McIntire demonstrated a proclivity for dissent and protest throughout his career, he avoided stirring controversy during his years on WPEN. The station's management may have played some role in containing McIntire. In March 1936, the station received complaints after he disparaged Christian Scientists during a broadcast. The station's director warned him afterwards not to make derogatory remarks against other religions that might put the station in the difficult position of defending itself against an FCC complaint.³⁶

McIntire maintained a contractual relationship with WPEN until early 1945, when its management notified him that it was cancelling his contract and switching to sustaining-time after April 1.³⁷ WPEN informed McIntire and fifteen other fundamentalist preachers who broadcast on the station of this policy change on February 20, just seven weeks after the FCC approved its purchase by the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*. The station's manager, G. Bennett Larson, asserted that WPEN's new policy reflected a desire to offer greater diversity in its religious programming and indicated that the existing schedule was too narrowly evangelical. He

³⁵ Ibid., 31-32, 71; *40 Years...Carl McIntire and the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood, 1933-1973* (Collingswood, NJ, Christian Beacon Press, 1973), 10.

³⁶ Mulholland, "Carl McIntire," 32.

³⁷ Petition to the Federal Communications Commission to Reopen Proceedings, *McIntire et al., v. Wm. Penn Broadcasting Company of Philadelphia*; "Philadelphia's Radio Protest," 233-34; "Body of Bulletin Protesting Radio Gospel Ban," *The Voice*, April 1945, 33.

stated, “It leaves no time available to the great bulk of Protestant churches or the large group of Catholic worshipers and none for the Jewish religious groups.” Larson’s statement plainly linked the station’s decision to offer religion as a public service with religious pluralism. In making this policy switch, the station collaborated with the Philadelphia Federation of Churches to broadcast the Protestant share of its Sunday schedule.

Why exactly WPEN decided to change its religious programming policy remains a mystery. This move might have been planned in advance to ensure that the *Evening Bulletin* secured FCC license approval. Or, it might have been a way to dissociate the station from the stigma of religious sectarianism with an eye towards enhancing its market position and increasing advertising revenue. Whatever the reason, Larson steadfastly maintained that the switch to sustaining time was being done strictly for the public’s benefit.³⁸

WPEN’s plan caused an uproar among evangelicals in the Philadelphia area. Ten local churchmen whose contracts were terminated by this policy change formed the ad-hoc Association of Philadelphia Gospel Broadcasters to fight this decision and named McIntire as its chairman. Although the group’s actions represented a collaborative effort, its methods of resistance bore McIntire’s imprimatur. The group’s persistence in pursuing every avenue for legal relief characterized his style of confrontation as did its mass rally at Philadelphia’s Convention Hall, which represented a tactic McIntire used commonly to generate popular support for public action. Then too, the group retained the legal services of Bible Presbyterian laymen James E. Bennet and Weidner Titzck, who represented McIntire and the ACCC other legal cases.

³⁸ “Pub-Serv or Paid Religion?” *Billboard*, 15 June 1946, 7, 10; “Philly Gospel Reps Protest WPEN Contract Nixing,” 4.

The legal petitions filed by members of the Philadelphia Gospel Broadcasters essentially sought to level the field of religious broadcasting by making public service a function of the free market. They argued that WPEN failed to uphold the public interest by not affording its members the right to bid competitively for broadcast time. Therefore, the station infringed upon their First Amendment rights by controlling the type of religious programs that it chose to broadcast. The group contended that decisions pertaining to religious programming should be contingent upon public demand and appealed to the FCC for a regulation giving preference to the purchase of broadcast time on the open market.³⁹

The Federal Communications Commission dismissed the Philadelphia Gospel Broadcasters' complaint against WPEN without a hearing. In its ruling on April 25, the FCC stated that the station's only obligation as a broadcast licensee was to "present a diversified and well-rounded program service." Members of the Philadelphia Gospel Broadcasters subsequently turned to the federal courts for relief. The courts refused to overturn the FCC's decision. The final word on this matter came from Circuit Court of Appeals Judge John Biggs, Jr., who stated that the First Amendment's purpose was to limit the actions of Congress and the Federal Government and not a private corporation. "For a radio station to refuse to sell time in which an individual may broadcast his views may be censorship," he declared, "but we know of no law which prohibits such a course." He added, "a radio station is not a public utility in the sense that it must permit broadcasting by whoever comes to its microphone."⁴⁰

³⁹ "Philly Gospel Reps Protest WPEN Contract Nixing," 4; Petition to the FCC to Reopen Proceedings, *McIntire et. al. v. Wm. Penn Broadcasting*.

⁴⁰ "Federal Court Upholds Radio Station in Refusal of Time to Religious Groups," *New York Times*, 13 October 1945, 20; *McIntire v. Wm. Penn Broadcasting Co. of Philadelphia*, 151 F.2d 597 (3d Cir. 1945), <http://scholar.google.com/scholar_case?case=16816890972269489106&q=mcintire+v.+wm.+penn&hl=en&as_sdt=2,14&as_vis=1>, accessed 16 July 2013.

Freedom of Speech and Network Radio

Just a month before WPEN notified McIntire of its switch to sustaining time religious programming, *Newsweek* highlighted an undertaking by a few large Protestant churches to counter the “lucrative brimstone” preached by Charles Fuller and other revivalist ministers by developing market-savvy messages of their own. The magazine intimated that radio revivalism was a racket and cited an estimate from *Variety* that evangelists raked in an approximately \$200,000,000 during 1943. An infuriated McIntire bemoaned that *Newsweek* had fallen victim to propaganda disseminated by the Federal Council of Churches. Articles such as this one together with his battle against WPEN confirmed for him the existence of a conspiracy to undermine fundamentalists’ access to the airwaves.⁴¹

As a result, McIntire became more tenacious in defending religious liberty on the radio. He gave wide publicity to other episodes where evangelists lost their right to purchase broadcast time. Two of those cases entailed bans on paid religious programs. A third incident involved ACCC fundamentalist minister Marion H. Reynolds, Sr., who was removed from Los Angeles station KFAC after he promoted the pamphlet *What is Wrong With the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America?* on his program. In each of those cases, members of the American Council of Christian Churches participated in or organized rallies to protest religious discrimination. Although fundamentalists failed to persuade those stations to reverse their decision, the vocal reactions they registered in these episodes and others like them served notice that evangelicals would not go quietly from the airwaves.⁴²

⁴¹ “Big Churches Learn Radio ‘Savvy’ to Counter Revivalist Air Racket,” *Newsweek*, 22 January 1945, 74-75; “Newsweek’s ‘Bible Pounders,’” *Christian Beacon*, 1 February 1945, 3.

⁴² “Second Great Protest Meeting Stirs Knoxville Over Radio Issue,” *Christian Beacon*, 9 May 1946, 1; Minneapolis Protest Rally,” *Christian Beacon*, 30 May 1946, 1; “Pub-Serv or Paid Religion?” 8, 10; “Radio Freedom Rally,” *Christian Beacon*, 30 January 1947, 1, 8.

McIntire inveighed against the discrimination of fundamentalist radio broadcasts to various public officials on numerous occasions during the late 1940s. He outlined his concerns most succinctly when he and New York lawyer William S. Bennet represented the American Council of Christian Churches at a Senate subcommittee hearing on a bill to overhaul the Federal Communications Commission.⁴³ The White-Wolverton bill, among other things, proposed allowing broadcast licensees to air opinions on controversial public topics with the condition that they give equal opportunity in presenting the opposing view. McIntire and Bennet asked the subcommittee to include certain provisions in the bill to protect the rights of religious minorities. First, they recommended an amendment mandating that preference be given to the sale of radio time over the distribution of free time. Secondly, if a station did implement a sustaining-time policy, they asked that it afford equal opportunity to different religious positions. Finally, they proposed inserting language in the bill to place religion in the same category as other public questions. In making this recommendation, they sought to place religion on the same regulatory plane as politics, thereby obliging licensees to provide equal opportunity for the presentation of different religious views.⁴⁴

The White-Wolverton bill never came to a vote thanks to opposition from the radio industry, which wanted to keep the FCC's regulatory authority vaguely defined rather than explicit. In the aftermath of this defeat, the FCC launched its own inquiry into the question of permitting stations to editorialize. Speaking for the American Council, McIntire reiterated the need for freedom of speech on the radio during a March 1948 hearing. He made an unmistakable

⁴³ William S. Bennet was a former Progressive Era Republican congressman from New York who previously provided the Philadelphia Gospel Broadcasters with legal counsel in the suit against WPEN, whose brother was James E. Bennet.

⁴⁴ *To Amend the Communications Act of 1934: Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce on S. 1333 a Bill to Amend the Communications Act of 1934, and for Other Purposes, June 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25 and 27, 1947* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947), 375-382.

connection between freedom of speech and free enterprise in his statement: “Let radio assume the responsibility for freedom, and radio will be more sensitive to the community’s interests in the religious groups and will be more inclined voluntarily to grant freedom in the exercise of religion on the air.” The FCC was not about to allow freely expressed opinions to go over the airwaves. But in 1949, it did permit licensees to editorialize on topics of a controversial nature on the condition that they provide balanced treatment of those issues. This new conception of the public interest ruling became the basis for a term the broadcast industry later referred to as the Fairness Doctrine.⁴⁵

New Jersey Council of Christian Churches vs. WCAM

McIntire mounted his most aggressive legal challenge against mainline Protestantism’s monopoly of sustaining time in 1949 when Camden, New Jersey, station WCAM cancelled his contract. WCAM was municipally owned station that had carried his Sunday morning services continuously since 1938. But McIntire’s broadcasting contract ran through a private company named Mack Radio Sales that provided the station with its paid commercial time, which consisted of all but four hours of broadcast time per week. This arrangement, combined with WCAM’s low power level of 500 watts, offered McIntire greater broadcasting freedom and flexibility than a professionally managed commercial station such as WPEN.⁴⁶ In early 1948, for example, McIntire purchased time on WCAM outside his regular Sunday schedule to mobilize

⁴⁵ Robert Britt Horwitz, *The Irony of Regulatory Reform: The Deregulation of American Telecommunications* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 165; Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial*, 134; “ACCC Defends Radio Freedom,” *Christian Beacon*, 11 March 1948, 1, 8; *Documents of American Broadcasting*, 177.

⁴⁶ Camden Air Firm’s Deal with WCAM Haunts License Plea,” *Billboard*, 4 May 1946, 8; “WOAX, Inc. (WTNJ) et al. before the Federal Communications Commission,” *Federal Communications Commission Reports: Decisions and Reports of the Federal Communications Commission of the United States* 13 (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1954), 173.

popular support for an amendment to the New Jersey state constitution that would mandate the separation of church and state. This episode began a few months earlier when the state's voters ratified a new constitution that authorized local school districts to use public funds to transport parochial school students and sanctioned a ballot referendum on legalized gaming by charitable organizations. While those provisions received hearty support from the state's Roman Catholics voters, McIntire contended that they signified the Catholic Church's attack upon the principles of separation of church and state. Under the sponsorship of the New Jersey Council of Christian Churches (NJCCC), which was a regional affiliate of the ACCC, he took to the airwaves to articulate his moral objections to the new constitution in a series of three half-hour messages.⁴⁷

His last address, titled "The Governor's Kittens," received a significant amount of attention when he brought a cat and several kittens to the studio and played with them as he spoke. They served as metaphorical props for his argument that the "cat crawled out of the bag" when voters ratified the new constitution, and it had given birth to kittens named "socialism, gambling, religion by force, power politics, government by experts, etc." McIntire's radio messages generated a number of letters from angry listeners who accused him of inciting anti-Catholic animosity. Despite the controversy he stirred, the station took no action against him. Ultimately, the NJCCC's campaign to amend the constitution could have benefitted from an infusion of catnip because it failed to stir much interest among the voting public.⁴⁸

McIntire's troubles with WCAM began in January 1949, when the station implemented a sustaining-time policy and arranged for the Camden County Ministerial Association, which

⁴⁷ Mulholland, "Carl McIntire," 71-73; "2 Religious Groups Clash on Gambling," *New York Times*, 3 July 1947, 12; Roy Elmendorf, "New Constitution Adopted in Jersey," *New York Times*, 5 November 1947, 1.

⁴⁸ Mulholland, "Carl McIntire," 74-75; "McIntire Opens Council's Drive for Amendment Guaranteeing Separation of Church and State," *Christian Beacon*, 4 March 1948, 1, 4; "Governor's Kittens Presage Trouble," *Christian Beacon*, 18 March 1948, 1, 4.

consisted of clergymen from mainline congregations, to allocate the Protestant share of time among the area's churches. The city of Camden implemented this change after the station ran afoul of the FCC. The commission ruled that Mack Radio Sales managed WCAM's commercial time for its own financial profit and not in the public interest. To regain its broadcast license, the city needed to sever its relationship with that company and submit a well-balanced program schedule to the FCC that demonstrated service to the community. The station subsequently offered sustaining time to the Ministerial Association as part of a restructuring plan that devoted 40 percent of its broadcast schedule to public service programming.⁴⁹

WCAM's predicament was no secret. McIntire had communicated his desire to work out an amicable agreement with the station prior to its cancellation of his program. He also expressed an interest in obtaining time for the New Jersey Council of Christian Churches should the city decide to implement a sustaining-time policy. When McIntire learned that WCAM went behind his back and inked a deal with the Camden County Ministerial Association, he and other ministers in the New Jersey Council of Christian Churches mounted a vigorous protest.⁵⁰

The NJCCC launched its campaign against WCAM during a revival crusade at the Camden Armory in mid-February 1949 that featured well-known "cowboy evangelist" Harvey Springer as the guest speaker. Springer himself was no stranger to the broadcast industry's treatment of independent radio evangelists and testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1946 that the gospel message was being purged from the airwaves. On the last evening of the revival, McIntire and other ministers in the NJCCC gathered on stage to announce two resolutions pertaining to their battle with WCAM. First, they called for HUAC to

⁴⁹ "WOAX Incorporated (WTNJ) et al.," 172-79, 201-03, 215-16.

⁵⁰ Mulholland, "Carl McIntire," 77; Petition to the Federal Communications Commission, *New Jersey Council of Christian Churches v. City of Camden, WCAM* (1949), McIntire Collection, Box 646, Folder 10.

investigate the FCC. Members of this group saw a larger conspiracy at work and pointed a finger of culpability at radicals in the general counsel's office of the FCC, who they claimed served the interests of the Federal Council of Churches by pressuring radio stations to adopt a free-time policy. The NJCCC's second resolution demanded that Camden's mayor intervene in this dispute and award it equal time with the Ministerial Association.⁵¹

Pressure from the NJCCC compelled the city to negotiate with it. The station's manager proposed a compromise solution that offered the group one hour of Protestant broadcast time per week and the Camden Ministerial Association two hours. WCAM's manager believed this proposal was more than generous considering the fact that only five of the seventy-six Protestant churches in the city belonged to the NJCCC. At the behest of the Ministerial Association, the mayor also insisted that both groups refrain from making derogatory remarks against other religious groups and that speakers refrain from announcing their sponsoring organization over the air. Howard Kiefer, who chaired the NJCCC's radio committee, refused to accept those terms and filed a complaint with the FCC when the city refused to approve its demands.⁵² The group's complaint boiled down to three basic issues: 1) WCAM discriminated against it by offering an unfair division of broadcast time; 2) the station infringed upon the group's First Amendment rights by censoring and controlling "the subject matter and content of the programs"; and 3) the station discriminated against a particular class of commercial program.

In regard to first point, the NJCCC asserted that it was entitled to an equal division of time because it represented "an entirely different and distinct religious position from that of the

⁵¹ "Springer Closes Great Campaign," *Christian Beacon*, 17 February 1949, 1, 8; "Pub-Serv or Paid Religion," 10; "Resolution and Challenge Issued at Harvey H. Springer Evangelistic Campaign," *Christian Beacon*, 17 February 1949, 4.

⁵² Federal Communications Commission Memorandum of Opinion and Order, *The New Jersey Council of Christian Churches v. The City of Camden, WCAM* (1949), McIntire Collection, Box 646, Folder 10; "Camden Radio Time," *Christian Beacon*, 24 February 1949, 1, 8.

Camden County Ministerial Association.” As a municipally owned station, the complaint argued, WCAM had an obligation to provide the council with the same amount of time as minority Catholic and Jewish groups. Insofar as point number two was concerned, the petition contended that the station’s restriction against Protestant speakers’ naming the organization that sponsored their program was discriminatory because it did not impose the same restriction on clergymen from the Catholic and Jewish faiths. The NJCCC furthermore argued that WCAM practiced censorship when the station refused to provide the council with equal time after a representative from the Ministerial Association promoted a state civil rights bill during a free-time broadcast observing National Brotherhood Week. As for the third matter, the NJCCC contended that the station declined to sell it time but freely sold time to commercial sponsors promoting racetracks, liquor, cigarettes, and political parties – including the Communist Party. Thus, the complaint asserted, the station discriminated against a specific type of commercial broadcast.⁵³

Commissioners for the FCC rejected the NJCCC’s petition, ruling that it had no established rules with respect to the type or content of religious program a station must broadcast. Nor did it stipulate whether religious programs must be allocated on a sustaining-time or a commercial-time basis. Moreover, the commission declared that WCAM’s offer to allot the NJCCC one-third the Protestant broadcast time was generous considering the fact that it would have received significantly less if “the division had been made solely on the basis of the number of churches in each group.” In regard to the charge that WCAM discriminated against the NJCCC by denying it equal time to speak against the civil rights bill, the Commission sidestepped the issue, stating that revocation of a broadcast license for a single offense “would be manifestly harsh,” and such a determination needed to be made in relation to the station’s entire

⁵³ Petition to the FCC, *New Jersey Council of Christian Churches v. City of Camden*.

program service.⁵⁴ The FCC's *Camden* ruling represented one of two important decisions during the late 1940s that clarified for licensees their legal obligation to broadcast religious programs. The commission's other significant ruling rejected the complaint of atheist Robert H. Scott, who petitioned the FCC in 1946 to revoke the licenses of three stations in the San Francisco area for refusing to sell him time to contest religious broadcasts that condemned atheism. Taken together, the *Scott* and *Camden* decisions gave licensees broad discretion in deciding whether a religious matter was controversial and in determining whether to grant equal time to an opposing viewpoint.⁵⁵

The National Association of Evangelicals and the Radio Revivalist Rivalry

The National Association of Evangelicals stood as a main organizational rival to the American Council of Christian Churches throughout the 1940s and 1950s. In April 1944, several dozen members of the NAE formed the National Religious Broadcasters after Mutual Broadcasting Company cut the number of paid-time religious programs it carried and prohibited on-air monetary solicitations. Although the NRB officially was an independent organization, it functioned as the NAE's unofficial radio branch. While both the ACCC and the NAE expressed significant interest in securing radio rights for fundamentalists, the NAE's leaders adopted a less confrontational strategy to achieve this end. Rather than trying to cudgel broadcasters into giving them time using protest and petition, the NRB used moral suasion.

⁵⁴ FCC Memorandum of Opinion, *The New Jersey Council of Christian Churches v. The City of Camden* (WCAM); "Programs – Religious Broadcasts (New Jersey Council of Christian Churches v. City of Camden, WCAM, 5 R.R. 1014)," *Journal of the Federal Communications Bar Association* 10 (Winter 1949), 245.

⁵⁵ Hangen, *Redeeming the Dial*, 135-39; "The FCC's Concept of Freedom of the Press," 505-12; "Programs – Religious Broadcasts," 245-46.

Significantly, the NRB adopted a five-point code of ethics aimed at raising the professional standards of evangelical broadcasters. The organization's leaders were acutely aware of the bad reputation that fundamentalist programs had received from a minority of rogue revivalists. Therefore, it insisted that members present the gospel in a "positive, concise, and constructive" manner and to work cooperatively with station or network management. It also stipulated that members appeal for monetary donations in a "dignified Christian manner," issue receipts to donors, and provide full disclosure of finances. One of the founding members of the NRB, James DeForest Murch, called this code of ethics "a veritable 'Declaration of Independence' from radio racketeers on the one hand and ecclesiastical boycotters on the other." This goodwill went a long way when the NRB negotiated for network time. CBS awarded the NAE time on its *The Church of the Air* program and NBC occasionally granted it free time. The ACCC had failed in its effort to gain time on either of those networks.⁵⁶

The simmering rivalry between the leaders of the NAE and ACCC intensified in the late 1940s over which organization represented the legitimate interests of evangelicals. Those tensions flared in a heated exchange of letters between McIntire and NAE leader J. Elwin Wright in 1948. McIntire disparaged the NAE as a polyglot group of Protestant bodies that included a large percentage of pentecostal denominations and churches still in the Federal Council. Wright, in turn, accused McIntire of grossly inflating the American Council's membership statistics. By his estimation, the American Council had less than 115,000 members, and he asserted that two of the fifteen denominations that allegedly belonged to the ACCC simply did not exist. He could find no information to validate the existence of the American Council's 57,000-member Old

⁵⁶ Voskuil, "The Power of the Air," 85; James DeForest Murch, *Cooperation without Compromise: A History of the National Association of Evangelicals* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), 78; Theodore Elsner, "Report of President of the National Religious Broadcasters," 3 May 1948, Box 66, Folder 20, Herbert J. Taylor Collection, Billy Graham Center Archives, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL.

Catholic Church. As for the 50,000-member American Episcopal Church, which was headed by a Bishop Swain, Wright remarked that the NAE turned down Swain's membership application when it discovered that the church existed only in the bishop's own head.

It particularly galled Wright that McIntire presented network executives with bogus figures on the ACCC's numerical strength in order to gain a share of sustaining time. He offered to contribute \$1000 to any missionary organization McIntire desired if he could prove that the ACCC had even twenty percent of the 1,213,000 members it claimed. "Your rigid insistence on a 'pure' church falls on deaf ears so far as we are concerned," Wright exclaimed, "because we feel that the sin of misrepresentation of membership is just as bad as the sin of modernism."⁵⁷ By 1948, Wright viewed McIntire as less an obstacle to evangelical cooperation and more an irritation. Commenting on the American Council's constituent membership in a confidential memorandum, he stated that it was "too small to be truly representative of American evangelicalism."⁵⁸

Other adversaries of the ACCC seized upon Wright's argument to cast doubt on the veracity and validity of its public testimony. Ralph Lord Roy, for example, famously repeated Wright's allegation in his 1953 book *Apostles of Discord*, which cast a spotlight on the ministers of schism in the United States who were sowing hate and discord. Roy noted that the ACCC refused to publish a detailed breakdown of its constituency and continually made confusing claims about its size, which ranged between one and two million. Roy stated that the ACCC's most recent claim of 1,500,000 members was a "highly exaggerated" figure.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Wright to McIntire, 4 June 1948, Box 1, Folder 1, Ephemera of James Elwin Billy Graham Center Archives, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL.

⁵⁸ "Confidential Bulletin on American Council of Christian Churches," Box 66, Folder 11, Taylor Collection.

⁵⁹ Ralph Lord Roy, *Apostles of Discord: A Study of Organized Bigotry and Disruption on the Fringes of Protestantism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1953), 196-97.

Conclusion

Radio became an effective means for evangelicals to stimulate popular religious revival. But many commercial broadcasters and mainline groups considered them a detriment to the public interest and some sought to banish them from the airwaves. Those oppositional forces together with the mandate that the commercial airwaves serve the “public interest, convenience, and necessity,” hampered the expansion of evangelical broadcasting in the 1930s and 1940s. Before midcentury, regulators strongly discouraged the use of the airwaves to disseminate propaganda and controversy. This conception of the public interest aided mainline groups seeking to promote religious unity with inspirational “broad truths” radio messages. The radio industry helped to curb broadcast opportunities for fundamentalists as well by adopting a sustaining-time religious program policy to gain a measure of control over the message transmitted on its frequency. By the 1940s public service religious programming became synonymous with tri-faith pluralism. At the same time, this policy allowed stations to avoid some of the unseemly practices associated with evangelical broadcasting in the popular imagination that included on-air appeals for money, pedantic sermons, and moralizing harangues.

McIntire argued that sustaining-time religious programs failed to serve the public interest because broadcasters used the policy to suppress the voice of fundamentalism. Since the federal government regulated commercial radio, it therefore had a duty to protect the minority rights of fundamentalists as a religious group. He and other fundamentalists in the ACCC favored paid-time religious broadcasting over sustaining time and argued that preference should be given to individuals and institutions seeking to purchase time in the “free and open competitive market of

the radio.” If the public desired to hear a certain type of religious program, he contended, they will support it, “and by such public interest the programs stand or fall.”⁶⁰

While fundamentalists provided sharp end-times critiques about the manifestations of modern liberalism in church and state during the 1930s, they showed little incentive to mobilize for public action until it infringed upon their religious liberty. Federal regulations and broadcast policies that impinged upon fundamentalists’ access to the airwaves became the catalyst for them to rally in defense of their right to broadcast the gospel. The ACCC’s battle for radio airtime implemented a number of strategies that included direct negotiations, legal appeals, popular petitions, and mass demonstration rallies. These methods established a pattern of protest that the American Council would rely on in future battles.

⁶⁰ *To Amend the Communications Act of 1934*, 378.

V. A Sectarian Mission to the Military: The ACCC and the World War II Chaplaincies

In late 1942 Bible Presbyterian Church clergyman David K. Myers applied for a commission in the Navy Chaplain Corps with the desire to serve both God and country. He submitted his application with an awareness that a Navy chaplain might be assigned extra-religious duties of a social or recreational nature and included a letter with his application requesting release from certain tasks. He specifically asked for exemption from supervising dances, showing motion pictures, or organizing card-playing events because those activities contravened the biblical principle of living a separated life. The chief of the Navy Chaplains Division, Captain Robert D. Workman, replied that the “candidate who feels that he cannot carry on these collateral activities disqualifies himself for the Naval Service.”¹

While Workman might have misconstrued Myers’s request as an appeal for exemption from all secular duties, Myers nonetheless expressed dismay at this reply to J. Oliver Buswell, who served as secretary for the American Council’s Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains. Although Navy regulations stated that a chaplain should expect to supervise recreational and entertainment activities, they also stipulated that no chaplain was required to perform collateral duties contrary to the doctrinal standards or customs of his faith.² Buswell seized on Workman’s

¹ Myers to Buswell, 25 January 1943, Box 359, Folder 8, McIntire Collection; “American Council Leaders to Meet Admiral Jacobs Concerning Chaplaincy Crisis” *Christian Beacon*, 02 March 1944, 8; Clifford Merrill Drury, *The History of the Chaplain Corps, United States Navy: Volume II, 1939-1949* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), 13, 247-48.

² Myers subsequently enlisted in the Army chaplaincy, which had eliminated collateral duties for chaplains after World War I. “American Council Leaders to Meet Admiral Jacobs,” 8; Robert L. Gushwa, *The Best and Worst of Times: The United States Army Chaplaincy 1920 – 1945, Volume IV* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Chief of Chaplains, 1977), 9.

reply as proof that the Navy discriminated against evangelicals in contravention of Navy regulations. He protested to Navy Secretary Frank Knox:

The fact is Workman has refused to consider the candidacy of conservative chaplains specifically on the ground that they have asked to be excused from the supervision of dances. It is my understanding that heretofore in the Navy that if a chaplain did not feel that the supervision of dances was consistent with his position as a minister of the Gospel, he was excused from such duties. Regardless of the virtues of the question, many very capable men are excluded from the Navy chaplaincy by Chaplain Workman on such grounds.³

When the American Council formed in September 1941, the placement of fundamentalist clergymen in military chaplaincies represented a minor concern for its members. But Japan's bombing of Pearl Harbor elevated its priority. The ACCC suddenly looked upon the military as a vital mission field in need of redemption from the influence of religious liberalism and sought to break what they contended was a monopoly on the placement of Protestant chaplains by the Federal Council of Churches. Buswell, together with Carl McIntire and W.O.H. Garman, led the American Council's drive to secure a place for its clergymen in the armed forces' chaplaincies. Their battle with the Navy Chaplains' Division became an especially contentious episode in that undertaking. When the Navy declined to assign the American Council a quota of chaplains, they accused Workman of discriminating against evangelical churches and mounted a public campaign to force the Navy to take corrective action.⁴

The American Council's conflict with the Navy featured a tension between religious pluralism and sectarianism. Officials in the Navy Chaplain Corps emphasized a pluralistic ideal that recognized three great divisions of faith between Protestants, Catholics, and Jews. For its part, the Navy considered Protestant chaplains interchangeable and sought to avoid commissioning clergymen from small sects and denominations that adhered to exclusive or

³ Buswell to Knox, 13 March 1943, Box 359, Folder 7, McIntire Collection.

⁴ Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps*, 90-91.

restricted religious practices. Fundamentalists in the American Council, on the other hand, defended a sectarian ideal that upheld the free exercise of religion. They contended that Protestant minorities holding distinctive religious beliefs had a constitutional right to representation in the military's chaplaincies and fought against a Navy culture that sought to exclude fundamentalists. The American Council's protests against religious discrimination ultimately compelled the Navy to accept its candidates. In doing so, the organization helped establish a legal beachhead for evangelical Protestants to incorporate the military into their sphere of mission activity.⁵

Establishing the American Council's Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains

The American Council of Christian Churches formed the Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains in September 1942 to act as an endorsing agency for applicants to the military's chaplaincies from its constituent denominations. The council intended it to serve as the fundamentalist counterpart to the General Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains, which serviced denominations belonging to the Federal Council of Churches. The FCCCA created the General Commission during the First World War to bring efficiency to the process of procuring chaplains by having it function as a central clearinghouse for its member denominations. Protestant officials divested the FCCCA of the General Commission on the eve of World War II at the behest of the Army Chief of Chaplains, who wanted it to serve as a chaplain-endorsing agency for churches not belonging to the council. The General Commission functioned as a liaison between the churches and the military for the vast majority of the Protestant churches at

⁵ Anne C. Loveland, *American Evangelicals and the U.S. Military, 1942-1993* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1997), 299-304; Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps*, 230.

the outset of the war. Only a few denominations such as the Southern Baptist Convention and the Lutheran churches retained their own chaplain endorsing agencies.⁶

Fundamentalists in the American Council contended that the Federal Council still controlled the General Commission and refused to work through it.⁷ Their point had some validity. While the General Commission technically became an autonomous agency in 1940, the Federal Council continued to fund its operation and held final approval over the appointment of its commissioners. McIntire also argued that the Federal Council controlled the appointment of Protestant chaplains to the military. This claim, on the other hand, held little merit. To begin with, many of the evangelical sects outside the Federal Council did not seek recognition from the military's chaplaincies until after the war began. Furthermore, the military procured its chaplains according to a proportional formula based upon the decennial religious census. The figures that the armed forces relied upon during World War II came from the *1936 United States Census of Religious Bodies*, which was published in 1939. Interestingly, the only constituent body in the American Council listed in that census was the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches. The Independent Fundamental Churches of America did not undertake a membership count for that census. And neither the Bible Presbyterian nor the Bible Protestant churches existed in 1936. This situation put fundamentalist sects at a distinct disadvantage in sending chaplains to the military when the U.S. suddenly went to war in December 1941.⁸

⁶ "A National Council," *Christian Beacon*, 11 April 1940, 4; "Soldiers," *Christian Beacon*, 08 August 1940, 4-5; "Minutes of the Executive Committee Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America," 12 June 1941, RG 18, Box 1, Folder 14, Records of the Federal Council of Churches in America; Gushwa, *The Best and Worst of Times*, 98; Roy J. Honeywell, *Chaplains of the United States Army* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Chaplains, Department of the Army, 1958), 225-26.

⁷ "How Are Army and Navy Chaplains Appointed?" Memorandum, Box 359, Folder 7, McIntire Collection.

⁸ "Federal Council," *Christian Beacon*, 15 August 1940, 4; McIntire, *Twentieth Century Reformation*, 24; Honeywell, *Chaplains of the United States Army*, 215; Gushwa, *The Best and Worst of Times*, 100; W.O.H. Garman,

Religious leaders in the American Council evinced a strident nationalism and repeatedly contrasted their unabashed support for the war with the pervasiveness of pacifism in mainline Protestantism. They contended that wars would only intensify and become more frequent in the last days, therefore, human efforts to eliminate war could never succeed. They frequently cited Matthew 24:6: “And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet” (KJV). This belief in the inevitability of war led dispensationalists to extol a strong military as the best deterrent against the sin of violence. W.E. Pietsch, for example, addressed the moral quandary of whether a Christian could be a soldier in an article he wrote in 1942 for the IFCA’s journal *The Voice*. He labeled the Axis powers the “trinity of evil” and stated it was the “Christian duty to do our full part to stem the tide of wicked aggression.” On the question of pacifism he simply stated that “No true Christian can be a pacifist on the question of evil.”⁹

Other religious figures in the American Council shared Pietsch’s views and blamed radicals in the Federal Council of Churches for subverting military preparedness. Carl McIntire declared in mid-1941 that “radical pacifism has done more to undermine the security of our nation and to leave us limp before the dictators than any other factor that could be mentioned.” Regular Baptist leader Robert T. Ketcham echoed McIntire’s sentiments in the midst of the war

“Latest News Chaplain Situation,” *Voice* (April 1943), 25; Buswell to Garman, 23 December 1942, Box, 359, Folder 7, McIntire Collection.

⁹ Gerald Lawson Sittser, *A Cautious Patriotism: the American Churches and the Second World War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 89; W.E. Pietsch, “Why a True Soldier Can Be a Good Christian,” *The Voice* (June 1942) 8-9; McIntire, *Twentieth Century Reformation*, 99.

and added that pacifism caused a multitude of American soldiers to die needlessly by forcing the armed forces to rush hastily trained “green troops” into the thick of battle.¹⁰

Mainline Protestant Pacifism during the Inter-War Years

Before World War I, religious pacifism had been largely confined to the historic peace churches – Quaker, Mennonite, and Church of the Brethren. Its base shifted to mainline Protestantism after the war, where it became the foundation for a larger international peace crusade. Early manifestations of this peace movement appeared in social gospel clergymen’s push for the U.S. to join the League of Nations after World War I. Two years later they enthusiastically supported negotiations to reduce naval armaments during the 1921 Washington Arms Conference. The peace movement intensified during the remainder of the decade. A number of Protestant clergy, including *Christian Century* editor Charles Clayton Morrison, John Haynes Holmes, Kirby Page, and F. Ernest Johnson became prominent figures in the movement to outlaw war. Working through the Federal Council of Churches, pacifist clergymen urged Senate ratification of the Kellogg-Briand Treaty in 1928, which renounced war as an instrument of national policy.¹¹

The peace movement reached its zenith in the mid-1930s when military regimes in Europe and Japan began to threaten world peace. Social gospel clergymen put the Federal Council on record in denouncing “the war system.” They extolled the work of the Nye

¹⁰ McIntire, *Twentieth Century Reformation*, 95; Carl McIntire, “Bible Strategy for War,” *Christian Beacon*, 19 June 1941, 3; Robert T. Ketcham, “The American Council and Post-War Military Training,” *Baptist Bulletin* (April 1945), 7.

¹¹ Martin E. Marty, *Modern American Religion, Volume 2*, 230-32; Patricia Appelbaum, *Kingdom to Commune: Protestant Pacifist Culture between World War I and the Vietnam Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 33, 42-43, Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 908. Sidney Gulick, “The Immediate Campaign of the Churches for the Abolition of War” *Herald of Gospel Liberty*, 22 March 1928, 278.

Committee, chaired by North Dakota's isolationist Republican Senator Gerald Nye, which exposed munitions manufacturers and Wall Street bankers for greasing the skids that plunged the U.S. into World War I. They also backed Congress's passage of the Neutrality Act in 1935, which placed an embargo on the sale of arms, ammunition, and other war materiel to belligerent nations.¹²

Pacifists never achieved numerical superiority in any of the mainline denominations, but they did command a degree of influence as evidenced by the numerous antiwar resolutions and statements those churches issued. Those declarations at best exerted only indirect influence in effecting political change. Pacifists had a much greater direct impact in their attempts to change the relationship between the churches and the armed forces vis-à-vis the military's chaplaincies. They believed that a chaplain in the armed forces could not ethically serve two masters and expressed concern that he might become an agent in constructing a military religion that linked God with country. Anti-war clergymen contended that as a commissioned officer, a chaplain could too easily fall prey to the military's goal of creating a disciplined fighting force by functioning as a morale officer rather than a spiritual leader. And some pacifists argued for the abolition of the military's chaplaincies because they violated the First Amendment's disestablishment clause.¹³

A crusade to demilitarize the armed forces' chaplaincies took place in some mainline Protestant denominations. Pacifists in the Rock River Conference of the Methodist Church in

¹² Michael S. Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States since 1930* (New Haven: CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 25; Eric A. Molander, "Historical Antecedents of Military-Industrial Criticism," *Military Affairs* 40 (April 1976), 62; "Federal Council Supports Munitions Inquiry," *Federal Council Bulletin* (November-December 1934), 21; "Keeping Track of the Munitions Makers," *Federal Council Bulletin* (February 1935), 7; "Church Leaders Support American Neutrality," *Federal Council Bulletin* (January 1936), 7.

¹³ Gushwa, *The Best and Worst of Times*, 54; Honeywell, *Chaplains of the United States Army*, 203; Sittser, *A Cautious Patriotism*, 35; Richard G. Hutcheson, Jr., *The Churches and the Chaplaincy* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), 62; "Churchmen Grapple with World Peace," *Federal Council Bulletin* (January 1935), 11.

1935 recommended barring its clergymen from military service and proposed replacing chaplains already in uniform with ministers controlled and subsidized by the church. The following year, delegates attending the annual meeting of the Disciples of Christ severed the church's connection with the General Committee on Army and Navy Chaplains and demanded that the Federal Council disband that committee altogether. This matter became a contentious issue during the Federal Council's biennial meetings as well.¹⁴ Agitation from a minority of pacifists to demilitarize the armed forces chaplaincies prompted the FCCCA to create a special committee in 1936 to study this matter further. The committee issued a report two years later that proposed only minor changes to the existing chaplaincy system. Its primary recommendations included: 1) no insignia of rank for chaplains other than a cross; 2) revising training manuals to emphasize the chaplain's spiritual ministry; 3) urging religious bodies to maintain close contact with their chaplains to ensure that they were not isolated from the church. Although this report failed to mollify social Christians it did become the FCCCA's final word on this subject prior to World War II.¹⁵

The moral idealism behind the peace movement eroded after the Munich Agreement in 1938 as the Roosevelt administration gradually shifted its foreign policy from rigid neutrality to open support for European and Asian nations resisting Axis aggression. Many of those who railed against "the war system" a few years earlier began promoting a more just war perspective. While the vast majority of Protestant clergymen in America supported the war, as a whole they exhibited what religious scholar Gerald Sittser termed a "cautious patriotism." With the memory

¹⁴ "Methodists Ban Service Chaplains," *New York Times*, 17 April 1934, 18; "Ask Methodists to Ban Chaplain Duties," *Chicago Tribune*, 5 October 1935, 11; "Demilitarize the Chaplaincy!" *Christian Century*, 28 October 1936, 1416.

¹⁵ Gushwa, *The Best and Worst of Times*, 55-56; "The Church and the Chaplaincy," *Federal Council Bulletin* (January 1937), 5; "Biennial Meeting Marked by Spiritual Advance," *Federal Council Bulletin*, January 1937, 6; "The Chaplaincy Question," *Christian Century*, 21 December 1938, 1668.

of unbridled patriotism during World War I etched in the minds of many Protestant clergymen, the churches sought to rise above temporal nationalism and maintain a prophetic voice for the global Christian community.¹⁶ This attitude was evident in the words and actions of the Federal Council of Churches, which balanced support for the war with a defense of individual conscience. On the one hand, it encouraged ministers and seminary graduates to enlist as chaplains. Yet it also convinced Congress to extend conscientious objector status to members of mainline Protestant churches, and it guarded the right of individuals to obtain alternative civilian service throughout the entirety of the war.¹⁷

The American Council of Christian Churches and the Army Chaplaincy

American Council representatives Carl McIntire, J. Oliver Buswell, and Arthur Williams traveled to Washington, D.C., in September 1942 to obtain recognition for their chaplaincy commission and a quota of chaplains. When they met with Army Chief of Chaplains William Arnold, he told them his office procured chaplains through the General Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains and referred them to that agency. They explained that the General Commission's affiliation with the Federal Council of Churches prevented them from patronizing it. Whereupon General Arnold agreed to recognize their commission and promised that his office would assign them a quota of chaplains.

McIntire initially rejoiced at this breakthrough. However, as weeks turned into months without a quota assignment, he and other members from the ACCC's chaplaincy commission

¹⁶ Gushwa, *The Best and Worst of Times*, 95; Sittser, *A Cautious Patriotism*, 2, 26; Samuel McCrea Cavert, *Church Cooperation and Unity in America: A Historical Review, 1900-1970* (New York: Association Press, 1970), 177-78.

¹⁷ Cavert, *Church Cooperation and Unity in America*, 178; Walter W. Van Kirk, "The Council and the Conscientious Objector," *Federal Council Bulletin*, September 1940, 6-7; "The Chaplaincy – A Call," *Federal Council Bulletin* (February 1942), 6; "The Chaplain in the Hour of Danger," *Federal Council Bulletin* (March 1942), 5; Carl Knudson, "On Being a Chaplain," *Federal Council Bulletin* (October 1942), 8.

expressed frustration. In March 1943, J. Oliver Buswell appealed to Senate Military Affairs Committee Chair Robert Reynolds for assistance and urged other ACCC members to petition their congressmen as well. Buswell blamed religious leaders in the Federal Council for this delay rather than the Army chaplaincy. He contended that the FCCCA was unwilling to relinquish its monopoly on the quotas assigned to the Protestant churches. In his plea to Senator Reynolds, Buswell contrasted the patriotism of their group against the disloyalty of the Federal Council:

We cannot see why a competent pastor of an Independent Baptist Church belonging to a small group of churches rather than a large denomination has to be rejected as a candidate for the chaplaincy. He is a patriotic American, and ought to have the common right of American citizens to serve his country...Now when we find the pacifistic Federal Council cannot fill their quotas, the office of Chief of Chaplains of the Army persistently refuses to admit chaplains not certified by the Federal Council's General Commission on Chaplaincy and its subcommittees. The result is that the Federal Council, through the Chaplaincy Commission which it controls, practically dominates the entire quota of Protestant chaplains...We are enclosing, as we promised, copies of the recent news releases sent out by the Federal Council's General Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains, showing the policy of this agency in directing pacifists toward the chaplaincy.¹⁸

Buswell contended that the Federal Council maintained its monopoly on chaplains' quotas by gerrymandering the system, which put fundamentalists at an inherent disadvantage. Yet this became an accusation that neither he nor McIntire could ever substantiate with hard evidence. Nor did Buswell ever prove that the Federal Council used the General Commission as a vehicle to direct pacifists to the military chaplaincies. Buswell, however, did make a valid point regarding the underrepresentation of evangelicals in the military's chaplaincies due to their fragmentation. Both he and McIntire saw the need for fundamentalists to cooperate on this matter and tried to persuade traditionally independent-minded fundamentalists to work collaboratively through the ACCC to overcome the weakness of disunity. The logic of this

¹⁸ "How Are Army and Navy Chaplains Appointed"; Buswell to Reynolds, 13 March 1943, Box 359, Folder 7, McIntire Collection.

appeal, however, escaped IFCA President W.O.H. Garman, who traveled to Washington, D.C., in mid-February 1943 to meet individually with General Arnold. Garman acted unilaterally in this case because he suspected, with some good reason, that Buswell and McIntire may have antagonized Arnold. And after conferring with him, he became convinced that the chief of chaplains considered them fighters seeking to bring their religious dispute into the Army Chaplain Corps.¹⁹

McIntire and Buswell both admonished Garman for meeting Arnold without first consulting them. To them it represented the type of autonomous action that contributed to fundamentalism's disunity and impeded the ACCC's movement-building efforts. Additionally, they worried that Garman might undermine their negotiations to obtain a quota of chaplains. Despite those fears, Garman's visit with Arnold did produce a positive outcome. The IFCA received a quota of ten chaplains from the Army four weeks later, becoming the first fundamentalist group to earn this privilege. After Buswell learned of this success, intra-group friction subsided. He congratulated Garman for this achievement but once again beseeched him to work with the ACCC's chaplaincy commission. The American Council received its own allotment of ten chaplains a few weeks after the IFCA. Buswell subsequently apportioned three of those chaplains to the Bible Presbyterian Church and the other seven to the GARBC.²⁰

¹⁹ W.O.H. Garman, "Latest News Chaplain Situation," *The Voice* (April 1943), 25; Henry, *For Such a Time as This*, 255-56.

²⁰ Henry, *For Such a Time As This*, 257; McIntire to Garman, 10 February 1943, Box 359, Folder 7, McIntire Collection; Garman to McIntire, 18 February 1943, *ibid.*; Buswell to E.G. Zorn, 16 March 1943, *ibid.*; Buswell Memorandum, 20 March 1943, *ibid.*; Buswell to Garman, 24 March 1943, *ibid.*; Arnold to Buswell, 21 June 1943, *ibid.*

The ACCC and the “Battle Royal” with the Navy

McIntire initially regarded General Arnold with some suspicion because of his Roman Catholic religious affiliation, but he eventually came to praise his professionalism and evenhanded treatment of the ACCC. However, the same could not be said of the chief of the Navy Chaplains’ Division, Captain Robert D. Workman. Representatives from the American Council clashed with him during their first meeting in September 1942 and relations only grew worse. Since Workman belonged to the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., he possessed inside knowledge of McIntire and Buswell’s schismatic tendencies. He made it clear that he had little tolerance for either of them. McIntire reported afterwards: “He told us he did not want any fighters in the Navy, etc. We told him he had no right to take into the Navy his ecclesiastical prejudices.”

At the end of a contentious two-hour meeting, Workman at last consented to recognize the American Council’s chaplaincy commission. Yet McIntire evinced apprehension about the sincerity of Workman’s offer. He stated in a memorandum afterwards that “things are not right at all with the Navy.” His skepticism proved justified. The Navy did not assign the ACCC a quota of chaplains for another nineteen months. Their indignation only increased when the Chaplains’ Division announced a shortage of qualified applicants in late 1943 yet still declined to accept candidates from the American Council. This snub stirred McIntire and his colleagues to action.²¹

The ACCC’s conflict with Workman arose concurrent to legislation seeking to reorganize the Chaplains’ Division. A few major religious groups wanted Congress to establish the chaplaincy as an independent bureau within the Navy headed by a chief of chaplains who would hold the rank of rear admiral. As it then stood, oversight of the Chaplains’ Division fell under

²¹ McIntire Memorandum, 26 September 1942, Box 359, Folder 7, McIntire Collection; Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps*, 47; “Chaplains Wanted,” *Newsweek*, 20 September 1943, 86.

purview of Vice Admiral Randall Jacobs, who was chief of the Bureau of Naval Personnel.

Captain Workman's status within that institutional framework corresponded to the position of chief chaplain rather than the chief of chaplains. Workman administered the Chaplains' Division and advised Admiral Jacobs on matters pertaining to the procurement of chaplains and policy decisions but held limited supervisory powers.

The General Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains was the most influential group behind this initiative. Its chairman, S. Arthur Devan, lobbied Congress to place the Chaplains' Division under the direction of a clergyman rather than a line officer. He contended that the decentralized structure of the Chaplain Corps gave commanding officers too much authority over chaplains in the field. Devan emphasized that chaplains often felt overwhelmed with collateral duties and that they had little time to devote to religious matters. As a result, many chaplains thought the Navy only had a perfunctory interest in the religious and moral welfare of its servicemen. As an example, Devan related the story of one district chaplain who told him his real job was serving as "aide-de-camp to the Commandant's wife." Since she served as the president of the local chapter of the Navy Relief Society, the chaplain complained that he spent much of his time conducting work for that organization rather than supervising the chaplains under his jurisdiction. High ranking officials in the Navy, however, urged Congress to keep the Chaplain Corps under the authority of the Bureau of Naval Personnel. The House ultimately bowed to the wishes of the Navy and stripped the bill of its proviso to create an independent chaplains' bureau. The only substantive issue remaining in this bill was the proposal to elevate the Navy's chief of chaplains from the rank of captain to rear admiral. While this plan fell short of what the

General Commission wanted, it hoped that elevating Workman's rank to rear admiral would represent an initial step in the overall goal of reorganizing the Chaplain's Division.²²

In contrast to the General Commission's remedy for religion's low status in the Navy, the American Council blamed the Chaplain Corps's problems specifically on the Navy's collateral duties policy and Captain Workman's desire to cultivate a common denominator faith. In regard to the matter of collateral duties, they essentially agreed with Devan's argument that line officers often saddled chaplains with too many secular duties. But more importantly, they contended that this policy posed a conflict of interest because it held the potential of binding the conscience of evangelical chaplains. Buswell asserted that this was the case with Bible Presbyterian candidate David K. Myers, who experienced discrimination by the Navy as a result of his devotion to the separated life. For that reason, the ACCC beseeched officials to eliminate extra-religious duties for chaplains.²³

Navy officials viewed extra-religious assignments as essential for maintaining morale because they kept the chaplain in continual contact with servicemen. Those duties frequently included manning the ship's library, supervising recreational and social events, and interceding on behalf of servicemen needing Navy Relief funds. Both Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox and Admiral Jacobs denied the ACCC its request to do away with collateral duties altogether and cited the Navy's regulation exempting chaplains from performing duties contrary to the principles of their faith. However, members of the American Council's chaplaincy commission countered that disobeying a direct order might result in reprisal regardless of that provision.²⁴

²² "Memorandum on Bills Now Before the Congress to Establish a Chief of Chaplains of the United States Navy," RG 18, Box 4, Folder 25, Federal Council of Churches Records; Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps*, 90-91.

²³ Buswell to Knox, 13 March 1943, Box 359, Folder 7, McIntire Collection; "A.C. Leaders Ask Navy Leaders to Release Chaplains for Full Time Religious Work," *Christian Beacon*, 9 March 1944, 1-2. "S.O.S." *Christian Beacon*, 9 March 1944, 4.

As far as the accusation that Workman sought to cultivate a common denominator Protestant religion, the ACCC contended that he deliberately avoided commissioning chaplains from sectarian denominations because doctrinal commitments might interfere with their ability to minister to servicemen of different faiths. Both Buswell and McIntire asserted that Workman himself acknowledged that this was the Navy chaplaincy's unofficial policy. After their first meeting with him, McIntire reported, "We had a battle royal with him when he told us he would not take the Southern Baptists who would not consent to baptizing infants." McIntire protested that "he had no right to bind the conscience of men and tell them that they had to cease to be real Baptists in order to be chaplains in the Navy." McIntire also revealed that the Chaplain's Division did not want candidates from denominations that practiced closed communion because it posed a problem when distributing the Lord's Supper to servicemen of other faiths. According to Buswell, Workman told him in a later conversation that he wanted Protestant chaplains who were willing to carry a rosary and crucifix for use by Roman Catholic servicemen in the event of an emergency. As a fundamentalist, Buswell objected that any Protestant clergyman should be cajoled into practicing idolatry.²⁵

The American Council and the Defense of Norbert G. Talbott

The American Council remained at an impasse with the Navy Chaplain's Division until early 1944, when Buswell learned that the Chaplain Corps coerced Norbert Talbott into resigning his commission for holding conservative religious views. Talbott was a 46-year-old Methodist minister from Huntingburg, Indiana, who held a doctoral degree in theology from Drew

²⁴ Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps*, 247-48; Arthur F. Williams, "The Basic Issue in the Chaplaincy Crisis," *Christian Beacon*, 9 March 1944, 5.

²⁵ McIntire Memo, 26 September 1942; "Chaplain Head Declares Lutherans, Baptists Unfit For Service," *Christian Beacon*, 20 January 1944, 8.

University. He commenced the Navy's eight-week chaplain training program at William and Mary College in June 1943. In the fifth week of training he went before an examining board of three chaplains that determined the fitness of each chaplain for active duty. Talbott received a shock during his interview when the examining board asked for his reaction to the three following hypothetical situations:

1. Suppose your ship is coming into port after several months at sea...The captain calls you into his office and says: "chaplain, here is \$500 which I am making available to you. I want you to go ashore, rent a hotel, make arrangements for a dance, get the orchestra, provide some beer for the men and let them have a real good time."

2. Your ship is coming into port after several months at sea. The men have had very little freedom and some will, no doubt, take their first opportunity to make contact with women. Your commanding officer orders you to give the men a talk on the necessity and use of preventative measures in order that they will know how to protect themselves against disease.

3. One of the officers in your group has received an advancement in rank. In celebration he invites several fellow officers, you included, to a party where there will be plenty of drink.

Talbott told the board that his religious principles forbade him from purchasing alcohol, promoting the use of prophylactics, and imbibing in alcoholic beverages. According to Talbott's account of this incident, one examiner replied that "these things are part of the life of many men in the Navy" and advised him of the necessity to be "a good scout" in order to earn acceptance from the men. When Talbott reiterated his religious views, another examiner suggested that he might be happier in a civilian parish and should consider resigning. After this interview he conferred with the school's commanding officer, Captain Clinton A. Neyman, to discuss the board's recommendation. Neyman left the decision to resign to him. But according to Talbott, Neyman did advise him that while the situations posed by the board were unlikely, refusing an assigned duty because of religious convictions would do little to benefit his Navy career. Talbott

subsequently tendered his resignation on August 6, nine days before his scheduled graduation. He contacted his resident bishop with the hope that the Methodist Church might intervene before his resignation became official. But his bishop took no action.²⁶

Buswell learned of Talbott's unfortunate experience from another Methodist minister in Indiana and obtained the details from Talbott himself. McIntire subsequently broke this story in the *Christian Beacon* on January 20, 1944. A number of secular newspapers and periodicals picked it up in the weeks that followed. *Time* described the circumstances surrounding Talbott's resignation along with McIntire's role in stirring this controversy. The editors of several religious publications ran this story as well, with some of them demanding an explanation from the Navy.²⁷

Talbott regretted that the American Council seized the initiative on this matter rather than his own church. He neither cared for the American Council's attitude toward the Federal Council nor did he consider himself a fundamentalist. However, the lack of interest by the Methodist hierarchy constrained him to employ an outside channel. He brought this concern to his old friend New York Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, who was also a member of the Methodist Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains. Oxnam demonstrated greater concern at the fact that McIntire got hold of this story than at the incident that caused Talbott's resignation. Roy L. Smith, who edited *The Christian Advocate*, became one of the few influential Methodists to push

²⁶ "Report of Norbert G. Talbott to The Methodist Commission on Army and Navy Chaplains," 8 February 1945, Folder 7, Norbert G. Talbott Collection, Archives and Special Collections, Roy O. West Library, DePauw University, Greencastle, IN; "Confidential Statement Concerning the Reverend Norbert Good Talbott," *ibid.*; "Statement of Norbert G. Talbott Relative to Resignation from U.S. Navy as a Chaplain," 22 April 1944, Folder 6, *ibid.*

²⁷ "Report of Norbert G. Talbott"; Buswell to Edward E. Blake, 03 January 1944, Box 359, Folder, 7, McIntire Collection; "Action of Board Calls for Protest by True Citizens," *Christian Beacon*, 20 January 1944, 1-2; "Naval Chaplain Resigns Under Pressure: Refuses to Arrange for Intoxicants, Dance," *Christian Beacon*, 20 January 1944; "One Less Chaplain," *Time*, 07 February 1944, 38.

the church's hierarchy for an investigation. Oxnam and a few other Methodist officials did question officials on the Navy's collateral duties policy, but they did not press for a policy revision, and ultimately their investigation into this matter was only cursory.²⁸

The publicity generated by the Talbott controversy put the Navy on the defensive. Workman refused to concede that the Chaplain Corps acted wrongly or mishandled this case. He repeatedly emphasized the fact that the Navy did not require a chaplain to engage in duties contrary to his religious beliefs, and he portrayed Talbott as either misinformed or confused by the examining board's questions. In responding to some of his critics Workman also sought to discredit McIntire and the American Council for their role in publicizing this incident. Such was the case when he rebutted an editorial in *The Presbyterian of the South*. Workman named the *Christian Beacon* as the source for this story and exhorted the editor of the former, "Please examine into the character, attitudes and past record of those who have prepared this material for publication and given it to the public." This entire incident became a battle of wills in which McIntire and Workman each saw his own perspective as absolutely correct.²⁹

As part of his crusade against the Navy's discriminatory policies, McIntire urged readers of the *Christian Beacon* to petition Frank Knox for redress. Knox along with Workman received numerous letters from fundamentalists irate at the Navy for reportedly denying the gospel to the men in uniform. For his part, Knox did not take too seriously the American Council's allegations and allowed Admiral Jacobs to handle this matter. After receiving an angry letter from one IFCA member, Knox forwarded it to Jacobs with a memo that said, "My Dear Admiral: Here is another

²⁸ Talbott to Sidney Cooper, 26 February 1944, Folder 6, Talbott Collection; Oxnam to Talbott, 24 March 1944, *ibid.*; Roy L. Smith to Talbott, 18 December 1945, Folder 7, *ibid.*; Diary entry, 28 March 1944, Box 12, 1944 Diary, Oxnam Papers.

²⁹ "Concern Expressed Over Navy Charge," *Christian Beacon*, 2 March 1944, 4-5.

long screed from the Independent Fundamental Churches of America. You will observe that, according to these folks, I am completely under your thumb and do whatever you recommend. So, please recommend what I should do about this.”³⁰

The American Council also viewed Jacobs as a key person who could help them resolve this conflict. McIntire, Buswell, and several other leaders from the ACCC met with him in early March 1944. The circumstances surrounding Norbert Talbott’s resignation became a vital piece of evidence to support their claim that the Chaplain Corps limited freedom of conscience. Additionally they presented the admiral with letters from servicemen who deplored the quality of spiritual guidance they were getting in the Navy. McIntire beseeched Jacobs to take the following actions: 1) release Navy chaplains from extra-religious duties; 2) recall Talbott to the Chaplain Corps; and 3) replace Workman as chief of the Chaplain’s Division.³¹

That meeting became a dress rehearsal for the American Council’s appearance before the Senate Naval Affairs Committee twelve days later on March 15, 1944, when McIntire, Buswell, and Garman testified against the bill to elevate Workman’s position to that of rear admiral. Their statements to the committee reiterated the arguments they made to Admiral Jacobs. McIntire declared that the Navy excluded Protestant candidates holding conservative theological views. He emphasized that “there should be the same religious freedom inside the Navy for the preaching and for the ministering to spiritual duties as there is on the outside.” He asked the committee both to table the bill until the Navy resolved its religious situation and to investigate the infringement of liberty of conscience within the Chaplain Corps. Massachusetts Senator

³⁰ Knox to Jacobs, 9 March 1944, Records of Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox, 1940-44, RG 80, Box 32, Folder 34-19, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD; Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps*, 248.

³¹ McIntire to Jacobs, 4 March 1944, Box 359, Folder 8, McIntire Collection; “A.C. Leaders Ask Navy to Release Chaplains for Full Time Religious Work,” *Christian Beacon*, 9 March 1944, 1-2.

David I. Walsh, who chaired the committee, agreed to hold up the bill until Admiral Jacobs could respond to the ACCC's charges. However, he declined to act on McIntire's second request, stating that his committee was empowered to craft legislation not investigate complaints.³²

The American Council and the Defense of Laurel G. Gatlin

The American Council's campaign to create a space for evangelicals in the Chaplain Corps received a boost that summer when it learned that Navy Reserve Chaplain Laurel G. Gatlin, a Southern Baptist minister from Pulaski, Tennessee, had been released from active duty for what the Navy termed "extremely zealous evangelistic inclinations." The district chaplain who dismissed Gatlin, Captain Clinton A. Neyman, had been in charge of the chaplains' school the previous year and played a direct role in Norbert Talbott's resignation. In Gatlin's official release, Neyman judged him "not adaptable to service as a Chaplain in the Navy." He further stated:

His devotion to this type of activity is and has been embarrassing and disquieting to his associates in the Navy; and he devotes himself to such activity to the exclusion of other important duties and services customarily performed by chaplains....This is partly attributed to a definitely narrow and sectarian religious view and background, which in one who is settled and matured, constitute a disqualification for effective service in the Navy's chaplaincy.³³

After his release from active duty, Gatlin fired back with a sworn affidavit defending his religious service to the Navy. He objected to criticism that he had been negligent in performing "other important duties and services customarily performed by chaplains" and pointed out that Neyman never listed any duties he neglected. Gatlin also demonstrated an awareness of the

³² *Chief of Chaplains, U.S. Navy: Hearings Before the United States Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, Seventy-Eighth Congress, Second Session, on H.R. 1023 (S. 300) to Establish a Chief of Chaplains of the United States Navy, 15 March 1944* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office 1944), 20, 43-45; Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps*, 335.

³³ "Another Chaplain Relieved," *Christian Beacon*, 22 June 1944, 2.

circumstances surrounding Talbott's resignation by confirming that chaplains were expected to distribute whiskey ration books, supervise dances, and instruct servicemen on the use of prophylactics.

Those concerns were ancillary to the central issue of his evangelical work in the Navy. Gatlin reported that two senior chaplains directed him not to preach about the redeeming salvation of Christ but instead tell the men "character stories." He also claimed that his superiors prohibited him from giving invitational altar calls during worship services. Gatlin protested that those proscriptions clearly contravened the Navy's regulation stipulating that a chaplain shall "conduct divine worship according to the manner and forms of his own church." And he asked: "Is not the liberty which was denied me the very thing for which we are fighting this war, and is guaranteed by our Constitution, and is so frequently referred to by our Commander in Chief?"³⁴

The Chaplain Corps extolled the motto "cooperation without compromise." This slogan signified a commitment to collaborating with clergymen from other faiths without sacrificing one's own doctrinal standards. The Chaplain Corps adopted that motto for the purpose of forging goodwill and inter-faith respect between Protestants, Catholics, and Jews. The ideal of cooperation without compromise, however, did not apply equally to Protestant sectarians. The Navy made this plainly evident in its official release to Gatlin when it disparaged him for holding religious views that were "narrow and sectarian."³⁵

Gatlin's case demonstrated the tensions that arose between sectarian and pluralist ideals in the military's chaplaincies. Since the Navy did not provide a detailed explanation for his release, the reasons for his dismissal are a matter of speculation. Gatlin's affidavit indicated that

³⁴ Ibid.; "Navy Chaplain Relieved of Duties," *Christian Beacon*, 11 June 1944, 4.

³⁵ Clifford Merrill Drury, who worked in the Chaplains' Division office during World War II, emphasized this ideal in the official history of the Chaplain Corps that he wrote in 1949. See Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps*, 214-15; "Another Navy Chaplain Relieved," 2 (photographic reproduction of Gatlin's release form).

his primitive revivalism might not have sat well with the Navy's staid upper-middle-class Protestant culture. The Navy's flag officers tended to come from hierarchic and ritualistic Protestant denominations, with a disproportionate percentage of them belonging to the Episcopal Church. Historian Peter Karsten wrote that that "young men from less ritualistic, more egalitarian 'gathered' churches and sects (such as Baptists and fundamentalists) would be less likely than their more ritualistic brethren to find military careers comfortable and would be more likely to drop out, or be pushed out, before reaching flag rank."³⁶

A more likely factor behind Gatlin's dismissal encompassed differing interpretations of evangelism. What Gatlin considered witnessing for Christ, his superiors may have viewed as proselytizing. Army and Navy officials prohibited this type of activity within the chaplain corps and the chaplains themselves considered it unethical. Gatlin admitted his zealousness in evangelizing and defended his actions by stating that the men in his charge might soon be sent into combat and needed spiritual preparation to meet their God. Yet he denied that he indulged in sheep stealing: "It has never been my practice to proselytize anyone to my faith, and it was not my practice in the Navy. Of all the 31 men that I won to Christ during the four months of active duty only two (2) joined the Baptists and they were of Baptist preference before coming to the Navy."³⁷ Viewed from a non-evangelical perspective, Gatlin's superiors likely construed his evangelical work as an untoward use of moral suasion to indoctrinate serviceman with a particular religious view.³⁸

³⁶ Karsten cited a study by sociologist Morris Janowitz estimating that in 1950 42 percent of the Navy's admirals identified themselves as Episcopalians. Peter Karsten, "Ritual and Rank: Religious Affiliation, Father's 'Calling,' and Successful Advancement in the U.S. Officer Corps of the Twentieth Century," in *The Military and Society: A Collection of Essays*, ed. Peter Karsten (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 77-90.

³⁷ "Another Chaplain Relieved," 2.

³⁸ Loveland, *American Evangelicals and the U.S. Military*, 74, 311; Kim Philip Hansen, *Military Chaplains and Religious Diversity* (Gordonville, VA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 165, 188-91.

McIntire's scoop of Gatlin's story generated a wave of protest that shook the Chaplain's Division, which was still recovering from the earlier Talbott controversy. More importantly, it offered hard evidence of religious discrimination in the Navy's chaplaincy. Under the headline "Gatlin Gunnery," *Time* magazine commented that the forty-four-year-old Tennessean frequently "pounded out straight hellfire and damnation" during his civilian ministry. He became a chaplain, it said, because the Navy "seemed like a field ripe unto the harvest." In the Southern Baptist publication *Western Recorder*, an indignant John Huss asked: "Can a chaplain be overzealous in evangelism?" Huss protested the Navy's repudiation of traditional Baptist liberty and declared that Southern Baptists should be outraged over this incident.³⁹

Unlike in the earlier Talbott episode, the Navy remained silent about Gatlin's dismissal. Navy officials evidently realized they had a public relations predicament on their hand and quietly reinstated Gatlin in late July 1944, five weeks after McIntire broke this story. Shortly after Gatlin's recall, Buswell received a cable from Captain Workman directing the ACCC to provide the Navy with five clergymen as soon as possible. His cable indicated that this order came from above. It stated, "In this matter I am acting for the Chief of the Bureau of Naval Personnel."⁴⁰

The Senate Naval Affairs Committee granted the American Council a second opportunity to voice its opinion on the bill to elevate the position held by Workman to rear admiral on December 7, 1944. McIntire read a prepared statement to the committee outlining the need to demarcate the roles of both church and state within the Chaplain Corps. He recommended to the

³⁹ Sittser, *A Cautious Patriotism*, 165; "Religion: Gatlin Gunnery," *Time*, 10 July 1944, 75; John E. Huss, "Can a Chaplain Be Overzealous in Evangelism?" *Western Recorder*, 24 August 1944, 5.

⁴⁰ "Gatlin Recalled to Chaplaincy by United States Navy," *Christian Beacon*, 3 August 1944, 1 "Navy Wires for A.C. Chaplains," *Christian Beacon*, 14 September 1944, 4.

committee that it should reject this piece of legislation because it “would definitely clothe a minister with powers of the state.” McIntire warned that bestowing a clergyman with state authority placed a specific religious group in a privileged position, thereby jeopardizing the rights of minority religious groups. As far as the religious duties performed by chaplains in the service of the military, he argued that oversight for those tasks needed to be the exclusive domain of the clergy.⁴¹

This bill passed Congress and became law on December 22, 1944. And McIntire rejoiced at the ACCC’s great victory in defeating the Federal Council’s plan to increase the power and authority of the Navy chief of chaplains. He declared that the “American Council of Christian Churches arrived just in the nick of time” to ensure that the chaplaincy remained under the direction of a non-cleric in the Bureau of Naval Personnel. His self-congratulatory editorial embellished the role of the ACCC by conveniently disregarding the fact that the proposal to create a separate chaplains’ bureau had been taken out of the bill long before the American Council ever arrived to save the day.⁴²

Fundamentalism’s Mission to the Military

The Army set a goal of providing one chaplain for every 1,200 men in uniform at the outset of the World War II, while the Navy adjusted its ratio at one to 1,250. As the war progressed, the number of chaplains allotted to each denomination fluctuated according to military manpower needs and the ability of the churches to fill their quotas. When churches failed to meet their obligation, the armed services compensated by increasing the quotas of other

⁴¹ *Hearings Before the United States Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, Seventy-Eighth Congress, Second Session, on H.R. 1023 (S. 300)*, 55.

⁴² Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps*, 91; “A Great Victory,” *Christian Beacon*, 21 December 1944, 4.

denominations. Those exigencies proved beneficial to the churches belonging to the ACCC, which had a surplus of candidates. By the end of the war they oversubscribed their quota of chaplains in the Army and had a total of thirty-nine clergymen in uniform. Yet this was a just a fraction of the 8,141 Army chaplains on duty at the time of Japan's surrender. Similarly, of the 2,811 chaplains on active duty in the Navy at the end of the war, only about twenty of them were from denominations belonging to the ACCC.⁴³

Although the number of fundamentalists in the armed forces chaplaincies remained proportionally small, they viewed themselves as a religious vanguard offering spiritual care that was qualitatively superior to that of their non-evangelical peers. To them the military represented an important and viable mission field to reach the unchurched. Regular Baptist minister David Otis Fuller, who served as a Navy Reserve chaplain in the waning months of World War II, expressed this missionary zeal when he said he enlisted “to win the souls of those young men to Christ who were facing death and many of them totally and completely unprepared for eternity.” While he worked with some chaplains whom he considered “true men of God,” Fuller commented that the majority of clergymen he observed conducted worship services that offered nothing more than the “cold formality” of ritual. The Navy, he contended, was in sore need of “a simple message as the Gospel.” Fuller held especially low regard for career chaplains who he claimed were all too often rank conscious. He remarked that they displayed great solicitude towards other officers, while neglecting the spiritual needs of enlisted men.⁴⁴

⁴³ Honeywell, *Chaplains of the United States Army*, 216-17; Drury, *History of the Chaplain Corps*, 312, 335-41; Clifford Merrill Drury, *United States Navy Chaplains, 1778-1945* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1948).

⁴⁴ David Otis Fuller sermon, “Some Things a Baptist Minister Learned in the U.S. Navy,” February 1946, Box 11, Folder Navy Chaplaincy 1946, Wealthy Park Baptist Church Records, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI; “Dr. Fuller Our First Navy Chaplain Reports,” *Baptist Bulletin* (June 1945), 8.

Other fundamentalists expressed similar sentiments about the status of religion in the military. During the early Cold War, Air Force Chaplain Raymond Pritz remarked, “As I talk to the Christian boys who have been in the Air Force for two and three years, many of them tell me that I am the first Gospel-preaching Chaplain they have ever had.” Pritz’s sentiment represented a view commonly held by evangelicals who served as military chaplains.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, fundamentalists who served in the armed forces as officers and enlisted servicemen commonly voiced disgust at the shallow religious content of sermons delivered by mainline Protestant chaplains. At the height of the American Council’s dispute with the Navy chaplaincy, the ACCC received numerous letters of this type, including one from a serviceman who complained that his chaplain “said the theme of Christianity was that there was a man who went about doing good.”⁴⁶

Besides voicing displeasure at the quality of religious care offered in the armed forces, fundamentalists frequently complained about chaplains who smoked, drank, and cursed. The *Baptist Bulletin* carried an account in late 1945 from one GARBC chaplain deploring pervasive abuse of alcohol at the garrison where he served. He stated that “coming home from one of our revival meetings we were forced to drive carefully because of the young fellows that were staggering down the road.” He decried the fact that a number of Army chaplains contributed to this problem by imbibing in alcohol themselves. “Yes, even Protestants love the stuff,” he declared. “They are real drinkers” and “real hindrances to the progress of our faith.”⁴⁷

IFCA leader W.O.H. Garman received several complaints from servicemen disgusted at the intemperance of some chaplains during World War II. During the early Cold War he lectured

⁴⁵ “Chaplains Report” *Baptist Bulletin* (April 1954), 15-16.

⁴⁶ ” Kenneth E. Lawson, *W.O.H. Garman: Patriarch of Christian Fundamentalism within the United States Military Chaplaincy* (Taylors, SC: Associated Gospel Churches, 2000), 54; “Letters from Navy Enlisted Men Concerning Deplorable Situation Among Chaplains,” *Christian Beacon*, 9 March 1945, 1.

⁴⁷ “How the Army is Making Drunkards of Your Sons,” *Baptist Bulletin* (November 1945), 3.

young men eligible for conscription about the moral snares associated with military life. He warned them, “Quite likely you will be shocked at times to discover that your chaplains drink, smoke, occasionally use profanity and do other things which would disbar a man from the ministry in the churches you represent.” He advised them to look for a church off base if they found their chaplain incapable of meeting their spiritual needs. Such comments divulged deep concern at moral conditions in the military and the challenge they presented to living a holy and separated life.⁴⁸

Chaplains from fundamentalist churches evangelized through both word and action. They placed importance on holding Bible study sessions during the week and frequently appealed to servicemen to dedicate their lives to Christ. While it was not uncommon for them to offer an invitation during worship services, they more frequently made this type of appeal during one-on-one counseling sessions. The reports that fundamentalist chaplains sent to others within their home denominations revealed the importance of evangelism and spiritual conversion to their mission. Those reports routinely recorded the number of people they led to Christ and often included anecdotal evidence highlighting individual successes that they found emotionally gratifying. One GARBC Army chaplain during World War II, for example, wrote of a soldier he counseled who stated to him, “Chaplain, I realize I am not right but you know I have been fooled once. This time I want the real thing. Do you know that I never knew there was such a thing as *being born again* until I met you Baptist chaplains?”⁴⁹ Clergymen who wrote about such episodes commonly revealed astonishment at the number of servicemen who had never before heard about Christ’s salvation. They also reminded others about the work that still needed to be done.

⁴⁸ “Concerning Chaplains,” Folder Sermons, Addresses, Etc., Garman Collection.

⁴⁹ Allen Taff, “Real Men Want a Real Savior,” *Baptist Bulletin* (May 1945), 10.

Conclusion

In mid-June 1945, Carl McIntire traveled to Washington, D.C., on behalf of the American Council of Christian Churches for another congressional hearing. This time he appeared before a House select committee that was soliciting public comment on the idea of post-war universal military training (UMT). McIntire was one of nearly two dozen religious figures who weighed in on this topic during more than two weeks of hearings. Most of those individuals recommended either a wait-and-see approach to UMT or rejected it outright because it ran contrary to the tradition of maintaining a small standing army during a time of peace.

McIntire was one of the few religious leaders who voiced unequivocal support for UMT, exhorting members of the House committee on the need to be ready to draw the sword. “In the present world crisis, the rise of Russia demands that America be prepared,” he warned. McIntire listed the benefits of UMT to American society, which included preserving individual liberty from Soviet communism and acting as a brake on pacifism. In addition, he argued that UMT training might instill in conscripts qualities of citizenship that included morality, character, and discipline.⁵⁰

McIntire’s contention that the next global crisis would feature an ideological cold war against Soviet communism proved quite prescient, and his promotion of a strong defense accorded with the arguments made by military officials during those hearings. Brigadier General Luther D. Miller, for example, an Episcopalian who became the Army’s chief of chaplains in 1945, also claimed UMT would aid in the development of moral character and discipline among the nation’s young men. Yet despite the support for defense preparedness articulated by both fundamentalists

⁵⁰ Loveland, *American Evangelicals and the U.S. Military*, 2; *Universal Military Training. Hearings Before the Select Committee on Postwar Military Policy, House of Representatives, Seventy-Ninth Congress, First Session, Pursuant to H. Res. 465, a Resolution to Establish a Select Committee on Postwar Military Policy, Part I* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1945), 473-74.

and armed forces leaders, the two groups remained wary of one another, and servicemen professing an evangelical faith remained outside the mainstream of military culture throughout the early Cold War. This was due in part to a civil religion that emphasized common values of religion and citizenship. The prevailing Judeo-Christian consensus during this period developed in stark opposition to Soviet communism and exalted an ideal of religious pluralism.⁵¹

Despite remaining marginal to the military's religious culture, evangelicals gradually increased their presence in the armed forces after World War II. Besides the military chaplaincy, Protestant evangelicals sponsored mission work by para-church organizations such as the Navigators, Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, and Overseas Christian Servicemen's Centers. The Officers' Christian Union also stood as an important mediator between evangelicalism and the military. Its long-serving president, General William K. Harrison, was a member of a GARBC church and actively promoted premillennial fundamentalism as a lay officer in the Army.⁵²

Carl McIntire and the American Council of Christian Churches played a key role in establishing a place for evangelicals in the military chaplaincies during World War II. The primary contribution of this organization lay in the persistence of its leaders in challenging the armed forces' model of religious pluralism, which disadvantaged Protestants holding sectarian views. The American Council's public battle with the Navy Chaplains' Division especially broke down the legal barriers that resulted in the exclusion of minority groups holding rigid doctrinal views or customs. McIntire's tenacity in this matter established a precedent for recurring tensions between the sectarian and plural ideals that continue to this day in the armed forces' chaplaincies.

⁵¹ Loveland, *American Evangelicals and the U.S. Military*, 83-84; *Universal Military Training. Hearings Before the Select Committee on Postwar Military Policy*, 493-95.

⁵² Loveland, *Evangelicals and the U.S. Military*, xii, 27-31, 49-55; "This and That," *Baptist Bulletin* (December 1955), 4.

VI. A Christian Crusade Against Communism: Fundamentalist Christian Americanism in the Early Cold War

In 1949, journalist John T. Flynn voiced alarm at what he perceived as the nation's slide towards socialism in his book *The Road Ahead: America's Creeping Revolution*. Flynn had gained a following among political conservatives during the 1930s and 1940s with his depictions of Franklin D. Roosevelt as a dilettante President whose incompetence produced a leviathan state and committed the U.S. to intervention in World War II.¹ In *The Road Ahead*, he argued that liberal Democrats promoting a "creeping revolution" of gradualist socialism posed a greater threat to the nation than Communist subversives acting under the direction of Moscow. He asserted that the U.S. was following the same path to socialism as Britain, where Fabian Socialists gradually nationalized the country's systems of financial credit, utilities, and transportation. He accused liberals in America carrying out this plan by infiltrating the nation's public institutions and voluntary societies, including its churches, and inculcating citizens with socialist propaganda. In a chapter titled "The 'Kingdom of God,'" Flynn assailed the Federal Council of Churches for "*using its machinery to promote the interests of a Socialist revolution in America*" [italics in the original].²

Flynn singled out several Federal Council leaders for opprobrium, including New York Methodist Bishop and former FCCCA President G. Bromley Oxnam, whom he called "the most powerful factor in it." Flynn recounted Oxnam's affiliations with a number of left-wing organizations and described the favorable statements Oxnam had made about the Soviet Union

¹ John E. Moser, *Right Turn: John T. Flynn and the Transformation of American Liberalism* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 3-4, 174-78; Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 172-73.

² John T. Flynn, *The Road Ahead: America's Creeping Revolution* (New York: Devin-Adair Co., 1949), 107.

as proof of his radicalism. Interestingly, he drew much of his information for that chapter from Carl McIntire's 1945 book *The Rise of the Tyrant*. Additionally, on that section of his manuscript draft, Flynn solicited McIntire's comments, which he enthusiastically provided. At the end of that chapter, Flynn tipped his hat to the American Council of Christian Churches for vigorously opposing "socialist planning preachers" such as Oxnam who filled the ranks of the Federal Council's hierarchy.³

Flynn's attack on the Federal Council outraged liberal Protestant leaders. John Foster Dulles, who chaired the FCCCA's Commission for a Just and Durable Peace and worked closely with Oxnam on that committee during World War II, called Flynn's allegations "unbalanced." FCCCA General Secretary Samuel McCrea Cavert declared that Flynn's treatment of the ecumenical movement betrayed "appalling ignorance and bias." Cavert accused him of mistaking social justice for communism and criticized him for foolishly drawing upon McIntire – an unfrocked Presbyterian minister with a history of divisiveness – as his authority on this subject.⁴

Clergymen in the ACCC, on the other hand, heartily endorsed Flynn's *The Road Ahead* as much for its harsh critique of the FCCCA as its antiliberalism. Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania, minister W.O.H. Garman lauded Flynn's book for its penetrating insight in an address he delivered multiple times after the publication of *The Road Ahead*. And McIntire extended an invitation for Flynn to stop by for a visit at the ACCC's 1949 fall convention in Washington, D.C., if he happened to be in the nation's capital during that time. Such fanfare was rather peculiar given the fact that Flynn was Roman Catholic.⁵

³ McIntire to Flynn, 24 April 1949, Box 158, Folder 21, McIntire Collection; Flynn, *The Road Ahead*, 119.

⁴ Samuel McCrea Cavert, *An Analysis of John T. Flynn's Attack on the Protestant Churches* (mimeographed statement, ca. 1949), Box 158, Folder 21, McIntire Collection; Moser, *Right Turn*, 178.

⁵ Ruotsila, "Carl McIntire and the Fundamentalist Origins of the Christian Right," 387; McIntire to Flynn, 12 October 1949, Box 158, Folder 21, McIntire Collection.

The spirit of cooperation that developed between McIntire and Flynn illustrates the manner in which the milieu of Cold War anticommunism enabled separatist fundamentalists to establish cultural connections outside the sphere of evangelical Christianity. McIntire and other members of the ACCC seized upon the ideology of Christian Americanism to become cold warriors in the crusade against atheistic communism. This plunge into anticommunist activism signaled a new form of public action for the ACCC. Whereas the organization in its early years focused on gaining equal legal footing with Federal Council of Churches in the area of public policy, during the Cold War the ACCC's leaders adopted a redbaiting strategy that linked the FCCCA to subversion of Christian America. This strategic shift moved McIntire and the ACCC in a political direction that enabled it to enlist the support of conservative anticommunist writers and politicians in attacking the ecumenical movement.

Christian American Anticommunism

The end-times role that fundamentalists ascribed to the Soviet Union led them to predict the Cold War long before it began to unfold. With Stalin's Red Army pressing towards Germany in the summer of 1944, the editor of the IFCA's *Voice* claimed that Russian imperialism was gaining strength with each passing day and feared that Stalin had "the upper hand in both the war and the coming peace." McIntire made a more incisive prophecy in his 1944 book *Twentieth Century Reformation*, assuring readers that the future world division would be between the communist and capitalist blocs. For this reason, he argued, the U.S. must remain strong militarily after the war to meet the Soviet challenge. McIntire made this argument to refute the "Six Pillars of Peace," which John Foster Dulles proposed in 1943 as chair of the FCCCA's Commission on a Just and Durable Peace. McIntire pilloried Dulles's proposal for its Wilsonian prescriptions

that included a call for the U.S. act in concert with the United Nations. From McIntire's perspective, if acted upon, the "Six Pillars of Peace" would constrain the U.S.'s ability to act unilaterally in checking Soviet expansion.⁶

Curiously, although Soviet totalitarianism represented an apocalyptic force in dispensational prophecy, McIntire centered his prediction on raw power considerations and theological reasoning rather than eschatology. This attitude was characteristic among fundamentalists after World War II. In contrast to fundamentalists before World War II, churchmen during the Cold War deemphasized end-times prophecy speculation and instead urged militant resistance against Stalinist aggression.⁷ Paraphrasing Luke 11: 21-22, McIntire argued in the *Twentieth Century Reformation* that the U.S. needed to maintain a strong military after the war. "If we are not strong enough, a stronger communism will take our house from us."⁸ McIntire's Cold War posturing also included a scriptural defense of individual liberty and private enterprise in contradistinction to atheistic communism. He cited the Eighth Commandment, "thou shalt not steal," which he claimed validated "the right of property, individual initiative, [and] capitalism."⁹

McIntire waded deeper into the waters of anticommunism in his next two books, *The Rise of the Tyrant* (1945) and *Author of Liberty* (1946). These works helped establish McIntire as a leading proponent of Christian Americanism at the dawn of the Cold War. This messianic ideology synthesized biblical Christianity with patriotic nationalism. Although evangelicals had

⁶ "Godless Russia to Meet God," *Voice* (July 1944), 12; McIntire, *Twentieth Century Reformation*, 123.

⁷ Williams, *God's Own Party*, 19.

⁸ McIntire, *Twentieth Century Reformation*, 123. Luke 11: 21-22 states, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils" (KJV).

⁹ *Ibid.*, 131.

long proclaimed America as a city upon a hill as part of their exceptionalist narrative about the nation's creation, Christian Americanism conveyed a conservative political philosophy in its divination of the nation-state and its social institutions. Fundamentalists during the Cold War effectively fused this ideology with anticommunism to sacralize free-market capitalism and individual liberty.¹⁰

In *The Rise of the Tyrant*, McIntire blended the economic ideas of Friedrich Hayek with fundamentalist theology to argue that competitive capitalism and private enterprise were ordained by God. His main purpose in writing this book was to refute the Federal Council's prescription for government regulation of the economy, which he condemned as an attack upon God's eternal truth. McIntire declared that justification for the system of capitalism could be found throughout the Bible and traced its origin back to Abraham. In an imaginative interpretation of Genesis 13, McIntire argued that Abraham parted ways with his nephew Lot when they discovered that collectivism did not work. From his perspective, Abraham became a capitalist when he divided the property that he and Lot owned and struck out on his own. More vehemently, McIntire called the Ten Commandments "the eternal bill of rights of the individual" and declared Moses "a real capitalist:"

When Moses was threatening Pharaoh in Egypt, crying, 'Let my people go,' one of the temptations that Moses refused was the offer of Pharaoh to let the Children of Israel depart from Egypt if they would only leave their property. Moses replied that they would not go if they could not take their property – their oxen and their sheep.¹¹

McIntire argued that anyone who owns property and used it for economic gain was a capitalist. He saw a direct correlation between economic and political freedom and declared that

¹⁰ Ernest Lee Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), vii-x; Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), xx, 47; Williams, *God's Own Party*, 59.

¹¹ Carl McIntire, *The Rise of the Tyrant: Controlled Economy vs. Private Enterprise* (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1945), 15-16.

the two conditions were inseparable. Following from this proposition, he asserted that it was the duty of the state to protect individual freedom by preserving free enterprise. The role of the state, he remarked, should be that of a policeman, intervening only when monopolistic practices threatened the liberty of people.¹²

While *The Rise of the Tyrant* focused on defending the biblical basis for capitalism, McIntire examined the divinely sanctioned tradition of individual liberty in *Author of Liberty*. In that book, he outlined the dissemination of socialism in mainline churches, schools, and labor unions, which he blamed for undermining traditional American values. Written as a jeremiad, he praised God as the author of liberty and predicted national calamity if society did not turn away from its sinful path. McIntire praised the nation's founders for their devotion to God. In return, he argued, God bestowed on them the idea of liberty.¹³

As anxieties about communism increased during the early Cold War, clergymen in the American Council of Christian Churches voiced opinions on numerous political issues outside the purview of church-state relations. But because they identified private enterprise and individual liberty as principles inherent to Christian liberty, they did not consider themselves as political actors.¹⁴ Fundamentalists in the ACCC openly supported the Taft-Hartley Act, which curbed the power of labor unions. They also opposed Harry S. Truman's proposals for a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission and universal health care as prescriptions for socialism. Occasionally their public actions involved direct appeals to politicians and grassroots pressure campaigns. In 1949, for example, clergymen from the American Council's Ohio state

¹² Ibid., 26-27.

¹³ Carl McIntire, *Author of Liberty* (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1946), xiii, 213.

¹⁴ "Resolutions Passed by Eighth Annual Convention of ACCC," *Christian Beacon*, 10 November 1949, 2; McIntire, *The Rise of the Tyrant*, xi.

chapter purchased radio time and took out a two-page advertisement in the *Ohio State Journal* opposing legislation for a state Fair Employment Practices Commission. During that period, the American Council added public demonstrations and protest rallies to its repertoire for political action.¹⁵

Fundamentalists became especially vigilant of foreign policies that might appease communism in any way or constrain the pursuit of a *pax Americana*. When speculation swirled in 1948 that John Foster Dulles might be selected as Secretary of State, the American Council vigorously denounced his candidacy because of his leadership of the FCCCA's Commission on a Just and Durable Peace. And numerous churchmen expressed distrust of the United Nations. The U.N. for them represented a prelude to the prophesied one-world government of the antichrist and unequally yoked the U.S. with non-Christian nations.¹⁶ The ultimate in Cold War fortitude came in 1948 when delegates at the ACCC's fall meeting passed a resolution urging a preemptive nuclear strike upon Russia as an act of Christian righteousness:

The longer we delay...the more complicated the situation develops and the more disillusioned and despairing the forces for morality become. For us to have the atom bomb, and in the name of false morality, born of a perverted sense of self-respect and pacifist propaganda, to await the hour when Russia has her bombs to precipitate an atomic war is the height of insanity and will, when the fateful hour comes, be a just punishment upon us.¹⁷

¹⁵ "American Council Resolutions Stress Religious, Civil Freedom," *Christian Beacon*, 13 May 1948, 4; "Resolutions from the A.C.C.C.," *Christian Beacon*, 5 May 1949, 4; "American Council of Christian Churches of Ohio Opposes FEPC Legislation," *Christian Beacon*, 24 March 1949, 4-5 (reprinted from the *Ohio State Journal*).

¹⁶ George Dugan, "Dulles Attacked by Church Council," *New York Times*, 30 October 1948, 16; McIntire, *The Rise of the Tyrant*, 226; Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 52-53; "Day-Dawn of Deliverance," *Voice* (May 1948), 11; During the early 1950s, the ACCC also endorsed the Bricker Amendment, which sought to limit the President's prerogative to negotiate foreign treaties. See Carl McIntire, *Servants of Apostasy* (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1955), 198

¹⁷ Quoted in Erling Jorstad, *The Politics of Doomsday: Fundamentalists of the Far Right* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 50. McIntire first articulated this sentiment in *Author of Liberty* where he asserted: "America used the bomb at Hiroshima as an instrument of freedom. It worked. For just the same reason American should use the atomic power at the present moment, if necessary. If she does not, she is failing in her stewardship before God." See McIntire, *Author of Liberty*, 209.

The International Council of Christian Churches

The ecumenical movement made several strong advances after World War II. The Federal Council's transformation into the much larger National Council of Churches in 1950 represented one major development. More significant was the establishment of the World Council of Churches (WCC) at Amsterdam, Netherlands, in 1948. Fundamentalists viewed the WCC as part of Satan's one-world church conspiracy. As president of the ACCC in 1948, W.O.H. Garman remarked on the eve of the WCC's Amsterdam assembly that its creation set the stage for the last great apostasy. "Protestantism and the evangelical faith are being shamelessly betrayed by the World Council leaders into the hands of Rome and Moscow," he declared.¹⁸ Carl McIntire likewise considered the WCC the Harlot of Babylon foretold in the book of Revelation and referred to it as a "modern tower of Babel" in his 1949 book of the same name.¹⁹

To offset the creation of the World Council, McIntire pressed the ACCC to create an international counterpart. At the ACCC's fall meeting in 1947, members approved a plan to create the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC) and scheduled its inaugural meeting for mid-August 1948 at the English Reformed Church in Amsterdam, Netherlands. The ACCC established an office in Amsterdam and appointed Arie Kok and Francis Schaeffer to organize support in Europe for the ICCC. Kok was a former Dutch ambassador to Beijing, while Schaeffer resigned as pastor of a Bible Presbyterian Church in St. Louis in January 1948 to undertake mission work in Switzerland for the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions. Since the majority of delegates who attended the ICCC's inaugural congress were

¹⁸ Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 49; Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, 98; Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More*, 262-64. W.O.H. Garman, "Christ and the Bible," *Voice* (November 1948), 18; Carl McIntire, *Modern Tower of Babel* (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1949), xiii, 121.

¹⁹ Carl McIntire, *Modern Tower of Babel*, 132.

American fundamentalists, it was not surprising that it was structured similarly to the ACCC. Its primary purpose was to foster revival of biblical Christianity and “awaken Christians everywhere to the insidious dangers of modernism and Roman Catholicism.” Delegates elected McIntire president of the organization, a position he held for the remainder of the century.²⁰

The ICCC concluded its meeting just three days before the start of the WCC’s first assembly. The editors of *Christian Century* fumed that the ICCC’s organizers chose the date and location to launch their council as a deliberate subterfuge to steal publicity and sow confusion among an unsuspecting press corps. The magazine cautioned reporters beforehand not to be deceived. Although the ICCC succeeded in garnering some network radio and national newspaper attention, McIntire expressed disappointment that press coverage fell short of his expectation and blamed the *Christian Century* for this outcome. He remained in Amsterdam after the close of the ICCC’s meeting to report on the World Council’s assembly for the *Christian Beacon*. However, WCC officials, many of whom belonged to the FCCCA, charged him with skullduggery and refused to grant him press privileges.²¹

One of the important questions that delegates grappled with at the WCC’s assembly dealt with the escalating global divide between capitalism and communism. John Foster Dulles and Czech theologian Josef Hromádka anchored the two extremes of this debate. Dulles sharply criticized communism as an obstacle to world peace, while Czech theologian Hromádka appealed for a more sympathetic understanding of the historical circumstances that gave rise to

²⁰ Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 44-45; George Dugan, “Bible Body Lashes at World Council,” *New York Times*, 21 August 1948, 16; McIntire, *Modern Tower of Babel*, 217; “Schaeffer New ACCC Appointee for U.S.,” *Christian Beacon*, 11 December 1947, 1.

²¹ McIntire, *Modern Tower of Babel*, 258-60; Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 44; During successive WCC plenary sessions, McIntire did receive press credentials and frequently exasperated adversaries with his admixture of exposé reporting, argumentative debate, and public demonstration. See Randall Balmer, “Fundamentalist with Flair,” *Christianity Today*, 21 May 2002, 53.

communism and lauded its compatibility with Christianity. Ultimately, the WCC staked out a middle ground when it adopted a report stating that “the Christian churches should reject the ideologies of both communism and laissez faire capitalism.” From the WCC’s perspective, capitalism produced serious inequalities that privileged economic power over human needs, while communism transferred economic and political power to a dictatorship that repressed individual liberty.²²

To fundamentalists, there could be no middle-of-the-road position on this issue. As president of the ICCC, McIntire responded to the WCC’s economic statement by labeling the organization a “front for world socialism.” Columbus, Ohio, IFCA minister William Ashbrook made a similar assessment and regarded Hromádka’s selection to the WCC’s Central Committee proof of its pro-Russian bias. Other fundamentalists echoed this sentiment and contended that the World Council’s disregard of Christian doctrine for the sake of ecumenical inclusiveness played into the hands of the communists.²³

Several writers have asserted that Sun Oil Company chairman J. Howard Pew played a critical financial role in helping McIntire establish the International Council. This allegation originally appeared in Ralph Lord Roy’s 1953 book *Apostles of Discord*, where he wrote that McIntire “solicited \$50,000 from Pew to finance one of [his] divisive ‘missionary’ jaunts to the Far East.” This assertion later appeared in other works. While McIntire might have solicited Pew for \$50,000, he only received a personal check for \$2,000, which he used to defray expenses for a 1949 Far East trip to promote the ICCC. Pew pumped significant amounts of money into

²² Carter Lindberg, *A Brief History of Christianity* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 176; Cavert, *The American Churches in the Ecumenical Movement*, 202; Harold E. Fey, “The Amsterdam World Assembly of Churches,” *Christian Century*, 6 October 1948, 1038-39.

²³ William Ashbrook, “The Voice of Apostate Religion,” *Voice* (October 1948), 14.

conservative causes during the early Cold War, especially those that espoused a Christian libertarian ethos of piety and laissez-faire capitalism. But much to McIntire's disappointment very little of it went to the Twentieth Century Reformation movement. In a 1950 meeting, the Sun Oil president flatly told him that he wanted to work "from within" mainline Protestantism and expressed doubt about whether the separatist position would prevail in the long run.²⁴

Relations between the two became even less amicable later in the decade when Pew began bankrolling new ventures launched by leaders in the new evangelical movement. Pew subsidized the start-up of *Christianity Today*, a monthly magazine founded by Billy Graham in 1956. He also made generous financial contributions to Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, which was headed by Harold Ockenga. Irritated by these actions, McIntire admonished Pew in 1958 for using his "means against the separatist movement."²⁵ Conversely, Pew labeled McIntire a "trouble maker." He complained to Seattle businessman James W. Clise, "Everybody is always wrong but himself. It makes no difference how conservative a man may be, unless he goes all the way down the line with Carl McIntire, he is a scoundrel and a crook. As a result, he has sacrificed almost every minister of whatever faith or belief."²⁶

Fundamentalists in the Grassroots Anticommunist Movement

The Second Red Scare profoundly affected the scope of the ACCC's activities. Its leaders put much of the council's energy into redbaiting the ecumenical movement rather than

²⁴ Roy, *Apostles of Discord*, 304; McIntire to Pew, 4 October 1946, Box 257, Folder 31, McIntire Collection; "Statement of Dr. Carl McIntire," 4 February 1955, *ibid.*; McIntire to W. Harlee Bordeaux, 14 October 1950, Garman Collection, Folder Pew, J. Howard. Others who repeated Roy's claim included Louis Gasper and Martin Marty. See Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 45; Marty, *Modern American Religion, Volume 3*, 439.

²⁵ Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 958; McIntire to Pew, 27 January 1958, Box 257, Folder 31, McIntire Collection.

²⁶ Quoted in Jorstad, *Politics of Doomsday*, 69.

developing new areas for cooperative evangelism. This negative movement-building strategy, which extolled God and flag in numerous articles, political declarations, and protest rallies, intersected with popular anticommunism. Nothing demonstrates this new dynamic better than the energy McIntire put into developing the careers of Edgar C. Bundy, Billy James Hargis, and Fred Schwarz. These three individuals emerged from the milieu of fundamentalism in the early 1950s to become prominent sentinels of Christian Americanism in their own right. The conspiracy theories they spun tapped into cultural anxieties about godless communists run amok in the schools, churches, labor unions, civil rights movement, and government. Together with McIntire and the American Council of Christian Churches, these three individuals aided the politicization of fundamentalist movement.²⁷

The first of the three crusaders with whom McIntire became acquainted was Bundy. McIntire began promoting his work in the *Christian Beacon* in 1949 when Bundy was just earning his wings as a Christian anticommunist crusader. He graduated from Wheaton College in 1938 with degrees in English and theology. After being drafted into the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1941, he eventually rose to the rank of captain in Intelligence. Along the way he became ordained as a Southern Baptist minister. When Bundy transferred from active duty to the reserves in 1948, he embarked upon his new career as an anticommunist crusader. Gifted with a silver tongue, Bundy possessed the innate ability to mesmerize audiences with tales of communist intrigue and subversion. In 1956, he became executive director of the Chicago-based Church League of America (CLA), succeeding advertising executive George Washington Robnett, who founded the CLA two decades earlier to combat FDR's New Deal liberalism.

²⁷ Chip Berlet and Mathew N. Lyons, *Right-Wing Populism in America: Too Close for Comfort* (New York: Guilford Press, 2000), 6-13; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 151-53; Jorstad, *The Politics of Doomsday*, 69-76; Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 59.

Bundy greatly expanded the Church League's index of un-American individuals and organizations and exposed their activities in its *News and Views* newsletter. He also purveyed his research to interested buyers.²⁸

Bundy demonstrated no shortage of swagger and self-promotion. He preferred to be addressed as Captain Bundy, ostensibly to draw attention to his military intelligence expertise, and billed himself as a "lecturer, soldier, traveler, journalist, [and] evangelist" in his publicity materials. He continually boasted that he served under General Claire Chennault in the China-Burma-India Theater and that he held the position of Chief of Research and Analysis of the Intelligence Section of the Alaskan Air Command after the war. However, his résumé of military accomplishments contained extravagant flourishes that made some Air Force officials rather anxious. Air Force Chief of Chaplains General Charles Carpenter privately referred to Bundy as an "embarrassment" to the service. Another Air Force official who responded to an inquiry about Bundy in 1950 painted an unvarnished portrait of his military record:

The matter of Capt. Bundy speaking on the subjects of communism, the Alaskan defense, the Government's China policy, etc. has previously been brought to the attention of this headquarters. The military service of Capt. Bundy, particularly his service with combat organizations, has been at the lowest command levels, i.e., squadron and group. He served in a squadron attached to the 81st Fighter Group for a period of approximately six months. His duty in Alaska with the Alaskan Air Command was for approximately five months. Capt. Bundy has been warned by appropriate agencies with the Air Force to include in his talks and speeches the information that the views expressed by him are his own and in no way sanctioned by the Department of the Air Force or the United States Air Force Reserve.²⁹

The outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 boosted Bundy's credentials as an anticommunist crusader when he claimed that he predicted North Korea's invasion of South

²⁸ George Thayer, *The Farther Shores of Politics: The American Political Fringe Today* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), 259-60; Roy, *Apostles of Discord*, 241; Moser, *Right Turn*, 160; "Major Edgar C. Bundy Biography," Box 8, Folder 11, McIntire Collection.

²⁹ Roy, *Apostles of Discord*, 241; "Major Edgar C. Bundy Biography"; Carpenter to G. Bromley Oxnam, 14 December 1945, Box 45, Folder 2, Oxnam Papers; Lt. Col. William C. Lindley to Edwin A. Brown, 15 February 1950, *ibid.*

Korea during congressional testimony the previous summer. While he did testify at a Senate appropriations committee hearing in 1949 to urge greater military commitment in Asia, his claim that he predicted the Korean War contained some embellishment. Bundy did not specifically pinpoint Korea as the location for a communist attack. Rather, he stated that China's fall to communism jeopardized all of southern and eastern Asia. His career profited greatly from the impression he created that he alone, as a private citizen, held a keener grasp of foreign affairs than the nation's government and military leaders. This attitude was quite characteristic among other grassroots crusaders whose careers thrived upon popular mistrust of the government and its capacity to deal effectively with the menace of Soviet communism.³⁰

Fundamentalist churches became a staple in Bundy's speaking circuit during the early 1950s. He frequently lectured to religious groups on the subversive influences within Protestantism. However, he demonstrated great versatility in tailoring his message to suit the tastes of civic and patriotic groups. This adaptability enabled him to rise to positions of influence in secular groups such as the Abraham Lincoln National Republican Club and the American Legion. Although he spoke to audiences across the nation, his strongest support came from lower-middle class conservatives in the Midwest.³¹

More influential than Bundy was Australian native Fred Schwarz, who established a medical practice in a suburb of Sydney and served as a Baptist lay preacher prior to coming to the United States. McIntire discovered Schwarz in early 1950 when he and fellow fundamentalist preacher T.T. Shields traveled to the Far East to organize support for the ICCC. Schwarz had

³⁰ Walter Trohan, "Senate Warned Reds Threaten U.S. Through Asia," *Chicago Tribune*, 24 June 1949, 9; Jonathan M. Schoenwald, *Time for Choosing: The Rise of Modern American Conservatism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 60.

³¹ In 1954, Bundy also made an impassioned speech at the Illinois American Legion convention denouncing the Girl Scouts for promoting the U.N. and omitting the Bill of Rights in its 1953 handbook. See Joseph Egelhof, "Legionnaires Defy Leaders, Urge Pensions," *Chicago Tribune*, 7 August 1954, 1.

become well versed in Marxist theory and proudly claimed to have once explained the principles of dialectic materialism to communists gathered at Sydney's Domain, which was a popular open-air venue for debates and demonstrations. Captivated by his speaking abilities, McIntire invited Schwarz to the U.S. that summer for a two-month speaking tour under the auspices of the American Council.³² The warm response Schwarz received during that visit confirmed for McIntire his utility to the movement. He beseeched Schwarz to suspend his medical practice and come back to the U.S. and lecture under the auspices of the ICCC. Like other prophets of doom, Schwarz painted a dark and satanic picture of communism. But he also engaged his audiences on a more scholarly plane by explaining the Marxist dialectic to them. This aspect became a point of honor with him and distinguished him from other grassroots crusaders. Because of this quality, McIntire beseeched Schwarz to return to the United States. He envisioned Schwarz moving beyond a fundamentalist constituency and speaking to civic, business, and labor groups.³³

Although Schwarz acknowledged that saving the world from communism had much greater appeal than treating "tonsillitis, peptic ulcerations, and female neuroses," he indicated apprehension about whether he could earn adequate income from lecture fees. But in early 1952 he announced his readiness to save Western civilization from the Red menace. Elated by this news, McIntire arranged publicity for him in anticipation of his arrival and assigned clergymen from the American Council's California chapter the task of coordinating Schwarz's initial

³² Laura Jane Gifford, "Girded with a Moral and Spiritual Revival": The Christian Anti-Communism Crusade and Conservative Politics," in *The Right Side of the Sixties: Reexamining Conservatism's Decade of Transformation*, ed. Laura Jane Gifford and Daniel K. Williams (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 163; McIntire to Schwarz, 27 March 1950, Box 204, Folder 19, McIntire Collection; Arnold Forster and Benjamin R. Epstein, *Danger on the Right* (New York: Random House, 1964), 50.

³³ Forster and Epstein, *Danger on the Right*, 49-50; Thayer, *The Farther Shores of Politics*, 246-47; McIntire to Schwarz 3 April 1951, Box 204, Folder 19, McIntire Collection.

speaking schedule in the Los Angeles area.³⁴ Schwarz, however, found the ACCC's preparations lacking and stuck out in an independent direction shortly after his arrival. His appearances at Fuller Seminary and Angelus Temple, a Foursquare Pentecostal church, did not sit well with some of the American Council's clergymen. Since Schwarz came to the U.S. under the auspices of the ICCC, they complained to McIntire that his lectures at those venues compromised the separatist position. McIntire responded ambiguously. Although he indicated dislike at Schwarz lecturing at institutions affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals, he did not expressly forbid it: "[Schwarz] is not bound to speak only in ICCC churches, but dealing with the question of communism, he can represent the ICCC and speak in other areas where his testimony will count."³⁵

Like Bundy, Schwarz spoke before a variety of church, civic, and patriotic groups. But his more erudite approach to communism also afforded him opportunities to address audiences with higher educational levels. Shortly after arriving in the U.S., he appeared on a news-oriented television program produced by the University of Southern California and at public universities in New Mexico. Most promising, however, were the business contacts he made in southern California, which opened the way for corporate backing. Schwarz carved out a niche in that region, which was in the midst of a post-war manufacturing boom fueled in part by massive increases in defense and aerospace technology spending.³⁶

³⁴ Schwarz to McIntire, 27 March 1951, Box 204, Folder 19, McIntire Collection; McIntire to Lionel F.S. Brown and Claude Bunzel, 11 March 1952, *ibid.*

³⁵ McIntire to Schwarz, 21 March 1952, Box 204, Folder 29, McIntire Collection, Bunzel to McIntire, 14 June 1952, *ibid.*, Box 204, Folder 29; McIntire to Bunzel, 24 June 1952, *ibid.*

³⁶ Schwarz to McIntire, 15 May 1952, McIntire Collection, *ibid.*; Schwarz to McIntire, 25 November 1952, *ibid.*; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 61, 155; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 187.

Waterloo, Iowa, IFCA evangelist W. E. Pietsch took a keen interest in Schwarz's work and guided him through the legal hoops necessary to incorporate his ministry as a tax exempt religious organization. In 1953, they chartered the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade (CACC). Pietsch became its president and Schwarz the managing director. Whereas Pietsch preached against communism from a premillennial perspective within the fold of fundamentalism during the 1930s, Schwarz transcended the fundamentalist subculture by avoiding discussions of premillennial prophecy and instead concentrated on Marxism's threat to Western civilization. This difference characterized the way fundamentalists engaged the issue of communism before and after World War II. Premillennial speculation moved to an ancillary position in fundamentalist thought simultaneous to the United States's foreign policy shift from isolationism to Cold War internationalism.³⁷

A mainstay of Schwarz's operation became the itinerant anticommunist school. These week-long seminars incorporated a series of daily sessions whereby Schwarz and other guest lecturers enlightened attendees on Marxist philosophy and the methods used by communists to gain power. The CACC's anticommunist schools cut across denominational lines. In 1958, a group of conservative Catholics in St. Louis led by Phyllis Schlafly and her husband Fred met with Schwarz and proposed uniting Catholics and Protestants into one organization to fight a common enemy. Schwarz balked at the suggestion, stating that his evangelical base would object. He instead urged the Schlaflys to form an anticommunist organization for Catholics. The couple followed through on his suggestion by creating the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation,

³⁷ Frederick Schwarz, *Beating the Unbeatable Foe: One Man's Victory Over Communism, Leviathan, and the Last Enemy* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 1996), 105.

which they named for Hungarian prelate József Mindszenty, who had been tortured and sentenced to life in prison in 1949 for his opposition to communist rule.³⁸

In contrast to Schwarz's scholarly approach to combating the Red menace, Billy James Hargis evoked emotion rather than reason by marrying anticommunism to southern gospel revivalism. Although Hargis's Christian Echoes National Ministry – better known as Christian Crusade – reached audiences across the nation, his base of support was found among evangelicals from rural America's lower economic classes. That following was consonant with his own blue-collar upbringing in Texarkana, Texas. After completing high school in 1943, he briefly attended unaccredited Ozark Bible College before becoming an ordained minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at the age of seventeen. Hargis began battling communism in 1947, while serving as the minister of the First Christian Church in Sapulpa, Oklahoma. Three years later he quit the pulpit and chartered Christian Crusade to expose the twin threats of communism and religious apostasy. A few years later, he moved his operation to Tulsa, where he built up a small empire that featured a syndicated daily radio program and a monthly magazine, both of which bore the title *Christian Crusade*. Lacking Schwarz's corporate financial backing, Hargis relied heavily on direct mail solicitations. The personalized form letters his organization sent out routinely combined stories of conspiracy, intrigue, and crisis with a plea for funds to rescue America from its moral decline.³⁹

Hargis's rhetorical style greatly simplified history and politics. He equated liberalism with communism and rebaited everything from the civil rights movement to the administration

³⁸ Thayer, *The Farther Shores of Politics*, 253; "Fred Schwarz," *Los Angeles Times*, 4 February 1959, B6; Donald T. Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 80.

³⁹ Williams, *God's Own Party*, 41; Balmer, *Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism*, 269; Heather Hendershot, *What's Fair on the Air: Cold War Right-Wing Broadcasting and the Public Interest* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 185-86.

of John F. Kennedy. Tulsa advertising agent L.E. “Pete” White, who previously lifted Tulsa evangelist Oral Roberts from obscurity, aided Hargis’s career as well by helping him simplify current events into uncomplicated formulaic stories about communist schemes and deceptions. At the height of his popularity in the early 1960s, journalists who analyzed Hargis’s method of communication frequently commented on the sheer anti-intellectualism of his message. One writer for the liberal magazine *The Nation*, for example, wrote in 1962 that Hargis demonstrated a “seeming ignorance of history and the basic laws of the land” and condescendingly declared that he had “mastered the art of moving crowds who want to be freed of the burden of thinking.”⁴⁰

Some credit for Hargis’s success should also go to McIntire, who gave him his first big break. In 1953, McIntire proposed a plan to publicize the work of the ICCC and fight Soviet communism at the same time by floating helium-filled balloons carrying Bibles behind the Iron Curtain. He selected Hargis to direct this project.⁴¹ This venture culminated in the release 10,000 balloons from West Germany in September 1953. As originally envisioned, the plan called for the balloons to carry entire Bibles. However, the project’s organizers were forced to modify that plan when they discovered that the size of balloon needed to carry a Bible into the communist East was cost-prohibitive. Instead, they used smaller-sized balloons and attached Bible excerpts and religious tracts. This project garnered enough publicity and interest for the ICCC to sponsor

⁴⁰ Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 40; Forster and Epstein, *Danger on the Right*, 72; Thomas H. Uzzell, “Billy James Hargis: A Pitch of God and Country,” *The Nation*, 17 February 1962, 142.

⁴¹ Inspiration for the Bible Balloon Project came from the Crusade for Freedom balloon launch in 1951. Crusade for Freedom, which received broad financial support from such corporate sponsors as General Mills, sent messages of freedom to the people of Czechoslovakia. Billy James Hargis, *But God!* (Sapulpa, OK: Billy James Hargis Publishing Co., ca. 1954), 25.

an annual launch each of the next four years, with Hargis serving as the director for the duration.⁴²

McIntire's relationship with each of these individuals ebbed and flowed during the next few decades, and he intermingled with other Christian anticommunists along the way. Notable among them was Verne Kaub, who ran the Madison, Wisconsin-based American Council of Christian Laymen. Kaub formed the ACCL in 1949 after retiring as a public information representative for Wisconsin Power and Light. Kaub's pamphlet *How Red is the Federal (National) Council of Churches?* became the *pièce de résistance* for his small organization and underwent numerous printings during the 1950s. It relied on the common practice of making guilt by association accusations that linked prominent National Council clergymen to organizations suspected of being subversive.⁴³

As the era of McCarthyism wound into high gear, conservative writers aided the fundamentalist right with their critical assessments of liberal Protestantism. John T. Flynn's *The Road Ahead*, which enjoyed wide circulation among conservative readers, represented the most important of these works. His attack on the Federal Council of Churches put that organization on the defensive and compelled General Secretary Samuel McCrea Cavert to publish a twelve-page booklet refuting his charges. A few months after the release of Flynn's book, *Reader's Digest* printed Stanley High's "Methodism's Pink Fringe," which took aim at the Methodist Federation

⁴² Earnest Schmidt, "Bible Carrying Balloons Launched!" (n.d.), Box 13, Folder 31, McIntire Collection, Box 13; Hendershot, *What's Fair On the Air*, 189. Hargis claimed that the Bible Balloons had a "direct bearing" on the failed 1956 Hungarian Revolution. He cited a speech by the Hungarian envoy to the U.N., who reportedly stated that American financial backing as well as propaganda, which included leaflets and booklets floated into Hungary by gas-filled balloon, were responsible for the uprising. "Bible Balloons Help Hungarian Revolt," *Christian Crusade Magazine* (December 1953), 1.

⁴³ Roy, *Apostles of Discord*, 244-45; Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 60; The 80-year-old Kaub transferred control of his organization to the American Council in 1964. The ACCC renamed it the Laymen's Council of the American Council of Christian Churches. "Notice of Special Meeting," Box 6, Folder 25, Papers of Verne P. Kaub, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI.

for Social Action. High's article renewed a struggle within the Methodist Church to purge its radical clergy and force the MFSA to remove the word Methodist from its name. Two prominent Methodist lay groups that formed at this time were the Circuit Riders, led by Cincinnati businessman Myers G. Lowman, and the Houston-based Committee for the Preservation of Methodism. Pressure from these groups and other Methodist lay members dealt a devastating blow to the MFSA that nearly shuttered it.⁴⁴

The ACCC and Congressional Anticommunism

Without a doubt the single most controversial attack on liberal Protestantism came from former Methodist social gospel clergyman turned right-wing anticommunist J.B. Matthews. His July 1953 *American Mercury* article titled "Reds in Our Churches" opened with the line, "The largest single group supporting the Communist apparatus in the United States is composed of Protestant clergymen." Matthews claimed that the Communist party had "enlisted the support of at least seven thousand Protestant clergymen." This figure included actual party members as well as fellow-travelers and "unwitting dupes."⁴⁵

Publication of J.B. Matthews's *American Mercury* article set off political fireworks in the nation's capital just ahead of the July Fourth holiday weekend. Just two weeks earlier, Joseph McCarthy had named Matthews executive staff director for his Permanent Senate Investigations Subcommittee. Although Matthews submitted "Reds in Our Churches" to *American Mercury* before his selection as director of that committee, McCarthy's enemies exploited the timing of its

⁴⁴ Cavert, *The American Churches in the Ecumenical Movement*, 195; Cavert, *An Analysis of John T. Flynn's Reply*; Patrick Allitt, *Religion in America since 1945: A History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 25; Ralph Lord Roy, *Communism and the Churches* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1960), 304-11.

⁴⁵ J.B. Matthews, "Reds and Our Churches," *American Mercury* (July 1953), 3.

publication to transform a religious slur into a political attack against the Protestant churches. McCarthy refused to fire Matthews despite mounting pressure from Protestant religious leaders, Democratic politicians, and even a majority of members from his own subcommittee. On July 9, just a little over a week after this controversy emerged, Matthews recognized that he had become a political liability to McCarthy and tendered his resignation. However, before McCarthy could announce his departure, President Eisenhower released a statement repudiating Matthews's allegation. In a telegram to leaders of the National Conference on Christians and Jews that the White House made public, Eisenhower called Matthews's attack "generalized and irresponsible" and remarked that it betrayed "contempt for the principles of freedom and decency." Eisenhower's contempt for McCarthy was not a secret among Washington's press corps, and the President's response signaled his most forceful rebuke of the Wisconsin Senator to date. This episode ultimately marked a turning point in McCarthy's political fortunes by providing moderate Republicans with the opening they needed to contain the wildfire of demagogic anticommunism and reclaim the soul of the party.⁴⁶

The Matthews affair took place during a very tense period in church-state relations. It unfolded in the midst of a contentious public dispute between Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam and the House Un-American Activities Committee. Oxnam was already scheduled to testify before HUAC on July 21 when the political storm over "The Reds in Our Churches" erupted. Matthews's accusation heightened anxieties among civil libertarians and liberal Protestants that there were no sacred institutions when it came to the work of congressional

⁴⁶ Richard M. Fried, *Men Against McCarthy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 267-68; Richard M. Fried, *Nightmare in Red: The McCarthy Era in Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 132; Robert Griffith, *The Politics of Fear: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Senate* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1970), 232-34; Powers, *Not Without Honor*, 267; C.P. Trussell, "Senators Predict Matthews Ouster," *New York Times*, 9 July 1953, 9; C.P. Trussell, "Eisenhower Scores Attack on Clergy; McCarthy Aide Out," *New York Times*, 10 July 1953, 1.

anticommunist crusaders. While the conflict between HUAC and Oxnam contributed to the political fallout that resulted from Matthews's attack on the Protestant clergy, the controversy stirred by his article consequently added drama to Oxnam's appearance before HUAC later that same month.

For McIntire and other fundamentalists in the ACCC these events represented the long-awaited quest to utilize the power of the federal government to expose the social gospel's political agenda and turn public opinion against the churches that nurtured it. The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) proved to be the ACCC's most effective ally in validating its claims that communists and their fellow travelers riddled the mainline denominations. In these controversies, members of HUAC upheld the principles associated with Christian Americanism. For the most part, the committee's strategy in ferreting out religious expressions it deemed un-American was informal and relied on public cooperation to identify subversives and mete out the necessary sanctions.

It conveyed this approach in the booklet *100 Things You Should Know About Communism and Religion*, which was one in a series of five question-and-answer booklets HUAC published in 1948 to alert the public about communism's threat to specific cultural institutions. The first part of the booklet described the suppression of organized religion in communist nations, while the second half outlined efforts to undermine religion in the United States. The committee identified a few subversive organizations and individuals within the ranks of Protestantism, which included the MFSA. But it also cautioned that Stalin's agents seldom worked in the open and pointed out that they were "not as important as the others who have joined the Communist fronts which the Attorney General and this committee have declared to be 'subversive.'" Through such warnings, HUAC ostensibly enlisted the public's help to identify

suspect clergymen, monitor the company they kept, and take appropriate action to purge their churches of subversive influences.⁴⁷

In the decade following World War II, more than any other clergyman, Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam came under fire from conservative anticommunists. This reaction stemmed from his high profile in the ecumenical movement. After his election as bishop in 1936, he led the episcopates at Omaha, Boston, and New York before receiving his final assignment as Bishop of Washington, D.C., in 1952.⁴⁸ During that period he also became a respected figure in the Federal Council of Churches. His peers elected him to a two-year term as president of the Federal Council in 1944. And in 1948 they selected him to serve on the presidium of the World Council of Churches. As a strident supporter of civil liberties, economic justice, and international goodwill, Oxnam joined numerous secular organizations during his career that advanced those causes. This proclivity created trouble for him when various governmental agencies began drawing up lists of communist-front organizations.⁴⁹

Politically Oxnam adhered to an ideology that Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., defined in 1949 as vital center liberalism. Oxnam approved of economic planning and cooperative capitalism insofar as they benefitted the common good. But he also cautioned that the gospel of Christ transcended any and all economic systems. He articulated this philosophy most forcefully in his

⁴⁷ Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998), xiv; U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Un-American Activities, *100 Things You Should Know About Communism Series* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1949), 47.

⁴⁸ Angela Lahr, "The Censure of a Bishop: Church and State in the McCarthy Era," *Methodist History* 44 (October 2005), 30; King, "The Reform Establishment and the Ambiguities of Influence," 124-27; Cavert, *The American Churches in the Ecumenical Movement*, 200.

⁴⁹ Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 262-63; Timothy L. Hall, *American Religious Leaders* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2003), 283; Oxnam's association with most of those groups predated their listing as subversive organizations. Yet anti-subversive agencies such as HUAC treated them retroactively: it made no difference whether an individual belonged to a group prior to the date of its listing. See *Testimony of Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam: Hearing Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, Eighty-third Congress, First Session. July 21, 1953* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954), 3632.

1950 essay “Jesus, the Revolutionist,” which stated, “the Christian Gospel can never be identified with any economic system: capitalism, communism, or socialism. It stands in judgment upon all systems.”⁵⁰

Fundamentalists charged that Oxnam’s economic philosophy aided communism. In 1946, McIntire labeled him the “Red bishop” after HUAC released a report critical of Oxnam’s ties to organizations and individuals it identified as radical. McIntire praised the committee for rendering a “valuable service to the cause of liberty” in that attack and expressed his hope that it would investigate the Federal Council.⁵¹ Others in the American Council raised public alarm about Oxnam as well. Their rhetoric became notably shrill after the publication of *The Road Ahead* and “Methodism’s Pink Fringe.” David Otis Fuller, for example, disparaged Oxnam in a letter to the editor of the *Grand Rapids Herald* after the bishop spoke in there in 1950. Fuller pointed out that Oxnam belonged to eleven communist organizations listed as subversive by the Attorney General and implored the newspaper’s readers to open their eyes to what was happening in American Protestantism. During a speaking engagement at Youngstown, Ohio, that same year, Edgar C. Bundy reportedly accused Oxnam of pilfering \$20,000 from a church mission fund to distribute Jerome Davis’s “pro-Soviet” book *Behind Soviet Power* to all Methodist ministers. Oxnam threatened Bundy with a libel suit afterwards and secured affidavits from three witnesses. Bundy retorted that he could find fifty witnesses who would swear he did not make that claim.⁵² Oxnam knew that McIntire was the principal figure behind this agitation

⁵⁰ G. Bromley Oxnam, *Preaching in a Revolutionary Age* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1944), 42, 92; Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 483-84.

⁵¹ McIntire, *The Rise of the Tyrant*, 92; McIntire, *Modern Tower of Babel*, 154-55; “The ‘Red’ Bishop,” *Christian Beacon*, 21 November 1946, 4.

⁵² Fuller to *Grand Rapids Herald*, 8 March 1950, Box 3, Folder 15, Wealthy Park Baptist Church Records; Edgar C. Bundy, *Apostles of Deceit* (Wheaton, IL: Church League of America, 1966), 327; Bundy to Oxnam, 22 June 1950, Box 45, Folder 2, Oxnam Papers; Oxnam to Bundy, 14 July 1950, *ibid.*

and resisted responding to his challenges as much as possible, stating that to do so “is to admit that what he is doing justifies the attention of those of us who are carrying very heavy responsibilities in the world church.”⁵³

Oxnam did not shrink from controversy and criticized HUAC on a number of occasions for its methods during the early Cold War. In 1953 the political conditions were ripe for a showdown as the Second Red Scare reached its zenith. This confrontation began in February when Agnes E. Meyer, wife of *Washington Post* owner Eugene Meyer, impugned the work of the committee during a speech at a school administrators’ conference. The new chairman of HUAC, Pekin, Illinois, native Harold Velde, retaliated by releasing evidence implicating Agnes Meyer as a communist sympathizer. However, it was quickly discovered that the evidence Velde released instead referred to a Mrs. G.S. Mayer, who lived in British Columbia.⁵⁴ HUAC’s chairman sheepishly conceded that this error was an “honest mistake.” However the incident reinforced Oxnam’s essential point that the committee had no right to release information from its files to the public. During an address at American University on February 24, he assailed HUAC for its recklessness:

There isn’t a man in this country who cannot be ruined overnight by the kind of procedure followed, wherein a lie is released by a responsible committee and given wide publicity....Without investigating the lie, the committee will send out, on its official letterhead, these lies and will do so over the signature of an official clerk. People receiving this information naturally assume it to be an opinion of the committee.⁵⁵

Members of HUAC did not allow Oxnam’s insult to pass without requital. Two weeks after his speech at American University, Velde suggested that the committee might investigate

⁵³ Oxnam to R.O. Brown, 9 June 1953, Box 45, Folder 14, Oxnam Papers.

⁵⁴ “Velde Orders Probe in Blast by Mrs. Meyer,” *Chicago Tribune*, 19 February 1953, 19; “Rep. Velde Admits Error in Accusing Mrs. Meyer,” *Chicago Tribune*, 20 February 1953, 17.

⁵⁵ Jeanne Rogers, “Methodist Bishop Flays Techniques of Probers,” *Washington Post*, 25 February 1953, 1-2.

communist infiltration into religion during the next session. However, he quickly sensed that he wandered into a political minefield and backtracked a few days later amid an outcry of protests from church leaders, newspaper columnists, and even a couple of members from his own committee.⁵⁶ Undeterred by this uproar, California Representative Donald L. Jackson, who was also a member of HUAC, pressed the matter further. During a long oration on the House floor on March 17 about communist subversion in the U.S., Jackson stated that he was initially “shocked” at Velde’s suggestion but indicated that he changed his mind after receiving a flood of correspondence supportive of the idea. Jackson then excoriated Oxnam for his radicalism and called for an investigation of religion:

Bishop Oxnam has been to the Communist front what Man O' War was to thoroughbred horse racing, and no one but the good bishop pays much attention to his fulminations these days. Having served God on Sunday and the Communist front for the balance of the week, over such a long period of time, it is no wonder that the bishop sees an investigating committee in every vestry....I feel that no greater service can be rendered to God and man alike than to find out what men, if any, would place the thorny crown of the Kremlin upon the brow of the Prince of Peace.”⁵⁷

Jackson’s speech echoed language used by the Los Angeles-based Better America Federation thirty years earlier to smear Oxnam: “Even in this country, among the number who are giving sympathy to the Soviets of Moscow, are clergymen who preach the Gospel on Sundays and assist in the promotion of Sovietism during the week.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ “Group in House May Attempt Next Year to Learn Whether Religious Are Infiltrated,” *New York Times*, 10 March 1953, 1; “Velde Says He Was Misinterpreted on Probe of Clergy as Colleagues Decry Such a Move,” *Washington Post*, 11 March 1953, 6; “Information from the House Committee on Un-American Activities,” *Christian Beacon*, 26 March 1953, 2.

⁵⁷ “The Continuing Attack,” 83rd Congress, 1st Sess., *Congressional Record* (17 March 1953), 2024. President Eisenhower expressed disapproval of an investigation into religion during a press conference two days after Jackson’s speech. He indicated that the church, “with its testimony on the existence of an Almighty God,” seemed the last institution in need of investigation and contended that no possible good would come of it. A Gallup poll taken during that period found that 36 percent of the respondents favored an investigation of the churches. See Herbert S. Parmet, *Eisenhower and the American Crusades* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 231.

⁵⁸ Quote from “A Solemn Warning,” *The King’s Business* (October 1923), 4-5.

Several clergymen in the American Council recognized that Oxnam's attack on HUAC made him vulnerable to reprisal and mobilized for action before either Velde or Jackson suggested an investigation of religion. The week after Oxnam's speech at American University, Billy James Hargis accompanied ACCC representatives William Harlee Bordeaux and Arthur Slaght on a visit to Capitol Hill to press Senator Joseph McCarthy for an investigation of religion. They did not get an opportunity to see McCarthy, who was in a hearing at the time, but they did speak with his aides. They directed the trio to William Jenner, chair of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. While Jenner received them warmly and expressed sympathy for their cause, the SISS's chief legal counsel told them that he needed solid evidence that the clergymen in question were members of the Communist Party before it undertook an investigation. Neither McCarthy nor Jenner showed much interest in wading into the quagmire of religion.⁵⁹

After Jackson made his speech on the House floor on March 17, McIntire rejoiced, "We will have to wait a good long time to get as good a break as the Lord gave us at this point." Members of the ACCC funneled information on Oxnam to the committee, and McIntire rushed into print a pamphlet titled *Bishop Oxnam, Prophet of Marx*. In it he called Oxnam "the leading 'religious disciple' of Marx in the free world" and briefly outlined his connections to subversive groups. He also initiated a petition drive urging HUAC to investigate religion. This campaign culminated in the ACCC's Christian Crusade Against Communist rally at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., on May 8. The event featured a guest appearance by Donald L. Jackson, who praised the ACCC for its support and hauled

⁵⁹ Bordeaux to Kaub, 2 March 1953, American Council of Christian Laymen Records, reel 6 (microfilm edition 1987), Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI; Bordeaux to Kaub, 6 March 1953, *ibid.*; Slaght to Kaub, 23 April 1953, *ibid.*

away two large bundles of petitions bearing the signatures of 25,000 people asking for an investigation of religion.⁶⁰

A war of words ensued that spring between Oxnam and members of HUAC, with each side amassing its legion of supporters. In late April, Oxnam and Congressman Jackson debated one another on the NBC's half-hour radio and television program *American Forum of the Air* over the question, "Is Criticism of House Un-American Activities Committee Methods Justified?" Jackson reiterated the need for HUAC to "investigate all possible leads" into communist subversion and defended its method of collecting information as a means of determining a person's "philosophical bent." Oxnam rebutted Jackson by asking, "Can the philosophy of an individual be determined by a scissors and paste process of cutting out clippings that damn?" Oxnam pointed out that the committee never released any information about his clerical or professional achievements. Therefore it did not paint an accurate picture of him. Once again he challenged HUAC on its use state power to intimidate and coerce.⁶¹

During that debate, Jackson invited Oxnam to seek redress before the committee if he felt unfairly treated. Oxnam resisted this overture out of concern that the Un-American Activities Committee would be primarily interested in character assassination rather than discovering the truth. But he relented in early June after Jackson rebuffed a Methodist conference appeal for him to apologize by retorting that "the place to adjudicate matters with the Committee was before the Committee." Ultimately, Oxnam considered HUAC's methods too great a threat to civil liberties

⁶⁰ McIntire to Kaub, 13 April 1953, *ibid.*; Carl McIntire, "Bishop Oxnam, Prophet of Marx," *Christian Beacon*, 9 April 1953, 1; "Congressman Jackson Receives ACCC Petitions in Washington Mass Meeting," *Christian Beacon*, 14 May 1953, 1, 8.

⁶¹ G. Bromley Oxnam, *I Protest* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), 37-38.

not to accept this challenge. On June 5, he contacted Velde to request a hearing, which was subsequently scheduled for July 21.⁶²

During the intervening weeks, the committee prepared for this hearing by conducting an inquiry of communist influences in religion. It met in executive session in New York during the first two weeks of July to hear testimony from several ex-Communist Party members who had appeared previously before HUAC as friendly witnesses. They included Manning Johnson, Joseph Kornfeder, Benjamin Gitlow, Leonard Patterson, and Herbert Philbrick. Those witnesses confirmed the Communist Party's enmity towards religion and recycled the names of known suspects. The Methodist Federation for Social Action came up frequently in those hearings as did the names of the MFSA's long-time director Harry F. Ward and his successor Jack McMichael. Because none of the witnesses had any current affiliation with the Communist Party, the information they provided tended to be badly outdated or based on hearsay. These attributes rendered disservice to a number of clergymen whose only crime may have been holding extremely liberal political and religious views.⁶³

Oxnam suspected that McIntire and the American Council were responsible for HUAC's sudden religious awakening. Indeed, Velde and Jackson did establish a cozy relationship with the American Council.⁶⁴ Oxnam's suspicion was confirmed when seven militant fundamentalists turned up for his hearing and received special treatment compliments of Congressman Jackson. Five of them were seated right behind Oxnam for the proceedings. They were American Council

⁶² Entries in 1953 diary, 22 April 1953, 7 June 1953, 12 June 1953, Box 22, Oxnam Papers.

⁶³ Roy, *Communism and the Churches*, 235-48; Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 524.

⁶⁴ In addition to Jackson's appearance at the American Council's rally on May 8, Bundy secured Velde as the main speaker for a dinner sponsored by the Abraham Lincoln National Republican Club in Chicago the following week. McIntire gave the invocation at that dinner. Bundy served as the club's president. Bundy to McIntire, 24 March 1953, Box 170, Folder 50, McIntire Collection; Bundy to McIntire, 27 April 1953, *ibid*.

President W.W. Breckbill, Vice President W.O.H. Garman, *Baptist Bible Tribune* editor Noel Smith, Edgar C. Bundy, and Bundy's pastor Victor Sears. Bundy attended the hearing in place of McIntire, who was attending a previously scheduled meeting in the Far East for the International Council of Christian Churches.⁶⁵

Oxnam's hearing began at 2:30 in the afternoon and lasted until after midnight. To deflect criticism that HUAC was transgressing against organized religion, Velde emphasized at the outset that Oxnam came at his own request and his appearance should not be interpreted as an investigation of religion. In a rare move, the committee allowed him to make an opening statement. In it he reiterated his request that HUAC discontinue its practice of releasing information on individuals without assuming any responsibility for its accuracy. He also requested that Congressman Jackson make an apology on the House floor for the "unprecedented and untrue statements" against him during his March 17 speech. Finally he stated his conviction that the churches were doing far more to contain the spread of communism than all the congressional investigative committees combined.⁶⁶

Throughout the hearing, members of the Committee refrained from asking questions that could be construed as an attack upon the Methodist Church, the National Council of Churches, or World Council of Churches. Rather, they grilled Oxnam about his attachment to secular groups during the 1930s and early 1940s that later were listed as communist front organizations. Of special interest to the committee was his attachment to the MFSA. Oxnam told the committee that he developed serious misgivings about Harry F. Ward's ideological orientation as leader of

⁶⁵ Oxnam, *I Protest*, 15-16; W.O.H. Garman, "Oxnam's Link with Communists and Communist Fronts Confirmed by Hearing Before Un-American Activities Committee," *Christian Beacon*, 30 July 1953, 1, 4.

⁶⁶ *Testimony of Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 3589.

the MFSA during the early 1930s. He also informed them that he resigned as the MFSA's vice-president in 1947 when he found Jack McMichael too radical for his liking.⁶⁷

Oxnam proved himself a forceful debater and handled himself adeptly in the adversarial setting of a HUAC inquiry. At a few different points during the evening, he blunted the committee's guilt by association tactic. When the committee attempted to implicate him for his wartime membership in the far-left National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, for example, he countered by quoting a 1945 message by Dwight D. Eisenhower commending the work of that group. As the hearing wound to a close, California Congressman Clyde Doyle motioned to let the record show that Oxnam had no affiliation with the Communist Party. This motion carried without dissent. However, the committee did not express the same unanimity when it came to Oxnam's affiliation with organizations that promoted communism. Jackson and Velde, at least, remained adamant that Oxnam had been a dupe of the Communist Party.⁶⁸

This hearing likely swayed the opinions of few if any partisan observers. For the clergymen in the American Council, it confirmed Oxnam's complicity in aiding communism. W.O.H. Garman's account of the hearing, which appeared in the *Christian Beacon*, opened with the lead, "That Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam worked with communists and communist fronts was definitely established." He rated this hearing second only to that of Alger Hiss's for its scandalous revelations and justified the need for a more in-depth investigation of religion by

⁶⁷ *Testimony of G. Bromley Oxnam*, 3734-35. Oxnam terminated his membership in the MFSA in 1948 after the editor of its publication, *Social Questions Bulletin*, made *ad hominem* attacks on John Foster Dulles and Martin Niemöller. Oxnam to Charles Flint, 19 July 1936, Box 68, Folder 10, Oxnam Papers; Oxnam to McMichael, 15 November 1948, *ibid*.

⁶⁸ Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 577-78; *Testimony of G. Bromley Oxnam*, 3602, 3801-02.

pointing out that Oxnam knew of the radical views held by Harry F. Ward and Jack McMichael yet took no action to censure them within the church.⁶⁹

Garman believed this event represented the opening act of a larger investigation into religion, and he looked forward to more spectacles like it. He had good reason to make this assumption. On July 20, the day before Oxnam's hearing, members of HUAC voted six to three to bring J.B. Matthews before the committee later in the year to hear evidence relating to his *American Mercury* article.⁷⁰ And two days after Oxnam appeared before HUAC, the committee subpoenaed Jack McMichael and scheduled him to testify the following week. McMichael made an easy target for committee members. His standing in the church took a severe beating after publication of Stanley High's "Methodism's Pink Fringe" article three years earlier. Since then, McMichael had been forced out as executive secretary of the MFSA, reassigned to a small church in northern California, tagged as a member of the Communist Party by HUAC's informants, and harshly criticized by Oxnam during his hearing.⁷¹

The mood surrounding McMichael's hearing contrasted significantly to the adversarial yet civil tone that characterized Oxnam's nine days earlier. McMichael irritated the committee's members from the start by showing up twenty minutes late for his hearing and demonstrated contempt of their work through the use of sarcasm and passive resistance. The Georgia-born clergyman, speaking in a folksy manner, tried to pass himself off as a simple gospel-loving country preacher. When his inquisitors produced evidence linking him to known radical groups, he reminded the committee that in the Gospel of Luke it stated that Jesus Christ spoke to

⁶⁹ W.O.H. Garman, "Oxnam's Link with Communists and Communist Fronts Confirmed by Hearing Before Un-American Activities Committee," *Christian Beacon*, 30 July 1953, 1, 5, 8.

⁷⁰ C.P. Trussell, "Velde Group Votes to Hear Matthews," *New York Times*, 21 July 1953, 1.

⁷¹ C.P. Trussell, "House Red Inquiry Summons a Pastor," *New York Times*, 24 July 1953, 8; Roy, *Communism and the Churches*, 311, 315.

Pharisees, publicans, and sinners alike. Ohio Republican congressman Gordon Scherer saw through McMichael's ploy and beseeched him to leave Jesus out of the hearing. But before he finished his sentence, McMichael seized the opportunity that Scherer presented:

It's a little hard for me to leave Jesus out. You may be able to do it. But I can't. In a situation like this, where guilt by association seems to be the principle on which you are operating rather than an analysis of the activities itself, I am sure He would have long ago been haled before this committee.⁷²

Ultimately, McMichael denied ever being a member of the Communist Party and repudiated his accusers as "liars and perjurers" who should be bound over for trial. His two-day hearing taxed the patience of the committee, which eventually referred his case to the Justice Department for a perjury indictment. However, that agency declined to pursue the matter.⁷³

There ended HUAC's inquiry into subversive influences in the Protestant religion. In October 1953, Velde signaled his desire for rapprochement with mainline Protestant leaders when he praised America's religious bodies as the "the greatest single force combating communism" and announced his intention to enlist the "advice and counsel" of representatives from the three major faith groups.⁷⁴ The reasons for Velde's sudden conciliatory mood are a matter of speculation.⁷⁵ But it is clear that his committee had antagonized scores of mainline

⁷² Roy, *Communism and the Churches*, 314-15; Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 592; *Hearings Regarding Jack R. McMichael: Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, Eighty-third Congress, First Session. July 30 and 31, 1953* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1953), 2762.

⁷³ Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 592; John Fisher, "Put McMichael Perjury Action to Prosecutor," *Chicago Tribune*, 25 August 1953, 10; *Hearings Regarding Jack R. McMichael*, 2657.

⁷⁴ "Velde Asks Clergy for Inquiry Advice," *New York Times*, 25 October 1953, 26.

⁷⁵ Charles C. Parlin, who served as Oxnam's chief counsel during his hearing and was an influential layman in the National Council of Churches, met with HUAC's chief legal counsel Robert Kunzig on September 28, 1953. In his report to the NCC's executive committee on that meeting, Parlin remarked that the committee knew very little about McIntire and the American Council. He stated that he gave Kunzig a copy of Ralph Lord Roy's recently released book *The Apostles of Discord*, which contained a chapter outlining the history and activities of the ACCC. Parlin reported that Kunzig found this book a real "eye-opener. He further speculated, "My guess is that Mr. Kunzig having read the book took it to Velde and stirred up in Velde some of the alarm which Kunzig himself felt as he began to understand the nature of the group with whom they had been working." Report by Charles Parlin on

Protestant clergymen during the preceding months. The Methodist Church and the National Council of Churches stood solidly in Oxnam's corner throughout that period. No doubt Velde and other Republicans in Congress realized their party could ill-afford to lose the support of the Protestant establishment heading into an election year. All the while J.B. Matthews waited patiently for a committee hearing that never took place.

Velde's surprise announcement elicited an angry response from ACCC General Secretary William Harllee Bordeaux, who protested, "You, too, would have felt rebuffed to see a committee which you have tried to help in every conceivable manner announce that it was calling representatives of the foe to give it counsel and aid in the prosecution of its important mission." He closed his missive with this warning, "I am persuaded that nothing less than the wisdom of the Almighty God will suffice to preserve you and your Committee from falling into the many pitfalls Satan has prepared against you."⁷⁶

Iron Curtain Ecumenism and Cold War Foreign Policy

McIntire and other members in the ACCC continued to assail Oxnam for several months after his hearing before transitioning to a new protest issue: the World Council of Churches assembly scheduled for August 1954 at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. The shift from the former to the latter took place in December 1953 when the American Council held a Faith and Freedom rally at the American Legion Stadium in Hollywood, California, which

Meeting with Robert Kunzig, 21 October 1953, RG 4, Box 1, Folder 1, Records of the National Council of Churches in Christ, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA.

⁷⁶ "Velde Asks Clergy for Inquiry Advice," *New York Times*, 26; Bordeaux to Velde, 14 November 1953, Box 3, Folder 130, Papers of Harold H. Velde, Dirksen Congressional Center, Pekin, IL.

featured McIntire as the main speaker. The purpose of this gathering was to protest Oxnam's appearance at a nearby American Civil Liberties Union event the following evening.⁷⁷

But McIntire saw this rally as an opportunity to begin galvanizing public opposition against the WCC's invitation for delegations from the communist countries of Czechoslovakia and Hungary to attend the Evanston assembly. He instructed officers in the ACCC's California chapter "to go all out" in organizing this rally and pressed Glendale, California, Bible Presbyterian minister Clyde Kennedy to tap local business leaders for funds to underwrite publicity expenses. "To get 6,000 people there is our big task now," he told Kennedy. "Contact by all means the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and all patriotic women's groups. Get, if possible, their mailing lists." Ultimately, the ACCC's Hollywood rally drew only about one-third the number of people McIntire sought.⁷⁸

Under the terms of the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, an alien who belonged to a communist organization or promoted Marxism was barred from entering the United States. This law effectively blocked delegations from Czechoslovakia and Hungary from attending the World Council assembly. Exceptions could be made if the Secretary of State recommended a waiver and the Attorney General approved it. As the highest ranking officer from the U.S. in the World Council Churches, Bishop Oxnam expressed awareness of this problem already in the spring of 1953 when he conferred with his old friend Secretary of State John Foster Dulles about resolving it. Dulles saw the potential benefit to American foreign policy in allowing the eleven clergymen from Hungary and Czechoslovakia to enter the United

⁷⁷ This idea for this rally began after Oxnam was barred from speaking at Philharmonic Auditorium for an event sponsored by the Southern California chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union. Temple Baptist Church, which owned the auditorium, deemed Oxnam too controversial. Los Angeles area clergymen in the American Council capitalized on the publicity generated by this story by organizing this event. "Opportunity," *Christian Beacon*, 24 December 1953, 1; "Oxnam Talk Barred," *New York Times*, 22 October 1953, 19.

⁷⁸ McIntire to Kennedy, 20 November 1953, Box 10, Folder 9, McIntire Collection; McIntire to Kennedy, 28 November 1953, *ibid.*; "More Faith and Freedom Rallies," *Christian Beacon*, 24 December 1953, 1.

States. He recommended that they receive visas on the grounds that their attendance at the WCC assembly could spiritually strengthen the Protestant churches in the Eastern Bloc and ultimately help to undermine communist rule there. Final approval for Dulles's recommendation rested with Attorney General Herbert Brownell, Jr., who held off on his decision until a month before the August 15 opening of the WCC assembly.⁷⁹

In contrast to Dulles's reasoning, fundamentalists in the American Council saw the Hungarian and Czech clergymen as agents of Soviet communism and sought their exclusion from the United States. GARBC minister Ray F. Hamilton, who was pastor of the Belden Avenue Baptist Church in Chicago, summed up the logic behind the ACCC's opposition in an editorial letter to the *Chicago Tribune*:

It ought to be clear to you, that the coming of such representatives from behind the iron curtain would only be for the avowed purpose of using the Evanston meeting as a sounding board for their own communistic philosophy. These men are not free religious leaders nor do they truly represent the Evangelical churches from behind the iron curtain. They are mere puppets in the hands of their communistic masters. They do not dare to express anything but that which meets the full approval of their political leaders.⁸⁰

The challenge by McIntire and the ACCC to granting visas to the Iron Curtain clergymen generated a wave of right-wing opposition during the first half of 1954. The *Christian Beacon* provided a barrage of criticism, focusing most intently on Czech theologian and WCC Central Committee member Josef Hromádka, whom McIntire called the "no. 1 communist clergyman." In April 1954, a delegation of twelve ACCC clergymen, led by McIntire, presented petitions to the State Department and Justice Department urging government officials to bar the Czech and Hungarian clerics from entering the country. The briefs they submitted asserted that freedom of

⁷⁹ Oxnam to Dulles, 6 April 1953, reel 27, Papers of John Foster Dulles (microfilm edition, Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1986); Oxnam to Dulles, 2 November 1953, *ibid.*; Miller, *Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam*, 377-78; Roy *Communism and the Churches*, 264.

⁸⁰ R.F. Hamilton, "The World Council of Churches," *Chicago Tribune*, 17 March 1954, 20.

worship did not exist behind the Iron Curtain and that the eleven clergymen in question were “communist agents coming for the known purpose of propagandizing for Russia.”⁸¹

Thanks to the influence he wielded as a member of the American Legion’s National Americanism Committee, Edgar C. Bundy simultaneously pushed this matter before members of that organization. In March 1954, the Cook County (Illinois) Council of the American Legion passed a resolution urging the State Department to bar four WCC clergymen from the United States: Josef Hromádka, Hungarian Bishop Albert Berezky, Swedish Bishop Theodore Arvidson, and Dutch theologian Willem Visser’t Hooft, who was general secretary of the WCC. Although Arvidson and Visser’t Hooft hailed from countries not aligned with the Soviet Bloc, the American Legion’s resolution placed them in the same category as Hromádka and Berezky for their antagonism to capitalism and America. Both the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times* criticized the Legion for this resolution. The *Tribune*, a citadel of Midwestern conservatism, stated that “the Legion resolution, well intentioned as it may be, is no credit to Chicago, the host city of the world assembly.” The editorial also pointed out that Visser’t Hooft was no more a communist than were members of the Legion’s anti-subversive committee.⁸² Undeterred by this criticism, the Illinois American Legion issued a similar statement against the same four clergymen, while the American Legion’s National Executive Committee mirrored the ACCC in calling for a ban on the Czech and Hungarian delegations.⁸³

⁸¹ “Joseph Hromadka,” *Christian Beacon*, 22 July 1954, 1, 8; “American Council Files Petition with State Department, Attorney General’s Office, U.S. Information Agency,” *Christian Beacon*, 22 April 1954, 1.

⁸² Roy, *Communism and the Churches*, 264; Jorstad, *Politics of Doomsday*, 58; “American Legion of State of Illinois Unanimously Passes Cook County Statement Asking Secretary of State Exclude Communist Clergy From WCC Meeting,” *Christian Beacon*, 15 April 1954, 1; “The World Council of Churches,” *Chicago Tribune*, 10 March 1954, 24.

⁸³ McIntire, *Servants of Apostasy*, 111.

Failing in its public drive to exclude the Iron Curtain clergymen, churchmen from the ACCC employed one last protest tactic before the WCC's Evanston meeting. They appealed to President Eisenhower to cancel his August 19 speech at the WCC's general assembly, contending that it would signal an endorsement of communist rule in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Eisenhower disregarded their request. He used the occasion to extol the legacy of America's religious heritage and implored the delegates to work towards securing world peace by "inviting every single person in every single country in the world who believes in the power of a Supreme Being to join in a mighty, simultaneous, intense act of faith." McIntire afterwards commended the President for highlighting the nation's religious inheritance but harshly criticized him for demoting Christianity to an equal among other faiths by invoking a universal Supreme Being.⁸⁴

The ACCC and American Legion together played a crucial role in drawing national attention to the subversive clergymen in the WCC before the Evanston assembly, but during it, protests from Eastern European refugees took center stage. Czech expatriates led by former ambassador to the U.S. Juraj Slavik picketed the WCC's assembly, noisily denouncing Hromádka as a "friend of Red henchmen" and "traitor of Christianity."⁸⁵ The House Select Committee on Communist Aggression gave eastern European refugees a forum to register their disapproval as well. The committee's chair, Michigan Republican Alvin M. Bentley, characterized the WCC's eleven communist clergymen as "obedient automatons in the propaganda service of the Communist governments" and claimed that the decision to grant them

⁸⁴ "American Leaders at ICCA Congress Send Petition to President," *Christian Beacon*, 12 August 1954, 1, 8; "Text of President's Address Before World Council Delegates," *Chicago Tribune*, 20 August 1954, 9; "The President at Evanston," *Christian Beacon*, 26 August 1954, 1.

⁸⁵ "Iron Curtain Clergy in Evanston Becomes National Issue: Exiled Protestants Join in Protest of Delegates Hromadka, Peter," *Christian Beacon*, 26 August 1954, 1 (reprinted from the *Baltimore Sun*).

visas dealt “a crushing blow to the hopes of millions of anticommunists behind the Iron Curtain who looked longingly to the free world for the day of their liberation.” His committee held hearings on the status of religious freedom in the communist East during the WCC’s assembly and heard testimony from several Czech and Hungarian émigrés who described religious persecution in those countries. Bentley also invited Hungarian Bishop Albert Bereczky to testify. He naturally declined the request.⁸⁶

The ACCC’s activism in 1954 became a blueprint for other anticommunist campaigns. In 1956, the organization launched a crusade to exclude eight Soviet clergymen from participating in an NCC-sponsored exchange visit to the United States. The impetus for the NCC’s initiative originated from an appeal at the WCC’s 1954 Evanston assembly for the churches to serve as the vanguard for Cold War détente by establishing closer relations with religious communities in the communist East. The first leg of this exchange took place in March 1956 when NCC President Eugene Carson Blake led a delegation of eight U.S. church representatives on a ten-day tour of the Soviet Union. It was followed by a reciprocal visit three months later when the NCC hosted eight Soviet churchmen led by Russian Orthodox Metropolitan Nikolai.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ WCC delegate Janos Peter came under intense scrutiny during that hearing for allegedly collaborating with the Hungarian secret police. He was the only Iron Curtain clergyman whose visa restricted him from traveling anywhere in the U.S. other than the Chicago area. During the 1956 Hungarian Revolution he and Bishop Albert Bereczky were stripped of their positions in the church until the Soviet invasion brought about their restoration. Roy, *Communism and the Churches*, 265-67; McIntire, *Servants of Apostasy*, 119-23; Congress, House, Representative Bentley (MI), “Re Admission of Certain Czechoslovak and Hungarian Churchmen as Delegates to World Council of Churches Conference,” 83rd Congress, 2nd Sess., *Congressional Record*, 22 July 1954 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954), 11489; Charles Grutzner, “Five Testify Reds Oppress Hungary,” *New York Times*, 24 August 1954, 13.

⁸⁷ The Soviet clerics included three Russian Orthodox prelates, two Evangelical Lutherans, two Baptists, and one Armenian clergyman. R. Douglas Brackenridge, “‘A Beginning Has Been Made:’ Eugene Carson Blake and the Soviet Union, 1956,” *American Presbyterians* 68 (Summer 1990), 89-91; Roy, *Communism and the Churches*, 267-68; George Dugan, “Church Leaders Will Go to Russia,” *New York Times*, 6 October 1955, 10; “Eight Soviet Clerics En Route to U.S.,” *New York Times*, 2 June 1956, 3.

As with the WCC's Iron Curtain delegations in 1954, the ACCC sought to leverage foreign policy against the ecumenical movement. Significantly, their protests disapproved of any cultural exchange designed to facilitate détente, which they equated with appeasement. The president of the ACCC, Canton, Ohio, gospel minister Harland O'Dell, appealed to President Eisenhower in late April for him to cancel the visas of the eight Soviet clergymen. O'Dell pointed out that Soviet intelligence defector Yuri Rastvorov recently revealed in testimony before a Senate subcommittee that the churches in Russia were under complete control of the secret police. O'Dell demanded that some explanation be given by the Eisenhower administration for ignoring this testimony. "We cannot as a Council of Churches sit idly by and permit the Reds to use the churches to promote their sinister purposes of world revolution," he said.⁸⁸

In the weeks prior to the June 1 arrival of the Soviet clergymen, the American Council staged a series of Faith and Freedom rallies in Philadelphia, Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago to mobilize grassroots protest against the churchmen's visit. The ACCC attempted to draw support for this campaign from outside the fold of fundamentalism by emphasizing the theme of Christian patriotism and including refugee clergymen who fled Stalinist persecution as program speakers. The speeches at those rallies, which each drew between 1,500 and 2,000 people, essentially reiterated the same argument that the group had been making since its campaign against the WCC two years earlier, namely that the churches behind the Iron Curtain merely functioned as a tool of the communist regime. In his address at Philadelphia's Convention Hall, the pastor of a Ukrainian Baptist Church from Chester, Pennsylvania, asserted that religious freedom existed in the Soviet Union only as "a demonstration for tourists and

⁸⁸ "ACCC Asks Eisenhower to Block Red Clergy's Visit," *Christian Beacon*, 3 May 1956, 1.

Protestant leaders from the United States.” He stated that the number of Baptists in Russia declined from 3,000,000 to 520,000 during the purges of the Stalin era. Those who remained, he declared, were well aware of the suspicion they were under from the secret police.⁸⁹

When the Soviet delegation arrived in the United States, nearly one hundred picketers turned out at New York’s Idlewild Airport to meet it. Protestors included fundamentalists from the ACCC as well immigrants from various countries dominated by the Soviet Union. A similar mix of people turned out at various stops on the Soviet clerics’ itinerary. One of the most boisterous demonstrations took place at Philadelphia, where an estimated crowd of 200 picketers, the majority of them from the ACCC, greeted the Soviet delegation with boos, catcalls, and anti-Soviet placards. A discomfited Eugene Carson Blake issued a statement afterwards disparaging this discourteous display as the view of a disaffected minority of citizens and remarked that “American liberty allows such activities, even when in grossly bad taste.” Such comments merely reinforced fundamentalists’ view of Blake as a naïve stooge for Soviet communism. As the new leader of global ecumenism in the United States, Blake’s primary interest lay in establishing and maintaining an open channel of communication with Soviet church leaders.⁹⁰

Conclusion

The specter of Soviet communism during the early Cold War played a critical role in precipitating a shift in the ACCC’s topical focus. Its original mission of defending fundamentalists’ religious liberties fell by the wayside as McIntire and other leaders of the

⁸⁹ “The Need for Protest,” *Christian Beacon*, 12 April 1956, 1, 8; Howard McDougall, “Church Collaboration Assailed: Rev. McIntire Flays Visit of 8 Red Clergy at Big Protest Rally,” *Christian Beacon*, 10 May 1956, 1 (reprinted from Camden, NJ, *Courier-Post*).

⁹⁰ Brackenridge, “A Beginning Has Been Made,” 97; “Blake Defends Invitation,” *New York Times*, 6 June 1956, 17; William Weart, “Russians Booed at Liberty Bell,” *New York Times*, 9 June 1956, 20.

ACCC sought to discredit the ecumenical movement with red scare warnings. By the mid-1950s, the ACCC garnered a public reputation for espousing patriotic Christian Americanism more than historic Christian doctrines. Fundamentalists increasingly articulated their views on a range of political issues pertaining to individual liberty and free enterprise after World War II. However, many of them did not view themselves as engaging in partisan politics, arguing that liberty and capitalism were inherent to Christian teachings on the divine ordering of society.

The ideology of Christian Americanism helped nudge fundamentalism in a political direction and bring it into the orbit of the post-World War II anticommunist movement. While McIntire played a principal role in defining and promoting this ideology, the ACCC and its constituent churches became conduits for its dissemination into popular culture. McIntire's recruitment of Edgar C. Bundy, Fred Schwarz, and Billy James Hargis into his Twentieth Century Reformation movement contributed significantly to this development. Each of these three individuals honed his own particular variation of Christian anticommunism within the milieu of Protestant fundamentalism before finding crossover appeal with secular audiences.

Collectively, these efforts helped McIntire and the ACCC to forge cultural connections with conservative politicians and right-wing journalists outside the separatist subculture and marshal right-wing opposition against the ecumenical Protestantism. Historian James Findlay, Jr., argued that the heated attacks against liberal ecumenists during the era of McCarthyism compelled leaders of the NCC to exercise prudence over the council's response to civil rights and other important social justice issues. Although McIntire extended the influence of the ACCC and its political theology beyond the boundaries of fundamentalism, the organization he founded exhibited few signs of numerical growth. His push into the sphere of anticommunist politics alienated many long-time allies, who dissociated themselves from him, while new adherents

replaced those who departed. This shift in membership changed the character of the ACCC, which ensured its continuation in a political direction in the decade that followed.⁹¹

⁹¹ Ruotsila, "Carl McIntire and the Fundamentalist Origins of the Christian Right," 392; James Findlay, Jr., *Church People in the Struggle: The National Council of Churches and the Black Freedom Movement, 1950-1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 28; David A. Hollinger, *After Cloven Tongues of Fire: Protestant Liberalism in Modern American History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 36; Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 33.

VII. “Freedom Is Everybody’s Business”: Fundamentalist Politics and the Baptism of Modern Conservative Populism

On September 15, 1959, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev landed in the United States for a twelve-day coast-to-coast visit. His tour of the U.S. would feature stops at the United Nations, Hollywood, and an Iowa farm before concluding with a two-day summit meeting with President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Both leaders agreed to the visit for the purpose of thawing Cold War relations between the two superpowers. But Eisenhower’s invitation to the Soviet leader elicited hostile reaction from a number of conservative anticommunist groups, including the ACCC, because it indicated accommodation with Soviet communism.¹ The council’s secretary, Robert Kofahl, president of Highland College in Pasadena, California, protested to Eisenhower, “It is morally wrong to fraternize with the leaders of the Godless Communist world conspiracy, who have vowed to bury us.” He argued that in light of Khrushchev’s “bloody past,” his visit would deceive Americans about the danger of Soviet communism and ultimately soften their resistance to it. ACCC President Clyde Kennedy called Khrushchev “an international Dillinger” and “the butcher of Hungary,” an obvious reference to the Soviet military’s quashing of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, and reiterated Kofahl’s essential arguments in public statements he issued on behalf of the ACCC.²

As in its 1954 and 1956 campaigns opposing visits by East Bloc clergymen, the ACCC sponsored a series of Faith and Freedom rallies to mobilize grassroots opposition against

¹ Aaron Max Berkowitz, “Mr. Khrushchev Goes to Washington: Domestic Opposition to Nikita Khrushchev’s 1959 Visit to America” (Ph.D. diss, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2010), 9-11; Schoenwald, *A Time for Choosing*, 40-45

² Gene Cowles, “K’ Visit Protest by Christian Churches,” *Christian Beacon*, 3 September 1959, 2 (reprinted from *Los Angeles Times*); “Khrushchev Protest Rallies Planned by ACCC,” *Christian Beacon*, 13 August 1959, 1.

Khrushchev's visit. Like those earlier protests, the council opposed Khrushchev's trip to the U.S. because it symbolized a policy of appeasement. But the nature of this campaign differed from those earlier rallies in a few respects. For one thing, the ACCC did not seek to leverage U.S. foreign policy against the ecumenical movement. Rather, U.S. foreign policy itself became the subject of dissent. Another difference entailed the council's quest to mobilize a more broadly conservative segment of the population. The ACCC displayed this strategy by collaborating with outside patriotic and immigrant groups to stage those rallies. These distinctions revealed a strategic shift by the ACCC to influence wider public opinion on matters where politics and morality intersected.³

This more overtly political direction resulted to some extent from a change in the underlying structure and purpose of the Twentieth Century Reformation movement. This transformation began in the mid-1950s when a shuffle in the ACCC's membership took place in reaction to McIntire's militancy and his anticommunist cultural politics. The IFCA withdrew from the council in 1953 and shortly after a split took place in the Bible Presbyterian Synod. By the end of the decade, the council's leadership was comprised of McIntire loyalists who demonstrated greater zeal in confronting the menace of communism along a broader political and cultural front. Concurrent to this development, McIntire branched out in an independent direction when he launched his *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* radio program. He started this program on a single station in 1955. Three years later he expanded it into a national broadcast that offered a mix of political propaganda and religion. At the height of its popularity in the mid-

³ Berkowitz, "Mr. Khrushchev Goes to Washington," 62; "Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., Freedom Rallies Manifest Reverent Memorial Spirit," *Christian Beacon*, 17 September 1959, 1; Clyde J. Kennedy, "God, America, and Khrushchev," *Christian Beacon*, 17 September 1959, 4.

1960s, the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* aired on several hundred radio stations and attracted a multitude of listeners dispersed across the country.

The motto that McIntire trumpeted most often during this period epitomized this fundamentalist right insurgency: “freedom is everybody’s business.” This new style of public engagement became part of a surge of conservative populism that began in response to President Eisenhower’s middle-of-the-road modern Republicanism and reached a crescendo during the ascendancy of liberalism under the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. Led by the John Birch Society, this diffuse movement featured a blend of anticommunism, libertarianism, and antielitism. As participants in this grassroots movement, McIntire and other fundamentalists in the ACCC became more well-known for their political views than their religious principles. Journalists and other writers situated them in the milieu of the grassroots right by branding them with such derisive names as the “far right,” “extreme right,” or “radical right.”⁴ During the early 1960s, flashpoint political issues that energized them included the candidacy of Roman Catholic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy, New Frontier and Great Society Democratic liberalism, and the Supreme Court’s rulings against organized school prayer and Bible reading. By the fall of 1964, fundamentalists’ fears about federal socialism and the erosion of individual liberty induced them to pin their hopes on the election of conservative Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater.

Reformation of the Twentieth Century Reformation Movement

The American Council’s foray into politics can be explained in part by the fact that the organization that crusaded against Khrushchev’s visit in 1959 was decidedly different from the

⁴ Forster and Epstein, *Danger on the Right*, 104-05; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 166-67.

one that fought against the cultural tide of religious pluralism a decade earlier. McIntire's Twentieth Century Reformation movement experienced two significant ruptures during the intervening period. One of them took place in 1953 when clergymen in the Independent Fundamental Churches of America voted to leave the ACCC because of its drift into anticommunist crusading. The second schism took place a short time later when reformers in McIntire's own Bible Presbyterian Synod sought to democratize the church and move it beyond constant denunciations of apostasy. Those who remained in the ACCC at the end of the 1950s tended to be churchmen loyal to McIntire and his Twentieth Century Reformation movement.

The IFCA's affiliation with the American Council had never been entirely harmonious. It joined the ACCC as a constituent body in part to place its clergy in the military's chaplaincies, and over time the IFCA's members became increasingly critical of its administration and methods. During World War II, for instance, a murmur of displeasure arose in reaction to McIntire's confrontational approach in negotiating with military leaders for chaplaincy quotas. A few years later many IFCA clergymen wearied of the ACCC's protest agenda, and in 1949 the fellowship formally requested that the council limit the scope of its activities to endeavors mutually agreed upon by its constituent bodies. Some IFCA leaders also became irritated with the ACCC's executive committee for its practice of issuing proclamations on political matters without debate. An example of this took place in 1951 when William McCarrell complained that the executive committee had put the council on record as supporting universal military training – a legislative bill he personally opposed – when its merits had never been discussed among the organization's rank-and-file members. Members of the IFCA, in short, wanted the council to focus more on areas of cooperative evangelism and less on protests and politics.⁵

⁵ Henry, *For Such a Time as This*, 232-33; "Convention Highlights," *The Voice*, July 1949, 10; McCarrell to W.O.H. Garman, 16 July 1951, Folder McCarrell, William, Garman Collection.

Anticommunist crusader Edgar C. Bundy played an instrumental role in provoking a formal split between the IFCA and ACCC. In 1951, he inserted himself into the middle of a simmering rivalry between two fundamentalist clergymen in Elyria, Ohio. Bundy chose to speak at an unaffiliated Baptist church in Elyria rather than at a Regular Baptist church associated with the American Council. When the minister of the Regular Baptist church questioned this decision, Bundy responded belligerently. Given his hostile reply, members of the ACCC's local arrangements committee who were planning the council's 1952 fall meeting in Columbus, Ohio, rescinded Bundy's invitation to speak at the convention until he apologized. When IFCA clergyman William Ashbrook informed Bundy of the committee's decision, Bundy flew into a fit of rage. He insulted Ashbrook, who reportedly struggled with some sort of nervous ailment, by asking, "I am wondering whether you have suddenly been seized with an attack of insanity or if what I have been hearing about your physical condition is true!" Bundy then proceeded to attack Ashbrook for his lack of vigor in defending the faith and berated him for daring to question his judgment. "When you speak of my 'actions' in Elyria," he told Ashbrook, "you make me sick!"⁶

That might have been the end of this matter had not American Council Vice President W.O.H. Garman undercut Ashbrook by retaining Bundy as a speaker and subsequently moving the ACCC's fall meeting to his home church in Wilksburg, Pennsylvania. Garman's decision ignited protest from several clergymen affiliated with the organization.⁷ More consequentially, this episode served as a final straw for leaders in the IFCA. They lodged an eleven-point complaint with the American Council's executive committee at the organization's fall meeting

⁶ Ashbrook to Bundy, 21 August 1952, Folder Bundy Edgar C., Garman Collection; Bundy to Ashbrook, 26 August 1952, *ibid.*

⁷ Ketcham to Garman, 18 September 1952, Box 170, Folder 49, McIntire Collection; William B. Cordes et al. to McIntire 25 October 1952, *ibid.*; "ACCC Pursues Vital Issues Confronting Churches," *Christian Beacon*, 6 November 1952, 1, 8.

that addressed three general concerns: 1) the IFCA had no voice on the ACCC's executive council despite being the largest constituent body; 2) the ACCC functioned as an oligarchy under the control of an executive committee; and 3) internal gossip, spite, and defamatory remarks greatly weakened the group's overall Christian testimony. Not surprisingly, the ACCC's executive committee refused to acknowledge any missteps and blamed fifth-columnists in the IFCA for facilitating this crisis. With a less than satisfactory response from the ACCC's executive committee, the IFCA's members subsequently voted to discontinue the denomination's affiliation with the council effective July 1, 1953.⁸

McIntire hesitated to intercede in the dispute between the Ohio clergymen and Bundy, but he realized Bundy's sharp tongue impaired relations within the movement and urged him to make amends. Bundy initially balked at that suggestion and apologized only when executive committee member Robert T. Ketcham began pushing for disciplinary action.⁹ The ACCC severed its relationship with Bundy a short time later. However, the cause for this action was not his temper but the discovery that he had a habit of soliciting young males for sex while doing the work of the Lord.¹⁰ Rumors of his homosexual activities circulated among delegates attending the ACCC's annual meeting in October 1953. Ketcham verified those rumors several months

⁸ IFCA members voted 199 to 15 break with the American Council at their annual convention in April 1953. But its leaders made it clear that individual churches could join the American Council if they so desired. The IFCA lost a few churches by withdrawing, but it also gained several new ones that previously declined to become members because of its involvement with McIntire's movement. Henry, *For Such a Time as This*, 240-44; "A Summary of Questions Presented to the Executive Committee of the American Council of Christian Churches on October 28, 1952," Box 1, Folder 11, Africa Inland Missions International Records; "American Council Reply to 11-Point Protest," *ibid.*; William Ashbrook, "A Summary of the Rebuttal Given to the American Council Executive Committee's Answer to the IFCA," *ibid.*; Mel Seguire, "Business Sessions," *Voice* (July 1953), 6-7.

⁹ McIntire to Bundy, 15 March 1953, Box 170, Folder 50, McIntire Collection; McIntire to Bundy, 23 April 1953, *ibid.*; Ketcham to ACCC Executive Committee, 14 September 1953, *ibid.*; Bundy to Ketcham, 25 October 1953, *ibid.*

¹⁰ At least two known encounters took place in the mid-to-late 1940s when Bundy evangelized for the Navigators, a military mission organization. Norman J. Crider to Ketcham 20 January 1954, Folder Bundy Edgar C., Garman Collection; Al Oldham to Ketcham, 6 January 1954, *ibid.*

later and pressed the council to disassociate itself from Bundy altogether. Before any further action took place, Bundy resigned from the American Council.¹¹

Ketcham's revelation did not come as news to McIntire. One of the documented episodes involving Bundy took place during a Bible Presbyterian retreat at the Harvey Cedars Bible Conference in the summer of 1953. The conference's director sent Bundy packing after he attempted to seduce young adult males there. McIntire stated that he elicited a teary-eyed confession from Bundy afterwards and extracted a pledge from him not to engage in Christian work for two years. He kept this matter confidential until Ketcham pressed for Bundy's censure.¹² Ketcham and a few other leaders in the ACCC feared the damage their adversaries might do with this information and urged McIntire to distance himself from Bundy. McIntire apparently complied with this request. During the remainder of the decade he rarely gave Bundy press coverage in the *Christian Beacon* and maintained only causal contact with him. By the early 1960s, however, McIntire willingly overlooked Bundy's carnal habits and frequently invited him as a conference speaker at his Christian Admiral hotel.¹³

Simultaneous to the IFCA's clash with the ACCC's leadership, discontent at McIntire's domination over denominational life was brewing within the Bible Presbyterian Church. One of the first hints of this dissent came from Francis Schaeffer, who grew concerned about McIntire's leadership style sometime around 1950. Schaeffer was the first clergymen ordained in the Bible Presbyterian Church and served congregations in Grove City, Pennsylvania, and St. Louis,

¹¹ Ketcham Memorandum, 24 May 1954, *ibid.*; Garman to McIntire, 10 December 1955, *ibid.*; Bundy to Crider, 21 June 1954, *ibid.*; Max Belz to Arthur Slaght, 16 July 1954, Box 170, Folder 50, McIntire Collection.

¹² Oldham to Ketcham, 6 January 1954, Folder Bundy Edgar C., Collection; Garman to McIntire, 10 December 1955, *ibid.*

¹³ Ketcham to ACCC Executive Committee, 28 May 1954, Folder Bundy Edgar C., Garman Collection; "Christian Admiral Sets Dedication for May 30," *Christian Beacon*, 28 March 1963, 1.

Missouri, during his decade as a church minister. In early 1948 he stepped down from the pulpit and moved his family to Switzerland to begin mission work under the auspices of the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions. During his first few years there, Schaeffer endeavored to organize support in Europe for the International Council of Christian Churches. He also opened a new front in the war against apostasy by critiquing the neo-orthodox theology of Swiss Reformed thinker Karl Barth, which Schaeffer termed the “new modernism.”¹⁴

But Schaeffer’s isolation from American fundamentalism together with the mission work he conducted in Europe’s more secular culture led him down a contemplative spiritual path. After spending many hours in 1950 meditating on the meaning of Christian discipleship in the loft of his family’s chalet in Champéry, Switzerland, he concluded that Christian love had fallen victim to the cause of separatism within the fundamentalist movement. He elaborated on this idea at length in a November 1951 letter to Allan MacRae, who had been his mentor at Faith Seminary. Schaeffer opined that separatism should not be an end unto itself, “but only one step in a close and profitable walk with the Lord.” The American Council’s ongoing feud with the National Association of Evangelicals stood foremost in his mind when he made that remark. Even though he considered the NAE’s position on ecclesiastical separation wrong, Schaeffer thought its members were still brothers in Christ who did not deserve to be attacked personally.

Schaeffer deplored the continuous maligning, mudslinging, and backbiting that now dominated what he pejoratively called “the movement.” He confided to MacRae about a widening ideological gulf between himself and McIntire:

I am not sure as to what my future is. My dream of a Council when I came back from Europe in 1947 is not Carl’s. My dream was a place where God’s people could come and learn from each other – certainly we each have something to learn and something to contribute, but it seems to me that one of the main reasons Carl has not liked my work here is because I have not gone along on pushing American labels and thinking down European

¹⁴ Hankins, *Francis Schaeffer*, 44-47.

throats. If I had, I would not have been nearly as useful here as I have been – at least that is my best judgment.¹⁵

By 1954, Schaeffer's views had spread through the Bible Presbyterian Church. Highland College President Robert Rayburn, who shared Schaeffer's sentiments, precipitated a factional showdown when he presented a minority report at the church's General Synod in 1954 accusing the ACCC's leaders of operating an undemocratic "tight little organization" and demonstrating poor ethical judgment.¹⁶ One of the examples he cited involved a recent episode in which the ACCC's leaders disseminated a rumor that missionary doctors for Africa Inland Missions, which was aligned with the NAE, allegedly examined prostitutes for venereal diseases in exchange for medical subsidies from the Congolese colonial government. Rayburn admonished the *Christian Beacon* for printing this unsubstantiated story and refusing to print a retraction when evidence indicated that rumor to be false. A second matter he addressed dealt with the American Council's inflated membership figures, which he believed damaged the credibility of the organization's Christian testimony. Citing a recent newspaper article in which McIntire claimed the organization had 1,312,000 members in 6,000 churches, Rayburn asserted that "it is not unreasonable to insist on being given a list of these 6,000 churches, together with their total membership."¹⁷

¹⁵ Ibid.; Schaeffer to MacRae, 8 November 1951, Folder Schaeffer, Francis A – 1951 – Correspondence; Allan A. MacRae Papers, Presbyterian Church in America Historical Center, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO.

¹⁶ This minority report bore the signatures of four other clergymen, three of whom were from the IFCA and the fourth from the GARBC. Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 271; Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 31; Rayburn et.al to the ACCC Executive Committee, 24 April 1954, Folder 40, Robert G. Rayburn Papers, Presbyterian Church in America Historical Center, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO.

¹⁷ Rayburn et al. to the ACCC Executive Committee; B.J. Lichtman to M.H Reynolds, 9 November 1955, Box 359, Folder 1, McIntire Collection; Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 31; Robert Rayburn, "American Council of Christian Churches – Its Statistics," *Bible Presbyterian Observer* (November 1955), 1, 2, 8.

Rayburn's doubts about the ACCC's statistics set off a contentious debate within the organization. Ketcham undertook a count of the organization's membership and defended the veracity of the numbers he received. Rayburn, however, cited irregularities in the ACCC's census-taking methods and not the figures that the organization received. He questioned, for example, whether the 286,000 members in the American Baptist Association (ABA) should be counted at all. The ACCC classified them as local constituent members based on a resolution passed by messengers at the ABA's 1948 convention that authorized the council to enumerate its members "wherever such a count will add force to [the ACCC's] position." Rayburn argued that the ABA never formally joined the ACCC. Nor did its individual churches. Another anomaly that Rayburn cited involved the 400,161 people that the ACCC listed as auxiliary members. This category consisted of people who signed McIntire's 1943 petition seeking network radio time for the council. The petition's signers indicated a desire to unite with the ACCC in testimony. But no one ever bothered to count the petitions in full or record the names of the signatories. After subtracting these figures along with a couple of other aberrations, Rayburn reckoned that the American Council had fewer than 200,000 members.¹⁸

Another controversy arose at this same time when Bible Presbyterian clergyman Max Belz, who also sat on the American Council's executive committee, accused organizers of the Bible Balloon Project of false advertising when it raised funds for that venture. Solicitations for the first balloon launch in 1953 announced that each of the 10,000 balloons would carry a Bible over the Iron Curtain. However, organizers substituted Bible portions for entire Bibles when they learned that their original plan was aeronautically untenable. Belz might have let that indiscretion pass had it not been for the fact that the ICCC promoted its 1955 Bible Balloon campaign by

¹⁸ Rayburn, "The American Council of Christian Churches – Its Statistics," 2, 8; Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 35.

proclaiming in large print, “You can help float Bibles behind the Iron Curtain.” He noted that only in small print underneath did the announcement state that the balloons would be carrying “portions of Bibles.” Belz inculpated the project’s organizers of mail fraud and demanded that the ACCC withdraw support for it until donors were notified of the disposition of their contributions. McIntire, who was president of the ICCC, confessed to the error but claimed it was a mistake. When no one else on the executive committee seconded Belz’s motion, he resigned abruptly in protest.¹⁹

These were but a few problems that gave rise to a movement to check McIntire’s influence within the Bible Presbyterian Church. Reformers proposed establishing a synod-controlled college and mission agency to accomplish this end. They pointed out that the existing independent schools and agencies were controlled by McIntire and those loyal to him. As a result, those institutions served the Twentieth Century Reformation movement rather than the church. McIntire’s critics also disliked the fact that much of the denomination’s news filtered through the *Christian Beacon*. They proposed establishing a denominational journal to eliminate his domination of the church’s channels of communication.

McIntire rejected these proposals outright. He derisively labeled his critics “the underground” and accused them of betraying the Twentieth Century Reformation movement. He contended that the creation of synod-controlled agencies defied the spirit of true Presbyterianism and would pave the way for the establishment of an ecclesiastical machine. Those loyal to him retaliated against the ringleaders of this reform movement by purging them from the independent agencies they controlled. Two important casualties included Robert Rayburn, who was forced

¹⁹ *Minutes of the Eighteenth General Synod of the Bible Presbyterian Church, Meeting at St. Louis, Missouri, 1955*, 29-31; “Revised Notes and Additions to the Brief about The American Council Meeting in Memphis, April 27-29, 1955,” Folder 24, Rayburn Papers.

from the presidency of Highland College and J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., who was removed from his position as head of Shelton College.²⁰

A print war ensued when each faction began publishing its own newsletter to present its side of the story.²¹ By the time of the general synod at St. Louis in April 1956, the two sides were irreconcilable. McIntire called for a boycott of the meeting, claiming that the location and date favored the opposition. For one thing, he argued, St. Louis was home to the reform faction. For another, he contended that moving the meeting's date to April from the traditional vacation month of June provided his opponents with representational advantage. In all likelihood, McIntire called for a boycott when he realized that he would lose this battle.²² With the absence of McIntire and his supporters from that meeting, the synod voted overwhelmingly to withdraw from the American Council of Christian Churches and the International Council of Christian Churches. It also approved the establishment of a college and seminary in St. Louis, naming Rayburn as its president and Buswell the dean of graduate faculty.²³

The split between the two factions became formal in late 1956. McIntire's branch became known as the Bible Presbyterian Church, Collingswood Synod. Forty percent of the

²⁰ Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 271-75, 281-82; Gasper, *The Fundamentalist Movement*, 31; Carl McIntire, "The Inside Story and the Underground," *Christian Beacon*, 12 July 1956, 1, 4, 5, 8; "Buswell Released from Shelton," *Bible Presbyterian Observer* (December 1955), 9-10.

²¹ The faction loyal to McIntire published *The Free Press*, while reformers printed the *Bible Presbyterian Observer*. McIntire pledged not to publicize this dispute in the *Christian Beacon* at the General Synod in 1955. He abided by that pledge until July 1956. See "The Attack upon Dr. McIntire," *Christian Beacon*, 12 July 1956, 1; McIntire, "The Inside Story and the Underground," 1, 4, 5, 8.

²² "Covenant College," *The Free Press*, 6 March 1956, 1; "A Petition by 110 Elders and Ministers," *The Free Press*, 6 March 1956, 2; Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 286-87.

²³ Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 288, 312; "The Nineteenth Synod," *Bible Presbyterian Reporter* (April 1956), 19.

denomination's members followed him into this new body.²⁴ Meanwhile, those who remained in the now McIntire-less denomination held a *pro re nata* meeting at Columbus, Ohio, in November 1956 to deal with this situation. Calling the Collingswood Synod's actions illegal, the Columbus group purged McIntire and those who followed him from the denomination's rolls. This group called itself the Bible Presbyterian Church, Columbus Synod until 1961, when members renamed it the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. It merged with another small Presbyterian body in 1965 to become the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, and in 1982 that denomination folded into the Presbyterian Church in America, which had been created nine years earlier by a conservative faction that had separated from the Southern Presbyterian Church.²⁵

The disputes involving the IFCA and Bible Presbyterian Church not only paralleled the McCarthy era but were also influenced by it. McIntire's excessive anticommunist activities loomed large in both of these religious conflicts. As with McCarthyism, these religious conflicts signified an exercise in purification. But in this set of disputes, McIntire and his loyalists accused dissidents of going soft on separation not on communism. Yet the cultural milieu of anxiety, suspicion, and distrust that McCarthyism thrived upon needs to be considered as a contributing force in these religious conflicts. Their censure of coreligionists who recommended peaceful coexistence with the NAE clearly marked an inward turn in the hunt for quislings who might betray the separatist movement. Not surprisingly, many of the same characters who led the ACCC's crusade against communist influences in mainline religion were most zealous in branding the dissenters in their midst as subversives of fundamentalist separatism. As well,

²⁴ This percentage should not be surprising given the fact that nearly twenty percent of the denomination's 8,670 communicant members belonged to McIntire's church prior to the schism. See Hutchinson, *The History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 293; *Minutes of the Eighteenth General Synod*, B2-B4.

²⁵ Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 298-300; Balmer, *Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism*, 66.

McIntire's hostile reaction in dealing with those who questioned his methods can be partly explained by the flourishing of the new evangelical movement. McIntire and other hard-line separatists continually attacked new evangelicals during this period for compromising on the issue of separation as a matter of reinforcing the boundaries of the fundamentalist separatism and eliminating any gray areas between the two movements. They especially fixed their sights on excoriating Billy Graham, who became the shining star of the new evangelical movement and someone who periodically consorted with ecumenists belonging to the National Council of Churches. Ultimately, the harsh denunciations meted out against those who sought to reform the separatist movement signaled instability rather than strength.²⁶

The Twentieth Century Reformation Hour Empire

In March 1955, McIntire began broadcasting a daily half-hour morning program over Chester, Pennsylvania, station WVCH. Unlike his Sunday morning services, which the station already carried, this new program provided information on current events relevant to the Christian faith. In a manner uncharacteristic for him, he launched this program with little fanfare and no program title. This low-key inauguration reflected his ambivalence about starting this broadcast. The idea for it originated with his parishioners, who thought it would augment the church's ministry and boost circulation of the *Christian Beacon*. After a few weeks on the air, McIntire held a naming contest and selected the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* as the winning entry.²⁷

²⁶ Hutchinson, *The History Behind the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod*, 272, 284; Henry, *For Such a Time as This*, 240; David O. Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism since 1850* (Greenville, SC: Unusual Publications, 1986), 326.

²⁷ "Listeners to New Radio Broadcast Interested in Bible Balloon Project," *Christian Beacon*, 17 March 1955, 1, 8; "Name '20th Century Reformation Hour' is Chosen for Broadcast," *Christian Beacon*, 5 May 1955, 1, 8; Carl McIntire, "The 20th Century Reformation Hour, 1955-1975," in *20th Century Reformation Hour: 20 Years*

York, Pennsylvania, Bible Presbyterian minister John M. Norris liked what he heard. Some time after the program's debut, he begged McIntire to tape the program so he could air it on the station he owned, WGCB in Red Lion, Pennsylvania. McIntire resisted Norris's entreaties for some time because he thought it would entail too much time and effort. But Norris eventually convinced him otherwise, and in early 1958 *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* began going out over the air on WGCB. From there, the program rapidly expanded into other markets. By year's end, it aired on thirteen different stations between Poynette, Wisconsin, and Greenville, South Carolina (Bob Jones University). An amazed McIntire thanked God for this unexpected opportunity and interpreted it as an encouraging sign for the fundamentalist movement.

When McIntire realized the potential of his program to become a coast-to-coast chain broadcast, he began devoting more of his attention to building the fundamentalist movement via the radio airwaves. Along the way he modified the program's format and content to increase its viability as a commercial broadcast. The program initially featured weekday segments with speakers and musical performers from schools and mission agencies affiliated with the Bible Presbyterian Church. It also featured a Saturday children's broadcast. But by the late 1950s McIntire devoted more program time to jeremiads on current religious, political, and social events. Accompanying him on his program was sidekick Charles E. Richter, Collingswood Bible Presbyterian Church's associate minister who earned the nickname Amen Charlie for periodically interjecting an "amen" into McIntire's monologues.²⁸

(Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1975), 3; Gladys Titzck Rhoads and Nancy Titzck Anderson, *McIntire: Defender of Faith and Freedom* (Xulon Press, 2012), 197-98.

²⁸ McIntire, "The 20th Century Reformation Hour," 3; Rhoads and Anderson, *McIntire*, 200; Patrick Farabaugh "Carl McIntire and His Crusade Against the Fairness Doctrine" (Ph.D. diss., Pennsylvania State University, 2010), 57.

McIntire marketed his program as a corrective to the liberal bias of mainstream commercial radio. It found a niche following among a cross-over audience that included fundamentalists and populist conservatives. This business undertaking offered McIntire advantages that the ACCC did not. To start with, his radio program generated vastly greater income, affording him new opportunities to disseminate fundamentalist views. Secondly, he had discretion in choosing where to direct those financial resources. The *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* became its own media empire, churning out a vast array of ephemeral materials and sponsoring numerous rallies, conferences, and protests. At its peak in the mid-1960s, it was a three-million-dollar-a-year enterprise that reportedly aired on more than 600 stations.

Economic considerations weighed heavily in decisions related to establishing and sustaining his program on a station, and McIntire took an active role in expanding his program into new markets. He exhorted listeners to form local committees to underwrite the initial cost of the program on a station and strengthened local fan-based communities by holding radio rallies in cities throughout the nation, which in turn assisted him to raise funds and expand into new markets. Those radio committees also served as a first line of defense in protecting his broadcast from opponents seeking to remove it from a local station's schedule.²⁹

McIntire's radio program figured prominently among a budding genre of right-wing broadcasts that featured Billy James Hargis, H.L. Hunt, Clarence Manion, and Dan Smoot. Their sudden rise in popularity paralleled growing discontent about the nation's political direction and became a tonic to legions of conservative listeners across the nation. Opponents on the Left

²⁹ McIntire, "The 20th Century Reformation Hour," 4; Forster and Epstein, *Danger on the Right*, 113; "First 20th Century Reformation Hour Rallies in Louisiana and Texas Produce Nine New Stations," *Christian Beacon*, 16 May 1963, 1; "Dr. McIntire Speaks to 2,350 Here, Gets \$4,000 in Pledges," *Christian Beacon*, 28 February 1963, 4 (reprinted from Warren, Ohio, *Tribune Chronicle*).

considered McIntire's program nothing less than a menace to democracy. Writing for the liberal *Nation* magazine in 1962, journalist Fred Cook categorized the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* as one of several "Hate Clubs of the Air." In terms of airwave exposure, Cook called McIntire the "number one spokesman of the radical Right." The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, among other groups, monitored McIntire's program closely and pressed the FCC to remove it from the air on the grounds that it spread religious and racial and bigotry. In some locations opponents organized boycotts against businesses that advertised on stations carrying McIntire's program.³⁰

A more effective weapon against *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* involved the application of the Fairness Doctrine to harass broadcasters carrying McIntire's program. First articulated in 1949, the Fairness Doctrine remained vaguely defined and little enforced until right-wing radio programs began multiplying on the nation's airwaves in the early 1960s. A critical turn in its enforcement came in July 1963 when the FCC issued a public notice requiring a broadcaster to transmit the text of a program to the person or group subjected to personal attack and to offer rebuttal time.³¹ One of the first organized uses of the Fairness Doctrine as an ideological weapon took place during the Senate's debate of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in the fall of 1963. The Democratic National Committee attempted to neutralize right-wing opposition

³⁰ Fred J. Cook, "Radio Right: Hate Clubs of the Air," *Nation*, 25 May 1964, 523-26; Farabaugh, "Carl McIntire," 58-60; *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* newsletter, 25 November 1963, Box 74, Folder Twentieth Century Reformation Hour, Papers of E. William Henry, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI.; Fred Friendly, *The Good Guys, the Bad Guys, and the First Amendment: Free Speech vs. Fairness in Broadcasting* (New York: Random House, 1975), 78-79.

³¹ Hendershot, *What's Fair on the Air*, 17-18; Friendly, *The Good Guys, the Bad Guys and the First Amendment*, 24, 28; Farabaugh, "Carl McIntire," 61; "Broadcast Licensees Advised Concerning Stations' Responsibilities Under the Fairness Doctrine As To Controversial Issue Programming," 26 July 1963, Box 7, Folder 6, Papers of Kenneth Cox, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI.

to the treaty by requesting reply time whenever McIntire or some other radio program host denounced its ratification.

Out of this campaign evolved a persistent initiative to drive right-wing programs from the airwaves by harassing local broadcasters with petitions for reply time. According to McIntire some broadcasters did just that. He claimed that many broadcasters feared the FCC might reject renewal of their broadcast license should they fail to comply with the Fairness Doctrine. Yet by his own account the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* expanded by some 100 outlets between 1963 and 1965, suggesting that some stations were willing air his program because its controversiality attracted listeners.³² By the summer of 1964, McIntire stood in open conflict with the FCC. Whereas a decade-and-a-half earlier McIntire demanded equal time to refute the ecumenical viewpoint on controversial issues, he now viewed that policy as a suppression of free speech when used against his paid-time broadcast.³³

Liberals' opposition to right-wing broadcasting stiffened after the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Many on the Left attributed that tragedy to the poisonous political atmosphere created by right-wing extremism. The minister for a Lancaster, Pennsylvania, congregation belonging to the historically pacifist Church of the Brethren summed up this sentiment when he wrote McIntire:

You seem to take great delight in the fact that "A Communist Killed the President." But you are not pure. You didn't assassinate the President with a bullet, but you assassinated his character a hundred times, and also the characters of many other great and good men. You helped fan the flame that brings results such as that dastardly deed of November 22 in Dallas. The methods of the far left and the far right are very similar. All extremists and radicals do

³² Friendly, *The Good Guys, the Bad Guys and the First Amendment*, 34-35; Farabaugh, "Carl McIntire," 63; "500 Stations Reached by 20th Century Reformation Hour," *Christian Beacon*, 18 July 1963, 1.

³³ *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* newsletter, 17 March 1964, Box 74, Folder Twentieth Century Reformation Hour, Henry Papers.

untold damage to our nation and to our world of stability and order. All vitriolic attacks on persons in the name of the Christian religion ought to be removed from the air.³⁴

On the day of Kennedy's funeral the management of WVCH informed McIntire that it was dropping his program. The station's attorney expressed concern that continuing to air the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* might jeopardize the station's license renewal.³⁵

The success of the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* helped McIntire to finance the purchase of a summer resort complex in Cape May, New Jersey. The crown jewel of that complex was the eight-story Admiral Hotel. The vacant 333-room beaux-arts style hotel caught his eye when he toured the New Jersey shore following a devastating nor'easter in March 1962. He purchased it later that year for \$300,000 and subsequently renamed it the Christian Admiral Bible Conference and Freedom Center. With help from volunteer church workers and financial contributions from radio listeners and *Christian Beacon* readers, he refurbished the fifty-four-year-old hotel in time for the 1963 summer season. The following year, he relocated Shelton College there and constructed a 2,000 seat auditorium adjacent to the hotel. In 1967, he spared the historic Congress Hall hotel – located a mile down the beach from the Christian Admiral – from the wrecking ball when he purchased it for \$550,000. By the late 1960s, Christian Beacon Press, Inc. was Cape May's largest landowner, catering to 25,000 guests each summer.³⁶

The Christian Admiral purveyed an interesting admixture of religion, patriotism, and commercial tourism. The motifs of religion and patriotism became visible throughout the hotel.

³⁴ John D. Long to McIntire, 16 December 1963, Box 74, Folder 20th Century Reformation Hour, Henry Papers.

³⁵ Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 247-49; *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* newsletter, 25 November 1963, Box 74, Folder Twentieth Century Reformation Hour, Henry Papers; *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* newsletter, 17 January 1964, *ibid*.

³⁶ Rhoads and Anderson, *McIntire*, 299-313; Forster and Epstein, *Danger on the Right*, 105; "Important New Undertaking Announced in Cape May Project," *Christian Beacon*, 1 November 1962, 1.

Each floor was dedicated to either America's founders or figures from the Protestant Reformation. Meeting rooms were named for Patrick Henry, John Birch, and Douglas MacArthur. The hotel frequently held week-long conferences throughout the summer that also blended religion and politics. Those programs featured fundamentalist speakers such as Edgar C. Bundy, Faith Seminary President Allan MacRae, as well as secular figures like South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond, Retired Army General Edwin Walker, and conservative commentator Tom Anderson.³⁷

WVCH's decision to drop the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* left McIntire without a radio outlet in the Philadelphia area. He soon learned that 500 watt daytime station WXUR-AM and its sister station WXUR-FM, which both broadcast from Media, Pennsylvania, were up for sale. He negotiated a deal in late 1964 for Faith Theological Seminary to purchase them for \$450,000, and he hired WGCB general manager John H. Norris to manage WXUR. Norris was both a trustee of Faith Seminary and the son of WGCB owner John M. Norris.³⁸

McIntire's quest to purchase WXUR for Faith Seminary ignited public controversy. Several dozen groups and individuals petitioned the FCC asking commissioners to reject the seminary's application for a broadcast license. A ten-page petition submitted by the Greater Philadelphia Council of Churches and cosigned by leaders from six other area organizations typified those complaints. It asserted that his record of irresponsibility and antagonism

³⁷ "Christian Admiral Sets Dedication for May 30," *Christian Beacon*, 28 March 1963, 1; Forster and Epstein, *Danger on the Right*, 105.

³⁸ The Norrises came under scrutiny from the FCC in 1963 when foreign policy considerations came to bear over their airing of McIntire's program internationally over short-wave station WINB. They operated this station along with WGCB under the aegis of Red Lion Broadcasting Company. More importantly, the Norrises mounted one of the most significant legal challenges against the Fairness Doctrine in *Red Lion Broadcasting v. the Federal Communications Commission*. The Supreme Court ultimately ruled against WGCB's refusal to provide reply time under the Fairness Doctrine in 1969. Friendly, *The Good Guys, the Bad Guys and the First Amendment*, 79. Farabaugh, "Carl McIntire," 66.

predisposed him to use WXUR for his private interest and not the public interest.³⁹ While a majority of liberals likely concurred with that objection, there were those who thought that free speech over the airwaves should not be abridged. The editors of *Christian Century*, for example, argued that while they disagreed “with 99 percent of what McIntire believes and preaches,” they defended his right to express his views.⁴⁰

With opposition to Faith Seminary’s purchase of WXUR running high, McIntire feared that the FCC might reject the license transfer and wrote commission Chairman E. William Henry on December 9, 1964, to plead his case. McIntire opened his appeal by downplaying his own interest in purchasing WXUR. He highlighted the fact that Faith Seminary applied for the broadcast license and not the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour*. “Faith Theological Seminary,” he asserted, “has been interested in acquiring a radio station for at least 10 years.” McIntire then undermined this argument by making it apparent that a motivating factor for the seminary’s desire to purchase the station was to restore his radio program to the Philadelphia area. He complained to Henry that the Fairness Doctrine created hardship for his program. Rather than offering listeners contrasting viewpoints on specific issues, he argued, it had become a weapon used by citizens groups to suppress his point of view. McIntire struck a blow for free speech by arguing that approval of Faith Seminary’s broadcast application would restore ideological diversity to the airwaves.⁴¹

³⁹ Co-signers of that petition were state representatives for the AFL-CIO, NAACP, New Jersey Council of Churches, Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Philadelphia, the *Catholic Star Herald*, and the Greater Philadelphia Area Committee for UNICEF, Herbert G. Gearhart, et al. to E. William Henry, 16 February 1965, Box 74, Folder Twentieth Century Reformation Hour, Henry Papers; “Complaints on McIntire’s Buy,” *Broadcasting*, 7 December 1964, 38.

⁴⁰ Farabaugh, “Carl McIntire,” 68; “Who’s Afraid of McIntire?” *Christian Century*, 6 January 1965, 5.

⁴¹ McIntire to Henry, 9 December 1964, RG 173, Docket 17141, Box 54, Volume I, Records of the Federal Communications Commission, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD.

The FCC approved the license transfer three months later in March 1965. Commissioners Rosel Hyde and Lee Loevinger, who together co-wrote the majority opinion, indicated their goodwill in giving the seminary an opportunity to abide by its pledge to comply with the standards of fair broadcasting. Barely had the ink dried on Faith Seminary's broadcast license before complaints began coming into the FCC regarding the relentless barrage of right-wing programs carried on WXUR. A clash of opinions on the interpretation the Fairness Doctrine would become the salient debate when the station's license came up for renewal in 1967, prompting the commission to hold a hearing on this matter. McIntire subsequently launched a protracted legal challenge against the Fairness Doctrine as well as an intensive grassroots campaign to retain WXUR's license. The FCC ultimately decided in 1970 not to renew Faith Seminary's broadcast license. But legal appeals enabled the seminary to continue broadcasting until 1973, when the Supreme Court settled the matter by declining to hear McIntire's appeal.⁴²

The John Birch Society and the Orbit of Fundamentalism

The *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* contributed to a groundswell of reactionary political conservatism in the United States. This response started in part as a reaction to President Eisenhower's middle-of-the-road Republicanism.⁴³ But a number of other factors contributed to it as well. They included the Warren Court's activism on civil rights, communism's expansion into the developing world, not to mention social anxieties about declining family cohesion and a rise in juvenile delinquency. John F. Kennedy's victory in the 1960 election further energized the Right and brought into focus two distinct but overlapping conservative movement cultures. The

⁴² Farabaugh, "Carl McIntire," 73, 111, 124; Hendershot, *What's Fair on the Air*, 155-56.

⁴³ Hendershot, *What's Fair on the Air*, 11; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 67-70; Schoenwald, *A Time for Choosing*, 5-9.

founder of the conservative weekly *National Review*, William F. Buckley became the standard bearer for one movement culture, which set its sights on gaining electoral power via an intellectual reformation of the Republican Party. The other movement culture pivoted around the John Birch Society, which was formed by Massachusetts candy maker Robert Welch in late 1958 to stir opposition against communist influences in government. Although each of these two individuals articulated a modern conservative ideology synthesizing traditionalism, libertarianism, and anticommunism, Welch's formulation drew more heavily upon conspiratorial anticommunism and patriotism.⁴⁴

Fundamentalists identified much more readily with Welch's style of populist conservatism than with Buckley's intellectual approach. McIntire developed a congenial working relationship with Welch, which was interesting given the fact that he continually exhibited great difficulty in maintaining working relationships with coreligionists. McIntire repeatedly defended Welch and the work of the Birch Society on his broadcasts and Welch reciprocated the favor. More importantly, the two figures forged a mutually profitable business arrangement. Because the Birch Society did not operate as a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization, the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* served as a conduit for Birch Society supporters to make a tax-deductible contribution. McIntire in turn purchased Birch Society materials at low cost and distributed them with the mailings for his radio program.⁴⁵

Although McIntire never joined the Birch Society, a number of clergymen affiliated with the American Council did. Notably, Donald A. Waite quit teaching at Shelton College to work as

⁴⁴ Schoenwald, *A Time for Choosing*, 12; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 67-68.

⁴⁵ Welch to McIntire, 24 July 1964, Box 248, Folder 46, McIntire Collection; McIntire to Welch 9 July 1962, *ibid.*; McIntire to Mrs. Seth Milliken, *ibid.*; Welch to Mrs. L.L. Lintner, 11 February 1963, *ibid.*; McIntire to Welch, 18 January 1965, *ibid.*; John A. Andrew III, *The Power to Destroy: The Political Uses of the IRS from Kennedy to Nixon* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002), 29.

Welch's personal assistant in 1963. Simultaneous to his paid position with the JBS, Waite served as minister of a Regular Baptist congregation in Newton, Massachusetts. Although Welch espoused belief in theistic evolution and a universal supreme being, Waite did not think his work with Welch conflicted with the fundamentalist principle second-degree separatism.⁴⁶

Some fundamentalists, however, did have misgivings at this type of worldly entanglement. Regular Baptist minister Louie DiPlacido in 1963 commended the Birch Society for preserving freedom and liberty but cautioned fellow believers about Welch's apostate beliefs. He pointed out that Welch's "total program" for defeating the forces of communism and collectivism did not include religion and found troubling Welch's "denial of biblical Christianity." The debate that DiPlacido's article stirred on this matter compelled Robert Ketcham to circulate a memorandum analyzing Welch's beliefs in relation to the Birch Society's political program. Ketcham commended the Birch Society for its battle against communism but dissented from Welch's goal of establishing a righteous society by strengthening the faith of any and all religious people regardless of their doctrinal views or beliefs. McIntire concurred with Ketcham's sentiments. "If Welch makes any move whatsoever to implement these ideas in the religious side, you can count on me being the first to repudiate it all."⁴⁷

Judging from the responses printed in the *Baptist Bulletin* afterwards many fundamentalists found DiPlacido's concern ill-founded. A minister from Troy, Illinois, summed up the thoughts of many respondents when he stated that he joined the Birch Society in spite of Welch's personal faith and beliefs of its members. "We are united, not on religious grounds," he

⁴⁶ Ketcham to McIntire, 10 June 1963, Box 254, Folder 31, McIntire Collection; Waite to McIntire, 21 September 1964, Box 248, Folder 29, *ibid.*; Welch outlined his religious views in the John Birch Society's *Blue Book*. See Robert Welch, *The Blue Book of the John Birch Society*, Sixth Printing (Belmont, MA, 1961), 62-63, 146.

⁴⁷ Louie DiPlacido, "The Religious Approach of the John Birch Society," *Baptist Bulletin* (March 1963), 8, 9, 19; Robert Ketcham memorandum, "Religion and the John Birch Society," n.d., Box 254, Folder 31, McIntire Collection; McIntire to Ketcham, 13 June 1963, *ibid.*

wrote, “but on the basis of a common determination to see our beloved country spared from collectivism, socialism, and communism.” In short, he contended, separation from unbelief did not apply when it came to collaborating with unbelievers for political action.⁴⁸

This type of strident anticommunism became the catalyst for the ACCC to enter into political activism more directly. The organization first exhibited direct political action in its Five Against Communism campaign in March 1959. For that undertaking, the ACCC sponsored a lecture tour of five clergymen from Taipei, Hong Kong, and South Korea to oppose U.S. recognition of Red China and its admission to the United Nations. ACCC President Clyde Kennedy expressed optimism afterwards that the organization would undertake similar projects in the future to “influence public opinion in the right direction.”⁴⁹ This drive to influence public opinion rather than just religious thought became evident as well in several articles its members wrote for *American Mercury*, one of the chief right-wing publications of the 1950s. W.O.H. Garman, for example, reported on his tour of Strategic Air Command headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base and thanked God that SAC stood as a guardian of peace on earth. Another ACCC member, Bob Jones, Jr., penned an article on why the nation’s citizens should oppose United Nations one-worldism. Jones drove home his point by citing the judgment upon Babel, as told in Genesis 11, where the people endeavored to create a one-world government by constructing a tower “whose top may reach unto heaven” and incurred God’s wrath as a result. Jones reinforced the meaning of this lesson by quoting Acts 17:26: “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.” Jones explained, “men are ‘of one blood’ but God has set up

⁴⁸ “The Religious Approach of the John Birch Society,” *Baptist Bulletin* (May 1963), 6-7.

⁴⁹ Ronn Spargur, “Five Against Communism,” *American Mercury* (October 1959), 94-99; Kennedy to McIntire, 1 June 1959, Box 10, Folder 9, McIntire Collection.

certain boundaries for different peoples – has established the frontiers of nations, has divided mankind.” Interestingly, Jones drew upon these same passages to defend the biblical basis for Jim Crow after the 1954 *Brown v. Board* decision.⁵⁰

The ACCC’s political activism was also evident in its Faith and Freedom rallies opposing Nikita Khrushchev’s tour of the U.S. in September 1959. For the first time, the council organized a protest response against a foreign policy decision that had no direct bearing on religion. When the ACCC announced its anti-Khrushchev rallies, council President Clyde Kennedy declared that President Eisenhower’s invitation to the Soviet Premier was “morally wrong.” Kennedy and other ACCC spokesmen repeated this theme frequently during the group’s campaign against Khrushchev’s visit. Framing communism as broadly immoral became a way for the ACCC to build relationships with groups outside the pale of Protestant fundamentalism. In this specific series of protests, the ACCC enlisted the help of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Minute Women to help promote it. The organization also included in its programs guest speakers from Hungarian and Ukrainian refugee groups to enlighten audiences about the nature of Soviet communism. The fact that the ACCC’s leaders booked the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, Connie Mack Stadium in Philadelphia, and Sylvan Amphitheater at the Washington Monument indicated an expectation that their protests would attract a wide cross-section from the anticommunism right. Much to their disappointment, none of their anti-Khrushchev rallies drew more than 2,000 people.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Jones’s originally wrote this piece for an ACCC broadcast on network radio. According to the *American Mercury*’s editor, network executives refused to broadcast it, stating, “They probably considered it an attack upon their darlings, the United Nations and integration.” The *American Mercury* accused the network of “thought control” and “brainwashing” for rejecting Jones’s manuscript. W.O.H. Garman, “A Minister Looks at the Strategic Air Command,” *American Mercury* (May 1959), 50-54; Bob Jones, Jr., “They Talked Themselves Out of It,” *American Mercury* (December 1958), 120.

⁵¹ “Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., Freedom Rallies Manifest Reverent Memorial Spirit,” *Christian Beacon*, 17 September 1959, 1; “Memorial and Patriotic Rally Held in California,” *Christian Beacon*, 24 September 1959, 1.

Whether deliberate or not, the ACCC's initiative to widen its cultural channels borrowed a formula used by Billy Graham with great success, namely emphasizing communism's immorality and its antithesis to the American way of life. This strategy owed much to the guidance of Ronn Spargur, whom McIntire hired in the late 1950s to direct public relations for the Twentieth Century Reformation movement. Unlike Graham, however, who advised Presidents from Eisenhower to Nixon on spiritual matters, the ACCC's clergymen remained locked outside the White House gates. Its leaders repeatedly attempted to gain an audience with President Eisenhower to discuss religious matters. But given their past criticism of the presidential administration, White House staff members kept them at arm's length. A memorandum that circulated within the White House in 1959 warned that "extreme caution should be exercised" in dealing with this group "because of our past experience and information."⁵²

Fundamentalists and the 1960 Presidential Election

The American Council's political activism intensified during the presidential campaign of 1960. John F. Kennedy's Roman Catholic faith loomed large as an issue for many Protestant voters. That concern was not just the province of evangelical voters. In early 1960, liberal ecumenists G. Bromley Oxnam and Eugene Carson Blake, for instance, publicly questioned whether Kennedy could make policy decisions without undue influence from the Catholic prelacy. And well-known New York City minister Norman Vincent Peale put his power of

⁵² Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 77-91; Thomas E. Stephens to Clyde Kennedy, 3 December 1958, Box 10, Folder 9, McIntire Collection; Rocco Siciliano to Kennedy, 30 December 1958, *ibid.*; Spargur to Kennedy, 17 December 1958, *ibid.*; Spargur to Kennedy, 29 March 1960, *ibid.*; See Gary Scott Smith, *Faith and the Presidency: From George Washington to George W. Bush* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 242, 550.

positive thinking into action by reviving anti-Catholic prejudice during the presidential campaign. Fundamentalists, however, provided the most vocal opposition to Kennedy's candidacy. Their rhetoric often conveyed greater anxiety at crossing the religious boundary of electing a Roman Catholic as President rather than a worry about Kennedy in particular. Regular Baptist clergyman Merle Hull summed up this sentiment best when he stated that it was highly unlikely that the Romanization of the nation would take place under Kennedy. Rather, he worried about the psychological barrier that would be broken, paving the way for the election of other Catholic candidates and the gradual encroachment of the Church in national political life.⁵³

Fundamentalists opposed Kennedy's candidacy on another account when he aligned himself with the National Council of Churches to court the Protestant vote. The first indication of this liaison took place in mid-April 1960 when Kennedy defended the NCC after a scurrilous attack against the organization appeared in an Air Force Reserve training manual for non-commissioned officers. This controversy began two months earlier when officials from the NCC learned that a section in the training manual titled "Communism in Religion" alerted servicemen to communist infiltration of Protestantism. Leaders in the NCC objected specifically to a passage in that chapter that stated, "The National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. officially sponsored the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Of the 95 persons who served on this project, 30 have been affiliated with pro-Communist fronts, projects, and publications." The training manual's information came largely from literature produced by Billy James Hargis and a few other Christian anticommunist crusaders. NCC Associate General Secretary James Wine protested vigorously to Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates, Jr., about the manual's infringement

⁵³ Randall Balmer, *God in the White House: A History: How Faith Shaped the Presidency from John F. Kennedy to George W. Bush* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 24-31; John Wicklein, "Oxnam Questions Kennedy Freedom," *New York Times*, 4 January 1960, 33; Merle Robert Hull, "The Presidential Election," *Baptist Bulletin* (October 1960), 10-11.

upon the First Amendment and demanded its immediate withdrawal. A red-faced Gates gave Wine his earnest apology and issued an immediate recall of the manual.⁵⁴

This controversy afforded Kennedy the opportunity to defuse the religious issue as a campaign topic. Staking out a position on behalf of religious pluralism, he issued a statement on April 17 criticizing the Air Force for its “flagrant violation” of separation between church and state. Kennedy declared that under the First Amendment the government could not “select any religious body for either favorable or unfavorable treatment.” He further disparaged militant sectarians for redbaiting the NCC in an effort to silence its religious views. Not surprisingly, his statement provoked an adversarial response from McIntire, who contended that Kennedy interjected himself into this controversy merely to win the Protestant vote.⁵⁵

That incident did not mark the last time the two sides would tangle before the election. In late August, Wine resigned from the NCC to work for the Democratic National Committee in neutralizing anti-Catholic bigotry during the presidential campaign. In his new capacity as DNC’s Director of Community Affairs, Wine developed a two-pronged strategy. The first involved utilizing allies in the ecumenical movement to win over skeptics. The second approach concentrated on discrediting and isolating the most vocal anti-Catholic antagonists. In pursuing this second line of attack, Wine’s office released a memorandum on September 16 naming five of the leading extremists who were fomenting anti-Catholic bigotry. McIntire and another ACCC member, Harvey Springer, were two of those five.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ “Mr. Kennedy’s New Shield,” *Washington Post*, 20 April 1960, A14; Roy, *Communism and the Churches*, 418-19; “Air Force Training Manual Draws NCC Fire,” *Christianity Today*, 29 February 1960, 29.

⁵⁵ “Texts on Kennedy’s Stand,” *New York Times*, 18 April 1960, 23; “McIntire Questions Kennedy on Position,” *Christian Beacon*, 21 April 1960, 1, 8.

⁵⁶ Shaun Casey, *The Making of a Catholic President: Kennedy vs. Nixon 1960* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 153-55, 187; Wine to Robert Kennedy, 19 September 1960, Series 1, Kennedy Campaign, Box 1, Personal

Incensed by the DNC's attempt to blackball him, McIntire demanded a meeting with DNC Chairman Henry "Scoop" Jackson. The Washington Senator agreed to meet with McIntire and ACCC President Clyde Kennedy the following week and invited reporters to attend. During their fifty-minute conference, McIntire and Kennedy protested that the DNC violated the fundamental principle of separation between church and state by publicly discrediting specific Christian leaders. McIntire made a valid point when he argued that the DNC unfairly denounced him but said nothing about Norman Vincent Peale's anti-Catholic pronouncements. As the verbal exchanges became heated, McIntire pressed Jackson for an apology. Jackson flatly refused, stating that the DNC's memorandum merely quoted from *FACTS*, which was published by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Jackson told McIntire that if he had a complaint about the accuracy of that information, he should contact the ADL.⁵⁷

In the weeks before the election, fundamentalists' anti-Kennedy rhetoric became quite noticeable. Some clergymen used the occasion of Reformation Sunday on October 30 to rail against John F. Kennedy's candidacy just ahead of the election. McIntire, for example, told worshipers at his church that "Senator Kennedy's election will greatly advance the ecumenical movement as promoted by Pope John XXIII and the National Council of Churches." According to McIntire, Kennedy's election would pave the way for the prophesied one-world church of the antichrist. In an address to churchgoers in Kansas City, Robert Ketcham evinced the traditional viewpoint of Baptist religious liberty when he stated that he would die for the right of Kennedy

Correspondence 1960, Folder 2 of 2, James Wine Personal Papers, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, MA; John W. Finney, "Democrats List 5 as Extremists," *New York Times*, 17 September 1960, 16.

⁵⁷ "Memorandum of ACCC, ICCC to Democratic National Committee," *Christian Beacon*, 29 September 1960, 2; John Finney, "Jackson Accused by Church Group," *New York Times*, 22 September 1960, 19; Forster and Epstein, *Danger on the Right*, 109.

to be a Catholic, as he would for his own right to be a Baptist, but he did not want a Roman Catholic as President.⁵⁸

Kennedy's triumph over Republican challenger Richard Nixon on November 8 naturally disappointed fundamentalists and some of them nursed a grudge. The day after the election, McIntire wired the President-elect to tell him that he owed the ACCC an apology for the suffering that the DNC inflicted upon religious minorities. He and a few other fundamentalist writers also made much of the fact that some churches became targets for vandalism and arson after their pastors spoke out against Kennedy. They blamed Democratic leaders for inciting religious intolerance, a tactic that allowed them to reposition themselves as persecuted outsiders. Donning the mantle of victimhood, McIntire warned fundamentalists to expect more of the same in the future: "The hatred which has been stirred up by the Democratic leadership against the Protestants who discussed the religious issue and defended separation of Church and State goes very deep." One Regular Baptist missionary urged vigilance in preserving religious liberty and recommended publicizing any Roman Catholic pressures that one might experience.⁵⁹ Regular Baptist clergyman Merle Hull stated that the complacency shown by a large percentage of Protestants towards a Catholic President revealed the fruits of modernism. For him, the meaning of the election was entirely apocalyptic:

Our Pilgrim forefathers came to America seeking religious freedom. Now a representative of an intolerant religious system occupies the nation's (and the world's) highest seat of power. Certainly this will not mean an immediate limitation on our freedom of worship. But the possibility is now greater, and the hour of eventual reality, we are

⁵⁸ Williams, *God's Own Party*, 54-55; David Otis Fuller sermon, "Which Should Govern America?" Box 9, Folder Catholicism, Wealthy Park Baptist Church Records; Merle Hull, "The Election's Dark Shadow," *Baptist Bulletin* (January 1961), 11; William Frye to Wine, 31 October 1960, Box 1, Personal Correspondence 1960, Folder 2 of 2, Wine Papers; "Church Group Asks Kennedy Apology," *Washington Post*, 07 October 1960, A18.

⁵⁹ Carl McIntire, "McIntire Wires Kennedy, Says He Still Owes Apology to ACCC," *Christian Beacon*, 17 November 1960, 1; Inez McLain, "More Election Reaction," *Baptist Bulletin* (March 1961), 2; Hull, "The Election's Dark Shadow," 12-13.

convinced, is now nearer. *We may be farther along in the stream of prophecy than we realize!*⁶⁰

Religious Liberty and the New Frontier Leviathan

The 1960 presidential campaign merely marked the opening phase of an antagonistic relationship between fundamentalists and the Kennedy administration. Before the election they vilified Kennedy for his Catholic faith. After his inauguration they criticized him for being soft on communism. This indictment contravened the fact that Kennedy entered office as a cold warrior who subsequently increased defense spending by fifteen percent, expanded the size of the armed forces, and authorized a new counterinsurgency strategy aimed at quelling communist “brushfire wars” in the developing world. Opponents of the President paid no attention to those actions and criticized him for his Cold War failures, which in 1961 included the Bay of Pigs fiasco and his handling of the Berlin Wall crisis.⁶¹

A striking example of the anticommunist right’s enmity towards the President took place in 1961 when the Army rebuked Major General Edwin Walker for politically indoctrinating troops under his command. On April 17, the Army relieved the highly decorated Walker from command of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry stationed in West Germany, while it investigated allegations that his Pro Blue education program indoctrinated servicemen and their families with right-wing propaganda. The impetus for this program originated with a 1958 National Security Council directive urging the military to use its resources in educating armed forces personnel and the general public on the nature of the Soviet threat. The program that Walker developed exceeded the directive’s intent by turning its rhetorical guns on American citizens. The Army’s

⁶⁰ “The One-World Church,” *Christian Beacon*, 1 December 1960, 1, 8; Hull, “The Election’s Dark Shadow,” 10.

⁶¹ Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 56; James N. Giglio, *The Presidency of John F. Kennedy* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 45-46.

investigation substantiated allegations that Walker had redbaited specific U.S. political figures and other public personalities. According to the independent newspaper *Overseas Weekly*, which broke this story, Walker's targets included former President Harry S. Truman, former Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and Eleanor Roosevelt. The Army's report also revealed that Walker had attempted to influence the vote of military personnel and their spouses by instructing them to use a voter index published by the right-wing organization Americans for Constitutional Action when casting their ballots. Walker's immediate superior, General Bruce C. Clarke, the commander-in-chief of the U.S. Army in Europe, officially admonished him on June 12. Walker resigned his commission later that year after the Army reassigned him to the post of assistant chief of staff for training and operations in the Pacific, a position he interpreted as a demotion. He took a parting shot at the Kennedy administration, which he blamed for his rebuke, when he announced his resignation, stating that he "must be free of little men" in order to serve further his country in its hour of need.⁶²

Walker's case brought to light the problem of military officials utilizing anticommunist lecturers and materials that expressed views contrary to official government policy. Arkansas Senator J. William Fulbright, who chaired the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, brought this matter to the attention of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara in June 1961. Fulbright's memorandum to McNamara evoked a strong reaction from South Carolina Democratic Senator Strom Thurmond, who denounced Fulbright's action as a "dastardly attempt to intimidate the commanders of the United States armed forces." Thurmond subsequently accused the Kennedy

⁶² Schoenwald, *A Time For Choosing*, 100-06; Cabel Phillips, "Gen. Walker Rebuke Laid to Political Rest," *New York Times*, 7 September 1961; Edwin Haakinson, "Walker Quits to Fight Reds," *Washington Post*, 3 November 1961, A2. From a religious standpoint, Pro Blue epitomized a scenario that backers of church-state separation long feared, namely the use of the chaplaincy to serve the ends of the military. Walker and his aides enlisted the division's chaplains to interpret and administer a program intended to disseminate a particular political view. See Christopher S. DeRosa, *Political Indoctrination in the U.S. Army from World War II to the Vietnam War* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 180.

administration of muzzling the military, a charge widely echoed by Walker's defenders.

Thurmond fought for and eventually secured a Senate subcommittee hearing in 1962 to examine this issue. Ostensibly that hearing was an exercise in political grandstanding on the part of Thurmond, who seemed more interested in publicly smearing the Kennedy administration for its timidity in fighting the Cold War.⁶³

The ACCC expressed its outrage at the government for silencing Walker and called for the Department of Defense to un-muzzle the military. McIntire lauded Walker for his patriotism and the *Christian Beacon* printed the text of his first public speech as a civilian, which the former general delivered to an enthusiastic audience of 6,000 in his hometown of Dallas on December 12. The crowd interrupted him frequently to applaud his attacks against the Kennedy administration, political liberalism, and the United Nations. The former general tried his hand at politics the next spring by launching a bid to become governor of Texas but finished last in six-candidate Democratic primary won by governor-to-be John B. Connally.⁶⁴ Walker proved more successful as a speaker on the anticommunist circuit than as a political candidate. In early 1963 he accompanied Billy James Hargis on a coast-to-coast speaking tour dubbed Operation Midnight Ride. Over the next few years, Walker also appeared on a number of occasions as a conference speaker at McIntire's Christian Admiral Hotel.⁶⁵

The sudden increase in right-wing vitriol did not go unnoticed by President Kennedy and his advisors. In the fall of 1961 he publicly responded to it. His most forceful

⁶³ Joseph Crespino, *Strom Thurmond's America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012), 146.

⁶⁴ Edwin Walker, "American Eagle Crusade for Truth," *Christian Beacon*, 28 December 1961, 2, 3; "Walker Rips Subservience of U.S. to U.N.," *Chicago Tribune*, 13 December 1961, 1; Tom Wicker, "Connally Faces Run-Off in Texas," *New York Times*, 7 May 1962, 1; Schoenwald, *A Time for Choosing*, 3-4; Jorstad, *Politics of Doomsday*, 107.

⁶⁵ Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 237; Williams, *God's Own Party*, 57; Jorstad, *Politics of Doomsday*, 107.

statement came at a Democratic Party dinner in Los Angeles on November 18, when he assailed those on the “fringes” of society who shirked civic responsibility “by finding a simple solution, an appealing slogan, or a convenient scapegoat.” He called upon the nation’s citizens to reject the entreaties of those who “find treason in our finest churches, in our high court, and even in the treatment of our water.” The last part of that sentence was an obvious reference to the conspiracy mongers who saw communist tactics at work in the fluoridation of water.⁶⁶

The President’s message inspired United Auto Workers President Walter Reuther to offer his help in combating the thunder from the Right. Together with his brother Victor and liberal attorney Joseph Rauh, Jr., they submitted a twenty-four-page memorandum to Attorney General Robert Kennedy in December 1961 recommending five different areas for action. The proposals most germane to the fundamentalist right included using the Internal Revenue Service to revoke the tax-exemption of groups engaging in political propaganda and using the FCC to penalize any radio stations that violated fair broadcasting standards by offering time only to right-wing personalities.⁶⁷

The public first gained knowledge of the so-called Reuther memorandum in the summer of 1963 when journalists Donald Janson and Bernard Eismann revealed its contents in *The Far Right*. Many on the Right viewed it as a smoking gun for a program of persecution already underway.⁶⁸ When the public learned of the Reuther memo, the Attorney General’s office claimed, quite falsely, that it never distributed it to any high-ranking government officials. This

⁶⁶ Andrew, *The Power to Destroy*, 18-19; Tom Wicker, “Kennedy Asserts Far-Right Groups Provoke Disunity,” *New York Times*, 19 November 1961, 1.

⁶⁷ Andrew, *The Power to Destroy*, 19.

⁶⁸ Donald Janson and Bernard Eismann, *The Far Right* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1963), 227-30; Edith Roosevelt, “The FCC and the Reuther Memo,” *Christian Beacon*, 10 October 1963, 1 (reprinted from the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*); “Fairness Caught Between: Reuther Brothers Report on Radical Right,” *Broadcasting*, 21 October 1963, 80.

denial failed to persuade fundamentalists, who remained convinced of a conspiracy to curb religious liberty.⁶⁹

Already in June 1962, a full year before the Reuther memo became public knowledge, McIntire complained that the Kennedy administration was using the IRS as a tool to harass fundamentalist churches. He made this accusation in the midst of the Bible Presbyterian Synod's dispute with the IRS over the church's federal income tax exemption. This problem stemmed from the denomination's failure to file an annual report with the IRS for several consecutive years. Although church officials eventually resolved this matter to their satisfaction, McIntire discerned a persecution campaign taking place after receiving complaints from a handful of other fundamentalist clergymen who experienced lengthy delays in receiving a tax exemption for their religious organizations or had that status revoked altogether. Those reports led the ACCC to campaign for the abolition of the Sixteenth Amendment in late 1962. The council's agitation on this issue took place concurrent to a broader campaign by the Birch Society and other groups on the Right calling for the elimination of the income tax. No evidence has ever been produced to reveal a systematic crackdown by the IRS against fundamentalist churches in 1962. Therefore it is not known whether that charge was valid or whether it was triggered by fundamentalists' expectation that a reign of persecution would take place under the Kennedy administration.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ JFK's special assistant Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., forwarded a copy of the Reuther memo to Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara a week after Robert Kennedy received it, which clearly indicated that it circulated outside the Justice Department. Andrew F. Oehmann to J. Edward Roush, 15 November 1963, Box 48, Folder Reuther Memo Congressional Correspondence, Papers of Robert F. Kennedy, Attorney General Papers, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, MA; Schlesinger to McNamara, 28 December 1961, Box WH-19, Folder Radical Right, Personal Papers of Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Boston, MA.

⁷⁰ "Correspondence between Internal Revenue Service and Bible Presbyterian Synod," 8 November 1962, *Christian Beacon*, 4. The IRS did, however, launch a secret program known as the Ideological Organizations Project in late 1961 with the goal of purging tax exempt organizations that spread political propaganda. This program apparently began concurrent to the drafting of the Reuther memo rather than as a result of it. The IRS conducted an internal audit of a dozen right-wing organizations between 1962 and 1964, including McIntire's *Christian Beacon* organization. It did not revoke the tax-exempt status of any organizations until after the 1964 presidential election. Seven right-wing organizations lost their tax exemptions by the time the program ended in 1967. Billy James

The ACCC's final act of dissent against the Kennedy administration unfolded in late 1963 when members learned that JFK had agreed to speak at the General Assembly of the National Council of Churches in Philadelphia on December 3, 1963. McIntire objected to the President's appearance at that event, claiming that it violated the principle of church-state separation by demonstrating preference for a particular religious group. On the same night as the President's scheduled speaking engagement, McIntire scheduled a counter rally at Independence Square sponsored jointly by the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* and the ACCC. In some ways, this protest evoked shades of the 1960 presidential campaign, except this time the unholy church-state alliance featured the NCC rather than the Catholic Church. Several ACCC members offered advance publicity in support of this counter-rally. Among them was Bob Jones, Jr., who urged "patriotic Americans" to turn out and protest "the efforts of tyranny and totalitarianism" to strengthen "the church of the antichrist."

Given the President's assassination in Dallas on November 22, McIntire cancelled that demonstration. He and other fundamentalists were quick to highlight the fact that the assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, was a communist. While fundamentalist writers grieved over the assassination of the President, they regrettably failed to give any serious thought to the question of why a communist would assassinate someone they continually accused of abetting communism.⁷¹

Hargis's Christian Crusade became its test case. Ultimately, the judge for the U.S. District Court, Northern District of Oklahoma threw out the IRS's revocation order against Hargis. See Andrew, *The Power to Destroy*, 40-56.

⁷¹ President Kennedy Speaks to National Council of Churches on December 3 in Philadelphia," *Christian Beacon*, 26 September 1963, 1; "National Leaders to Participate in ACCC Protest," *Christian Beacon*, 21 October 1963, 1; "Communist Assassinates President John F. Kennedy," *Christian Beacon*, 28 November 1963, 1; "As the World Turns," *Evangelical Methodist*, March 1964, 9.

One of the featured speakers for that rally was to have been Edwin Walker. Syndicated columnist Drew Pearson seized on this fact during the period of national mourning to support his claim that political extremism contributed to the President's death. Pearson wrote:

Walker's speech, later canceled, was deliberately planned by the so-called Rev. Carl McIntire as part of a hate campaign which he and other extremists waged against the late President and which made it increasingly difficult for Mr. Kennedy to put his program through Congress.

McIntire retorted, "To claim that I was leading a 'hate campaign' against the late President Kennedy is a cruel and cutting accusation in this hour of our national grief. Had he listened to my broadcast he would have heard me repeatedly praying for the President personally." McIntire also objected to Pearson's characterization of the Independence Hall Rally as a "Walker versus Kennedy deal." Rather, he contended it was a religious service meant to protest the emerging alliance between the President and the NCC.⁷²

The Reaction Against the Fundamentalist Right

Prior to 1961, Ralph Lord Roy's *Apostles of Discord* (1953) and *Communism and the Churches* (1960) stood out among the few surveys of the fundamentalist right.⁷³ But the sudden outburst of conservative populism in the early 1960s prompted an outpouring of literary works. Many of them were published after JFK's assassination. Those surveys often included the likes of McIntire, Billy James Hargis, Fred Schwarz, and Edgar C. Bundy. Whereas Roy treated those individuals primarily as menaces to the Christian religion, later writers viewed them as scourges to the democratic political process. The most notable volumes in this genre were Donald Janson

⁷² Drew Pearson, "Radio Program Deals in Hate," *Washington Post*, 5 December 1963, D23; Carl McIntire, "Church Group President in Answer to Drew Pearson," 23 December 1963, *Nevada Daily Mail*, 9.

⁷³ Roy originally wrote *Apostles of Discord* as his thesis at Union Theological Seminary, where he studied under prominent ecumenist John T. Bennett. See Roy, *Apostles of Discord*, xii.

and Bernard Eismann's *The Far Right* (1963), Arnold Forster and Benjamin Epstein's *Danger on the Right* (1964), Harry and Bonaro Overstreet's *The Strange Tactics of Extremism* (1964), and Brooks Walker's *The Christian Fright Peddlers* (1964). Written from a liberal perspective, such journalistic surveys tagged the movement with such pejorative terms as ultra-right, extreme-right, far-right, radical-right, or fringe-right to indicate their position beyond the pale of ordinary conservatism.⁷⁴

A handful of academic appraisals of the anticommunist right appeared during that period as well, providing social scientific and historical frameworks for understanding this movement. But like the accounts written by journalists, these studies too exhibited a liberal bias.⁷⁵ *The Radical Right* (1963), edited by Columbia University sociologist Daniel Bell, stood out as the foremost work of this type. Published as an expanded and updated edition of *The New American Right*, which was released eight years earlier, *The Radical Right* featured a few essays that explored the nexus between Protestant fundamentalism and right-wing politics. The article that Bell published in that volume propagated the popular misconception of fundamentalism as being a vestigial product of rural America rather than a movement rooted in the urban North. But he astutely observed that the culture of fundamentalism placed great stress on individualism and self-reliance. Armed with those ideological principles, he argued, its adherents plowed their

⁷⁴ Those surveys included: Donald Janson and Bernard Eismann, *The Far Right* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1963); Arnold Forster and Benjamin R. Epstein, *Danger on the Right* (New York: Random House, 1964); H.A. and Bonaro Overstreet, *The Strange Tactics of Extremism* (New York: Norton, 1964); Brooks Walker, *The Christian Fright Peddlers* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964).

⁷⁵ An excellent summary of the scholarly literature on the American right is William B. Hixson's *Search for the American Right Wing: An Analysis of the Social Science Record, 1955-1987* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992).

activism into such political programs as the elimination of social security, abolition of the federal income tax, and restoring state prerogatives on labor and social welfare policies.⁷⁶

Historian Richard Hofstadter largely concurred with Bell's assessment in his essay "The Pseudo-Conservative Revolt," which appeared in both *The New American Right* and *The Radical Right*. But whereas Bell attributed the eruption of right-wing activism exclusively to social alienation, Hofstadter added cultural displacement to that list. In the postscript he wrote for *The Radical Right*, Hofstadter stated that "questions of faith and morals, tone and style, and freedom and coercion" were fighting issues for many on the Right. Hofstadter remarked that if he were to rewrite "The Pseudo-Conservative Revolt" he would include religion in its scope, noting a high degree of psychological similarity between Protestant fundamentalism and the political right wing. He elaborated more fully on these ideas in his 1965 book *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, where he remarked, "The Manichean and apocalyptic style of thought prevalent in the fundamentalist tradition can easily be carried over into secular affairs and transmuted into a curiously crude and almost superstitious form of anti-communism." The insecurities wrought by modernity, he predicted, all but guaranteed that fundamentalism would continue in perpetuity.⁷⁷

Right-wing populism created its share of headaches for both the Republican Party and conservative intellectuals within the party. *National Review* founder William F. Buckley, for example, found it necessary to toss overboard right-wing figures who threatened to swamp the conservative boat. In 1959, he disparaged the *American Mercury* for its "pathologically irresponsible editorial material" and let it be known that he disapproved of the *National Review*

⁷⁶ Jerome Himmelstein, *To the Right: The Transformation of American Conservatism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), 2; Daniel Bell, "The Dispossessed," in *The Radical Right, The New American Right Expanded and Updated*, ed. Daniel Bell (New York: Doubleday, 1963), 21.

⁷⁷ Richard Hofstadter, "Pseudo-Conservatism Revisited: A Postscript," in *The Radical Right, The New American Right Expanded and Updated*, ed. Daniel Bell (New York: Doubleday, 1963), 81-86; Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 73.

publishing material submitted by individuals who wrote for the *Mercury*. More notably, Buckley criticized Robert Welch in 1962 for his peddling of gauche anticommunist conspiracy theories, which he claimed not only gave the Republican Party a black eye but greatly hampered the mainstreaming of conservative ideology.⁷⁸

California's moderate Republican Senator Thomas Kuchel conveyed similar sentiments when he denounced the purveyors of right-wing ideology as "fright peddlers" and "crackpots of paranoia" in a May 2, 1963, congressional speech. McIntire rebutted that people had good reason to be fearful. He contended that the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban missile crisis, and America's loss of unilateral power to the U.N. underscored the advance of international communism. In a follow-up speech that Kuchel delivered later that month, he reported that the mail he received ran four-to-one in favor of his point of view. But he stated that he also received numerous missives from followers of McIntire. Referring to him as a "hillbilly huckster of hate," Kuchel remarked, "They tell me he questions my loyalty. If so, I must tell them that I question his sanity."⁷⁹

The Disestablishment of Religion in Public Education

Fundamentalists' anxieties about the government's curtailment of religious liberty became more pervasive when the Supreme Court struck down organized public school prayer and Bible reading in *Engel v. Vitale* (1962) and *Abington v. Schempp* (1963). Together, these two decisions were crucial to the disestablishment of religion in public education. The Court's decision in *Engel v. Vitale*, prohibiting state-sponsored public school prayer, angered many

⁷⁸ "The National Review Scolds *Mercury* Writers," *American Mercury* (July 1959), 151; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 128; Schoenwald, *A Time for Choosing*, 176-78.

⁷⁹ "California Senator Kuchel Attacks Right Wing Fright Peddlers," *Christian Beacon*, 23 May 1963, 2; Carl McIntire, "A Preacher Replies to a United States Senator," *Christian Beacon*, 23 May 1963, 3; "McIntire Attacked by Name, Kuchel Addresses Senate Again in Speech, Fright Peddlers I," *Christian Beacon*, 13 June 1963, 1.

Christians, especially Catholics. But after reading the decision, some evangelicals, including those belonging to the ACCC, reluctantly agreed that the state did not possess the authority to establish an official prayer. *Abington v. Schempp*, on the other hand, sent conservative Protestants up in arms. The majority opinion in that case, written by Associate Justice Tom C. Clark, proscribed public schools from reciting the Lord's Prayer and reading the Bible in devotional exercises.⁸⁰ The editor of the *Baptist Bulletin* emphatically denounced the decision: "We did not take issue with the Court in their outlawing a *prescribed* prayer; we do take issue with them in doing away with it altogether." Chicago resident Robert Ketcham fired off a letter to Illinois Democratic Senator Paul Douglas urging him to mobilize Congress to nullify this decision by whatever means necessary. He expressed the view of many evangelicals when he argued that separation of church and state did not mean the separation of God from the state.⁸¹

Senators and Representatives introduced nearly 150 different bills into Congress calling for the restoration of school prayer and Bible reading in the year after the *Schempp* decision. And public pressure for a constitutional amendment ran high. The Becker Amendment, named after New York Republican Congressman Frank Becker, emerged as the bill that conservative Christians pinned their hopes on. Clergymen from the ACCC launched an all-out campaign in 1964 to push for its passage. McIntire roundly endorsed it at a House Judiciary Committee hearing in May 1964, and the ACCC distributed flyers during the political campaign season showing the position of candidates on this bill. The International Christian Youth – USA, which was an affiliate of the International Council of Christian Churches chaired by McIntire's son,

⁸⁰ Kevin Schultz, *Tri-Faith America: How Catholics and Jews Held Postwar America to Its Protestant Promise* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 120; Williams, *God's Own Party*, 64.

⁸¹ "The Supreme Court," *Christian Beacon*, 5 July 1962, 1; "That Supreme Court Decision," *Baptist Bulletin* (September 1962), 10; "Bible Reading, Prayer, and the Public Schools," *Baptist Bulletin* (July 1963), 6; "Religion in the Public Schools," *Baptist Bulletin* (August 1963), 22; "Supreme Court, 8 to 1, Rules Bible Reading and Prayer in Public Schools is Unconstitutional," *Christian Beacon*, 20 June 1963, 1.

Carl Thomas, also got in on the act by mobilizing young adults for a petition drive that ultimately collected two-and-a-half million signatures. That fall, the ICY-USA sponsored rallies simultaneously in several different cities and distributed worship materials that included a Sunday school lesson plan and a sermon titled “A Free Nation under God.” Through these activities, fundamentalists sought to make the 1964 general election a referendum on the Becker Amendment.⁸²

Fundamentalists for Goldwater

Conservatives’ hopes ran high for the 1964 presidential election when Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater won the Republican nomination and challenged Lyndon B. Johnson for the presidency. Goldwater’s tough-talking no-appeasement policy towards Soviet communism along with his strident support for free-market economic policies earned him notoriety well before 1964. Conservatives initiated a draft-Goldwater movement in the wake of Richard Nixon’s defeat in 1960, and their enthusiasm for him intensified during the Kennedy and Johnson years. Goldwater’s opposition to the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 also earned him the support of a majority of white voters in the traditionally Democratic deep South. Ultimately, those states would be the only ones he captured outside of his home state of Arizona.⁸³

⁸² Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 64-65; Carl McIntire, *I Support the Becker Amendment* (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon, ca. 1964), 2-3; Carl Thomas McIntire, “Becker Amendment Passage Urged by National Petition Day, April 11,” *Baptist Bulletin* (April 1964), 7; “Churches Back Project America,” *Baptist Bulletin* (June 1964), 20; “Project America II,” *Evangelical Methodist* (October 1964), 5.

⁸³ Gregory L. Schneider, *The Conservative Century: From Reaction to Revolution* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009), 105; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 122-23.

A number of separatist fundamentalists were bitten by Goldwater fever as well and rejoiced when he captured the Republican nomination in 1964.⁸⁴ Their support for him was based on the Arizona Senator's political positions and not his religious beliefs. Goldwater, an Episcopalian, never espoused anything more than a generic personal faith. He once quipped that his saddle was his church and the trees his cathedral and stated that "if a man acts in a religious way, an ethical way, than he's really a religious man – and it doesn't have a lot to do with how often he gets inside a church." Despite the fact that he did not hold deeply held religious convictions, he promoted religion for its social utility as a foundation for moral society. This outlook became a guiding force behind his endorsement of the Becker Amendment, which made up for his lack of religiosity among evangelical voters.⁸⁵

Fundamentalists also gave Goldwater's Roman Catholic running mate, New York Congressman William E. Miller, a pass on his religious faith as well. Interestingly, the *Christian Beacon* downplayed the matter of Miller's faith by stating, "Denominational lines don't determine degrees or levels of apostasy. Many Roman Catholic believe Christ was a virgin-born son of God." That attitude signaled a complete reversal from McIntire's position on John F. Kennedy four years earlier. The editor of the *Baptist Bulletin* also avoided the matter of Miller's religious affiliation by stating that "one votes for a presidential candidate on the assumption that he is going to fulfill his term in office."⁸⁶

IRS regulations forbade tax-exempt religious organizations from endorsing political candidates. But they found artful ways to communicate their support for Goldwater without

⁸⁴ Fuller to Goldwater, 17 March 1958, Box 3, Folder Fuller Correspondence G, 1954-1960, Wealthy Park Baptist Church Records; Verne Kaub to Goldwater, 22 August 1960, Box 5, Folder 16, Kaub Papers.

⁸⁵ Jorstad, *Politics of Doomsday*, 116. For more on the social utility of religion see James H. Hutson, *Church and State in America: The First Two Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 54.

⁸⁶ Jorstad, *Politics of Doomsday*, 116-17; "The Bulletin and Politics," *Baptist Bulletin* (February 1965), 14.

outright violating that provision. McIntire, for example, distributed Goldwater's speeches through his *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* materials. ACCC member Bob Jones, Jr., disguised his support for Goldwater in a "Turn Back America" campaign at the institution bearing his father's name, Bob Jones University. Delegates attending the ACCC's fall convention indicated their support for Goldwater by drafting a resolution on school prayer that quoted a passage from one of Goldwater's speeches where he said, "How strongly can you create morality in the minds and hearts of young people when the Supreme Court has said you cannot pray in the schools."⁸⁷

Fundamentalists' enthusiasm for Goldwater spilled over into eulogies for the Republican Party in their effort to uphold moral traditionalism. The connection between the Republican Party and evangelicalism, especially in the North, was hardly new. But only after the 1964 election did they begin openly contemplating how any Christian could vote Democratic. Although they might not have recognized that a major realignment of the political party system was underway, they clearly comprehended that the Republican Party held the moral high ground on the issues that mattered most to them, especially on the Becker Amendment.⁸⁸ In its postmortem on the 1964 election the *Baptist Bulletin* denigrated the Democratic Party for its fiscal profligacy. The magazine's editor accused Democratic candidates of using the U.S. Treasury as a welfare piggy bank to curry favor among certain blocs of voters:

Millions of people voted against their moral convictions because they thought the Democratic Party would do more for them. One man expressed it in direct fashion: "My heart is with Goldwater, but my pocketbook is with Johnson." This crucifixion of convictions for the

⁸⁷ Jorstad, *Politics of Doomsday*, 117-18; Williams, *God's Own Party*, 74; "Church Group Assails Civil Disobedience," *Chicago Tribune*, 30 October 1964, C15.

⁸⁸ Jorstad, *Politics of Doomsday*, 117; Williams, *God's Own Party*, 74; W.O.H. Garman, "What is the Meaning of This Election," *AGC Reporter* (ca. 1964), 2; "It's All Over," *Baptist Bulletin* (December 1964), 13.

gain of some present benefit can indicate nothing but a deepening of the shadows over our beloved nation.⁸⁹

Conclusion

The political mobilization of fundamentalists who marched under the banner of the Twentieth Century Reformation movement differed qualitatively in the early 1960s from their earlier forms of activism. This transformation first became apparent in 1959 with the Five against Communism and the Anti-Khrushchev campaigns. Whereas McIntire and other fundamentalists in the ACCC previously turned to politics as a way of countering the Protestant ecumenical movement, these public actions transcended organized religion by attempting to influence broader public opinion on matters of foreign policy. Their political activism intensified during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations and intersected with a wave of conservative populism. The judgments made by fundamentalists on a host of political issues, from the IRS to the U.N. to the appeasement of Soviet communism, were shared by a vast array of right-wing groups, most notably the John Birch Society.

Simultaneous to these developments, McIntire created a powerful media empire via his *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* radio program. He started this program on one station in 1955. A decade later it was a multi-million-dollar-a-year enterprise airing on several hundred radio stations across the nation. This radio empire enabled McIntire to open another avenue in winning converts to the fundamentalist point of view. More importantly, it freed him from dependence on collaborative action and voluntary financial contributions that constrained the ACCC as an effective vehicle for fundamentalist action. As a result he poured more of his energy into building the fundamentalist movement via his radio program during the 1960s. McIntire

⁸⁹ "It's All Over," 13.

most frequently targeted liberal Protestantism on his broadcasts, but they also attracted listeners from across the right-wing spectrum thanks his frequent jeremiads on current political events.

VIII. “There is No Substitute for Victory”: Civil Rights, Vietnam, and the Limits of Fundamentalist Public Action

On October 25, 1969, Georgia Governor Lester Maddox served as the guest of honor for a *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* Bible Believers March in Trenton, New Jersey. McIntire originally scheduled this event to rally public support for Shelton College, which was locked in a battle with the state of New Jersey to retain its academic accreditation. Several days before the march, however, he changed its main theme to victory in Vietnam in response to massive antiwar Moratorium demonstrations held in cities across the nation on October 15. An estimated 6,000 spectators turned out for the Bible Believers March, which terminated at the Trenton War Memorial. Maddox, who was a conservative Methodist layman, delivered the keynote address at the War Memorial. He spared no ammunition in attacking the groups he considered “enemies of God, America, and freedom.” They included antiwar “idiots,” the National Council of Churches, the United Nations, and most of all liberals in Congress, who he claimed gave America a fruitless war on poverty instead of victory in Vietnam. “Only a miracle,” he declared, “will prevent this nation from becoming Communist or a dictatorship.” McIntire praised Maddox at the conclusion of his speech and declared that New Jersey could use a governor like him. His suggestion elicited a chorus of amens from the crowd.¹

Such a demonstration, featuring a northern fundamentalist minister and a southern segregationist politician on the same stage, would have been an unlikely combination at the outset of the decade. McIntire’s brand of fundamentalist militancy had yet to pervade the Deep

¹ “Last Call to March on Trenton,” *Christian Beacon*, 23 October 1969, 1; Thomas F. Brady, “Maddox in Jersey, Defends Fundamental College,” *New York Times*, 26 October 1969, 65; Ford Bothwell, “1,500 Hear Gov. Maddox Blast Antiwar ‘Idiots,’” *Christian Beacon*, 6 November 1969, 7 (reprinted from *Trenton Times*, 26 October 1969).

South, while Maddox's law-and-order form of racial politics had yet to find a critical mass of sympathy outside the South. The social upheavals and countercultural revolutions of the 1960s helped cement new relationships across the nation's sectional divide. Maddox's appearance at McIntire's pro-Vietnam rally symbolized a larger cultural realignment of institutional religion and politics that was well under way by the end of the 1960s. This realignment, as sociologist Robert Wuthnow observed in his seminal 1988 study *The Restructuring of American Religion*, featured a liberal versus conservative ideological fissure that supplanted traditional sectional religious and political allegiances. James Davison Hunter seconded Wuthnow's observations when he used the term "culture war" to describe "the polarization of a religiously informed public culture into relatively distinct moral and ideological camps."²

During the late 1960s, a new wave of fundamentalism started to gather momentum in reaction to the social turmoil sweeping the nation. Fundamentalist preachers stoked the fury that many conservative Protestants harbored towards civil rights agitation, student protests, and urban riots by spreading a right-wing gospel message. Separatists associated with the ACCC broadened the scope of their political activism during the decade as they confronted the civil rights and antiwar movements. The political gospel that McIntire preached over his *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* radio program reached people in all parts of the country. But his message found an especially receptive audience in the South. Those broadcasts ultimately helped to cultivate a militant consciousness among white Protestants in the South and strengthen the

² Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 315; James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), 106; George Marsden, "The New Fundamentalism," *The Reformed Journal* 32 (February 1982), 10.

ACCC's network of fundamentalist churches and institutions that already existed in that region of the country.³

Southern Alliances

The expansion of fundamentalism into the South stood out as a key development that aided the reconfiguration of religion and politics in late-twentieth century America. Although Protestant denominations in the South experienced discord before the midcentury, that level of acrimony was minor in comparison to the fundamentalist-modernist controversies that wracked the northern churches during the same period. Disquiet about theological liberalism within southern mainstream denominations was often tied to other concerns. In the Southern Methodist and Southern Presbyterian churches a number of clergy fought against reunification with the northern – and more liberal – wing of their denominations. In the Southern Baptist Convention, opposition to theological liberalism was tied to resistance against denominational centralization. Fundamentalism, in short, did not penetrate the South to a great degree before midcentury because: 1) denominational loyalty ran high, and 2) liberalism and secularism did not threaten traditional culture and customs.⁴

That would change in the decades that followed. By the mid-1970s fundamentalism's center of gravity had shifted to the South. This new fundamentalism recombined intellectual

³ Richard V. Pierard, "The New Religious Right in American Politics," in *Evangelicalism and Modern America*, ed. George Marsden (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984), 167-68; Ruotsila, "Carl McIntire and the Fundamentalist Origins of the Christian Right," 398.

⁴ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 237-38; William R. Glass, *Strangers in Zion: Fundamentalism in the South, 1900-1950* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2001), 30, 91. Samuel S. Hill, "Fundamentalism in Recent Southern Culture: Has It Done What the Civil Rights Movement Couldn't Do?" in *Southern Crossroads: Perspectives on Religion and Culture*, ed. Walter H. Conser, Jr. and Rodger M. Payne (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 359; Paul Harvey, *Freedom's Coming: Religious Culture and the Shaping of the South from the Civil War through the Civil Rights Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 222-23.

currents from the separatist and new evangelical movements, evincing militancy on moral-political issues while eschewing ecclesiastical separation. Many evangelicals shared a similar religious outlook and level of cultural militancy with self-described fundamentalists but shunned that label and sidestepped the issue of separatism, which greatly complicated the scholar's task of creating tidy typologies for each group. Televangelists Jerry Falwell, James Robison, Charles Stanley, D. James Kennedy, and Pat Robertson, all southerners, exemplified this new fundamentalism and became its most visible personalities.⁵

Several historians have highlighted the magnitude of federal civil rights as a driving force behind this new fundamentalism. Paul Harvey, for one, persuasively argued that many white conservatives in the South applied a "folk theology of segregation" to justify Jim Crow. Defense of this folk theology pitted laity against hierarchy in the Southern Baptist and Southern Presbyterian churches. By the early 1970s, conservatives in those denominations accepted racial desegregation as an accomplished fact and turned their attention to moral matters pertaining to gender and sexuality. Although the issue of racial rights played a paramount role in establishing a factional foundation for the advancement of fundamentalism in the South, a panoply of social and cultural issues also contributed to this process. Among them were the Cold War threat of communism, the Supreme Court's ban on school-sponsored prayer and Bible reading, urban race riots, sexual revolutions, and antiwar radicalism.⁶

⁵ Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 237; Darren Dochuk, "Evangelicalism Becomes Southern, Politics Becomes Evangelical: From FDR to Reagan," in *Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the Present*, 2nd ed., ed. Mark A. Noll and Luke E. Harlow (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 299; Williams, *God's Own Party*, 6, 48; Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 198-200.

⁶ Harvey, *Freedom's Coming*, 242; Nancy Tatom Ammerman, *Baptist Battles: Social Change and Religious Conflict in the Southern Baptist Convention* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 65-66; Joel L. Alvis, Jr., *Religion and Race: Southern Presbyterians, 1940-1983* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1994); Jane Dailey, "The Theology of Massive Resistance: Sex, Segregation, and the Sacred After *Brown*," in *Massive Resistance: Southern Opposition to Second Reconstruction*, ed. Clive Webb (New York: Oxford University

McIntire saw the southern religious landscape ripe unto the harvest and launched a southern strategy early in his career to win converts to his movement, concentrating most intensely on the Southern Presbyterian Church. In 1939, with anti-church union sentiments running high, he published several exposés on apostasy in Southern Presbyterianism in the *Christian Beacon* and sent his newspaper to every minister in that communion for an entire year. Southern Presbyterian clergy and laity, however, generally proved resistant to the Siren's song of separatism. By the time of the Bible Presbyterian schism in the mid-1950s, his denomination counted little more than a dozen southern congregations in its fold. McIntire's rhetoric, however, did not fall on deaf ears. An editor for the *Presbyterian Outlook* in 1954 blamed him for fueling Southern Presbyterian resistance to a PCUS-PCUSA merger during debate that year on church union.⁷

Despite those modest gains, McIntire and the ACCC found allies among other church bodies in the South. In 1942, the 4,000-member Southern Methodist Church joined the American Council of Christian Churches, becoming the first entirely southern denomination to join the council. This church body was comprised largely of dissidents from South Carolina and eastern Georgia who refused to reunite with the northern Methodist church in 1939. Its members resisted this merger as much to preserve traditional Wesleyan teachings as to protect the church's southern identity, which included the principle of racial segregation.⁸

Press, 2005), 160-66; Mark A. Noll, *God and Race in American Politics: A Short History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 143-44.

⁷ Carl McIntire, "Christian Beacon to Extend Testimony Throughout South," *Christian Beacon*, 12 January 1939, 1; *Minutes of the Eighteenth General Synod*, B2-B5; R. Milton Winter, "Division and Reunion in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.: A Mississippi Retrospective," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 78 (Spring 2000), 76.

⁸ Glass *Strangers in Zion*, 168, 261-6; Samuel S. Hill, et al., ed., *Encyclopedia of Religion in the South*, 2nd ed. (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2005), 750-51; The Association of Religion Data Archives, < http://www.thearda.com/Denoms/D_1471.asp>, accessed 19 July 2013.

A number of Baptist sects in the South also aligned with the American Council of Christian Churches. They included the 50,000-member World Baptist Fellowship and the 250,000-member American Baptist Association. The large proportion of churches that belonged to those denominations inhabited a geographical area that stretched roughly from western Tennessee to central Texas. Although these two church bodies embraced similar religious views, they originated from different circumstances. Fiery Texas dispensationalist J. Frank Norris organized the World Baptist Fellowship in 1933 after parting ways with the Southern Baptist Convention. The American Baptist Association, on the other hand, descended from the Landmark movement that swept through the Southern Baptist Convention in the mid-nineteenth century, which emphasized the autonomous authority of the local congregation. Because of this ecclesiological tenet, the ABA did not have the power to speak for its churches. Therefore its messengers declared the organization in concord with the ACCC but did not officially join it.⁹

Notable as well were numerous preachers and evangelists from the Baptist Bible Fellowship (BBF) who established cordial relations with McIntire and other separatist leaders in the ACCC. They included BBF founder G. Beauchamp Vick and *Baptist Bible Tribune* editor Noel Smith, who held a front row gallery seat behind G. Bromley Oxnam during his 1953 HUAC hearing. BBF evangelist Bob Wells was also well known in ACCC circles and spoke in various churches affiliated with the council before forming Central Baptist Church in Orange County, California, in 1956. During the 1960s he invited the likes of Carl McIntire, Billy James Hargis, and Edwin Walker to speak at his Sunday night anticommunist “crisis crusades.” Thomas Road Baptist Church minister Jerry Falwell, who also belonged to the BBF, became

⁹ Glass, *Strangers in Zion*, 195-97; H. Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1987), 749-67; William H. Brackney, *The Baptists* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1988), 18-19.

personally acquainted with McIntire. Years before he formed the Moral Majority, Falwell cooperated in staging McIntire's rallies in his hometown of Lynchburg, Virginia.¹⁰

McIntire also cultivated amicable relations with several independent southern fundamentalists. Prominent among them was Bob Jones, Jr., who together with his father established Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina, as the foremost fundamentalist college in the South. Interestingly, despite their thoroughgoing identification with fundamentalism, the Joneses joined the National Association of Evangelicals during the 1940s in large part because the elder Jones disliked the infighting that marred the separatist movement. But that changed in the early 1950s when a number of evangelicals in the NAE began fraternizing with ecumenists from mainline Protestantism, which induced the Joneses to cast their lot with the ACCC.¹¹

Billing itself for many years as "the world's most unusual university," Bob Jones University became known widely for its rigorous academic climate as well as its rigid regulation of student conduct. Bob Jones, Jr.'s fear of miscegenation resulted in the university's ban on admitting blacks until 1971, and only then on the condition that they were married to someone of their own race. Four years later, the university began admitting non-married blacks but proscribed inter-racial dating, a policy it maintained until the year 2000. Those policies ran the university afoul of the Internal Revenue Service, which adopted a code in 1970 barring religious schools from receiving tax-exemption if they practiced racial discrimination. Administrators

¹⁰ W.O.H. Garman, "Oxnam's Link with Communists and Communist Fronts Confirmed by Hearing Before Un-American Activities Committee," *Christian Beacon*, 30 July 1953, 4; "National Leaders to Participate in ACCC Protest," *Christian Beacon*, 21 November, 1953, 1; W.O.H. Garman to Harry Losier, 9 January 1956, Folder Wells, Robert, Garman Collection; "Revival for Survival" form letter, 25 May 1954, Box 7, Folder 33, Wealthy Park Baptist Church Records; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 190, 237; Ruotsila, "Carl McIntire and the Fundamentalist Origins of the Christian Right," 395.

¹¹ Dalhouse, *An Island in the Lake of Fire*, 62-73; Williams, *God's Own Party*, 39.

steadfastly refused to amend the school's policy on inter-racial dating as a matter of principle. The university ultimately was unsuccessful in challenging the IRS's tax code as an infringement of religious liberty.¹²

By 1966, the ACCC recognized the opportunity for fundamentalism to penetrate the South more fully and established a regional office in Atlanta. It became the ACCC's only regional office, operating on an annual budget of about \$12,000. Southern segregationist Sherman Patterson, who published the fundamentalist newspaper *Militant Truth*, aided this endeavor by subsidizing the office's rent for a year. The ACCC hired Southern Methodist Church minister Donald L. Gorham to staff it. In his first year as the director of the southern office, Gorham spoke in dozens of churches throughout the region for the purpose of strengthening the churches belonging to the ACCC. He also produced a weekly *Southern ACCCent* radio program that aired on stations in Atlanta, Charleston, and Bamberg, South Carolina.¹³

The *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* and the Southern Strategy

The intensification of civil rights agitation in the early 1960s paralleled the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour*'s transformation into a chain broadcast, and McIntire found audiences in the South receptive to his political jeremiads. During the first half of the 1960s, the number of radio stations broadcasting the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* swelled to more than 600, with around forty percent of those stations located in the South. McIntire's populist remonstrances helped drive a wedge between laity and hierarchy in the mainstream southern

¹² Dalhouse, *An Island in the Lake of Fire*, 155-58; Dailey, "The Theology of Massive Resistance," 171.

¹³ Gorham to McIntire, 26 February 1968, Box 354, Folder 5, McIntire Collection; *Southern ACCCENT* newsletter (January 1967), *ibid.*; Gorham to McIntire, 28 July 1969, *ibid.*; McIntire to Gorham, 28 July 1969, *ibid.*

Protestant churches. Southern Presbyterian layman L. Nelson Bell, for example, fielded numerous inquiries from clergymen complaining about the deleterious effect that McIntire's radio program was having on congregational harmony. As editor of both the *Presbyterian Journal* and *Christianity Today*, not to mention a mentor to his son-in-law Billy Graham, Bell was intimately familiar with McIntire's attacks against non-separating evangelicals and the Southern Presbyterian Church's membership in the National Council of Churches. Typical of the missives Bell received from Southern Presbyterian clergymen was the following from Spartanburg, South Carolina, minister Robert Craig:

I am writing to ask if you know of any literature that I could put into the hands of a few people who need to have some facts on Dr. Carl McIntire. He is being heard on the radio on a five minute and a thirty minute daily program. A few folks think he has been sent down from above. They need to hear something on the other side. Some are sending him money. I do not know if there is anything in leaflet form or not but I would like for some of these people to have their eyes opened.¹⁴

Although Bell held conservative social and religious views, he was no fundamentalist and resented McIntire's efforts to sow militant passions among Southern Presbyterians. He empathized with the plight of those who wrote him but could offer little advice other than pointing out McIntire's method of operation. Responding to Craig's inquiry, Bell vouched for the soundness of McIntire's doctrinal positions as well as his stand against communism but deplored his attacks on fellow Christians who disagreed with him. Bell asserted, "I really think that in this regard he is almost psychopathic, because on a number of occasions I have been completely aware of situations which he has reported, and I could hardly recognize them as being the same issues." The situations that Bell referred to dealt with McIntire's charge of apostasy among the Southern Presbyterian missions in Brazil and South Korea. He claimed that

¹⁴ Craig to Bell, 11 June 1962, Box 35, Folder 20, Papers of L. Nelson Bell, Billy Graham Center Archives, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL.

in both episodes McIntire inserted himself in a local disagreement and exacerbated conflict based upon hearsay and conjecture.¹⁵

Much of the correspondence that Bell received from McIntire's defenders in the South conveyed great angst at church officials' corruption of the Christian faith and their efforts to lead the nation down the path of socialism. Interestingly, much of that correspondence came from housewives wary of social modernization's effects upon family bonds.¹⁶ One woman from Mississippi who wrote him in early 1961 derided the Southern Presbyterian hierarchy for promoting liberalism and praised McIntire for his "eye-opening messages." She declared, "I am more convinced than ever before that if there is really to be a spiritual awakening in this country in time to preserve freedom for our children, it must come through things like [Billy James Hargis's] Christian Crusade and Twentieth Century Reformation." Another woman from Birmingham, Alabama, writing in 1965, conceded that McIntire had strong opinions but insisted that his warnings about "Godless communism" taking over the nation were badly needed. "Where will the people get a message such as this one?" she asked. "Not thru' newspapers. So this message from Dr. M. is strong enuf [sic] to wake us up to the clever work of the WCC and UN." The fact that the communists and the NCC despised him, she stated, was a good enough reason for her to give him financial support.¹⁷

Popularity of the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* in the South was further boosted by McIntire's views on racial civil rights, which accorded with those held by many southern

¹⁵ David Chappell, *A Stone of Hope: Prophetic Religion and the Death of Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 117-19; Bell to Craig, 19 June 1962, Bell Papers, Box 35, Folder 20.

¹⁶ Historian Michelle Nickerson argued that housewives played a crucial role in the development of the post-World War II conservative movement. She argued that their desire to protect family and community "from aliens, internationalism and power-hungry bureaucrats" spurred them to grassroots political action. Michelle Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), xvi.

¹⁷ Mrs. James Harris to Bell, 25 January 1961, Box 35, Folder 20, Bell Papers; Mrs. H.G. McClellan to Bell, 29 October 1965, *ibid.*

white conservatives. McIntire spoke the same color-blind language as the White Citizens' Councils in defending racial segregation, arguing that federal civil rights violated individual liberty (freedom of association), private property rights, and states' rights. And like white supremacists in the South, he blamed Moscow for the agitation for racial equality. His fulminations on civil rights gave segregationist leaders in the South what they sought, namely legitimacy outside the South for Jim Crow's legal justification.¹⁸ McIntire displayed no compunction about consorting with segregationist politicians. South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond lectured at the Christian Admiral Hotel each summer during the mid-1960s. McIntire also established amicable relations with George Wallace, Lester Maddox, and other segregationist politicians during the mid-to-late 1960s, lauding each for his righteousness in defending liberty.¹⁹

The singular role of the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* in advancing the cause of fundamentalism in the South should not be overstated. A sizable proportion of the population likely never even heard of McIntire. But his program did figure prominently among nationally syndicated broadcasts that openly sympathized with massive resistance. A telling example of McIntire's usefulness to southern resisters took place in 1964 when the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission used literature distributed by the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* to attack the National Council of Churches for its involvement in Freedom Summer. In June 1964, Eugene Carson Blake, who was vice chairman of the NCC's Commission on Religion and

¹⁸ Stephanie R. Rolph, "Courting Conservatism: White Resistance and the ideology of Race in the 1960s," in *The Right Side of the Sixties: Reexamining Conservatism's Decade of Transformation*, ed. Laura Jane Gifford and Daniel K. Williams (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 22-23; George Lewis, "White South, Red Nation: Massive Resistance and the Cold War," in *Massive Resistance: Southern Opposition to Second Reconstruction*, ed. Clive Webb (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 126; Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 164-66.

¹⁹ Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 241; McIntire to George Wallace, 12 January 1966, Box 14, Folder 24, McIntire Collection; "Last Call to March on Trenton," 1.

Race, flew into Jackson, Mississippi, to inaugurate the council's participation in Freedom Summer. The Sovereignty Commission pulled material on Blake from its files, which consisted largely of printed literature distributed by the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour*, and sent it to the *Jackson Daily News* for publication. The newspaper subsequently smeared Blake as a radical, citing a litany of offenses that included fraternizing with Soviet clergymen and urging recognition of Communist China.²⁰

Fundamentalism, Federal Civil Rights, and the Cult of Individualism

Responses by white evangelicals to civil rights varied from conditional endorsement to outright opposition. In general they questioned the need for federal civil rights and disparaged the black freedom movement for inciting civil disobedience. Billy Graham stood at the progressive end of the evangelical spectrum when it came to supporting racial civil rights and the black freedom movement. But his views were conservatively cautious in comparison to the more strident backing of ecumenical Protestant leaders. While he approved of such federal measures as the 1954 *Brown* decision and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, he generally favored a gradualist approach to desegregation and drew the line at the use of civil disobedience to achieve racial equality. Graham's father-in-law, L. Nelson Bell, displayed deeper ambivalence to civil rights. In a 1955 *Southern Presbyterian Journal* editorial, he declared that "segregation by law cannot be legally defended" but neither should integration be forced. Privately he extolled the wisdom of voluntary racial segregation and bristled at the notion that African Americans thought they could attain social equality through a court of law. That privilege, he asserted, needed to be earned,

²⁰ Crespino, *In Search of Another Country*, 166; "Leftist Preacher Rallies Agitators," *Jackson Daily News*, 12 June 1964. "Leftist Preacher Rallies Agitators," *Jackson Daily News*, 12 June 1964, Sovereignty Commission Online. Mississippi Department of Archives and History, <http://mdah.state.ms.us/arrec/digital_archives/sovcom/result.php?image=images/png/cd10/073960.png&otherstuff=13|41|0|7|1|1|1|73019|>>, accessed 26 December 2013.

“and until their minds are disabused of this thought, I believe some of them will be quite trying to live with.”²¹

Bell’s statement regarding African-American social equality underscored a major motif among white evangelicals. A recent study of social and political attitudes among both white and black conservative Protestants by Michael Emerson and J. Russell Hawkins highlighted the prevalence of an “individualized theology” among white evangelicals, who tended to emphasize individual prerogative in human relations. From this perspective, white evangelicals have often viewed racism as a personal transgression by certain individuals who lack Christian love and understanding. Connected with this idea has been the propensity of evangelicals to criticize structural remedies, such as laws and legal rulings that promote group rights. Such measures, evangelicals argue, undermine individual responsibility and accountability.²²

This notion of individualism permeated separatist fundamentalism, and for McIntire it became a fetish. Fundamentalists in the ACCC consistently opposed both federal civil rights and the black freedom movement. Their arguments proceeded from two assumptions: 1) the majority of African Americans opposed integration; and 2) African Americans did not really need special protection because of the immense social progress they had achieved since emancipation.²³

²¹ Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 28-32; Chappell, *A Stone of Hope*, 117; L. Nelson Bell, “Christian Race Relations Must Be Natural Not Forced,” *Southern Presbyterian Journal*, 17 August 1955, 3-4; Bell to Mrs. W.E. Kibler, 1 November 1958, Box 15, Folder 15, Bell Papers.

²² Emerson and Hawkins also argued that African Americans tended to adhere to a theology of limited individualism in which sin and atonement were individual experiences but human relations were predicated upon the construction and maintenance of communities. Hence, African Americans were more prone to view racism as a structural condition embedded in social and cultural institutions. Michael O. Emerson and J. Russell Hawkins, “Viewed in Black and White: Conservative Protestantism, Racial Issues, and Oppositional Politics,” in *Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the Present*, 2nd ed., ed. Mark A. Noll and Luke E. Harlow (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 330, 336.

²³ These themes appeared in numerous articles published in fundamentalist newspapers and periodicals, including the following: “States Rights and Human Rights,” *Christian Beacon*, 22 July 1948, 8; “Use of Troops in Mississippi,” *Evangelical Methodist* (November 1962), 4-5; “Negro Minister Warns Against Racial Strife,” *Evangelical Methodist* (May 1964) 11; “Civil Rights,” *Evangelical Methodist* (July 1964), 9. Carl McIntire,

The opening act in their opposition to civil rights took place in the late 1940s when McIntire and other churchmen in the ACCC actively campaigned against legislation to create a Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC).²⁴ Their foremost objection to FEPC centered on the claim that the government could deprive an employer of the liberty to exercise personal discretion in hiring decisions.²⁵ They applied a similar line of reasoning when they opposed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In a *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* tract titled *Repeal the 'Civil Wrongs' Bill for Biblical Reasons*, McIntire presented a vision of big brother government using “intimidation, harassment, and false accusation” to compel compliance with the Civil Rights Act. He cited a handful of New Testament passages that he thought justified repeal of this law. While the verses he referenced provided sage advice for righteous living, they failed to address how any specific provision in the Civil Rights Act violated the gospel. For example, he accused leaders of the black freedom movement of delivering African Americans “into new bondage” by quoting the admonition from 2 Peter 2:19 to be watchful of counterfeit prophets promising false liberty. But he failed to articulate just how the Civil Rights Act would deliver them into spiritual bondage. Such a lack of precision reflected personal opinion rather than gospel.²⁶

Revolution in the Delta (Collingswood, NJ: Twentieth Century Reformation Hour, ca. 1964); “Negroes and Civil Disobedience,” *Baptist Bulletin* (November 1966), 14.

²⁴ Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York: Random House, 2008), 90-102; “Federal Council’s Anti-Discrimination Bill,” *Christian Beacon*, 4 December 1947, 1; “American Council of Christian Churches of Ohio Opposes FEPC Legislation,” *Christian Beacon*, 24 March 1949, 4, 5.

²⁵ Carl McIntire, *Russia’s Most Effective Fifth Column in America* (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, 1948), 25-30; “F.C. and FEPC,” *Christian Beacon*, 19 February 1948, 8; “States’ Rights and Human Rights,” *Christian Beacon*, 22 July 1948, 1.

²⁶ Carl McIntire, *Repeal the “Civil Wrongs Bill” For Biblical Reasons* (Collingswood, NJ: Christian Beacon Press, ca. 1964).

Northern Fundamentalism and the Theology of Segregation

The folk theology of segregation that coursed through southern white Protestantism pervaded the pews to a greater extent than the pulpit. This theology drew upon the Bible to sanctify Jim Crow and racial purity. Conservative white Protestants in the South most frequently cited the second half of Acts 17:26 to justify segregation. Interestingly, ecumenists who supported desegregation emphasized the first half of the same verse. It stated in full, “And [God] hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation” (KJV).²⁷ Defenders of segregation on biblical grounds also found justification for their views in the book of Genesis. In Genesis 9, God divided the postdiluvial world among Noah’s three sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Although the Bible never ascribed any racial attributes to Noah’s sons, segregationists claimed Ham was the progenitor of the black race. In conjunction with that passage, white supremacists cited Genesis 11, where God scattered the people at Babel as judgment for building a stairway to heaven, as further evidence that he created the races and intended them to remain separated.²⁸

Segregationist theology percolated through northern fundamentalism, helping further to draw together fundamentalists in the North with evangelicals in the South. Several clergymen affiliated with the ACCC upheld this hermeneutic in the wake of the Supreme Court’s 1954 *Brown v. Board* decision.²⁹ In 1956, Johnson City, New York, Regular Baptist minister Kenneth Kinney, whose term as president of the ACCC had recently ended, unapologetically defended the

²⁷ Harvey, *Freedom’s Coming*, 229, 234; Dailey, “The Theology of Massive Resistance,” 154.

²⁸ Stephen R. Haynes, *Noah’s Curse: The Biblical Justification for American Slavery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 5.

²⁹ Fuller to John Benedict, 20 November 1958, Box 3, Folder 4, Wealthy Park Baptist Church Records; Carl Newton to Fuller, ca. 1959, Box 3, Folder 24, *ibid.*; Howard A. Keithley, “Your Questions Answered,” *Baptist Bulletin* (June 1956), 17.

biblical basis for Jim Crow in the *Baptist Bulletin*. Kinney contended that as the descendants of Ham, blacks had always demonstrated a “spirit of rebellion.” Kinney blamed them for the judgment at Babel by asserting that they willfully disobeyed God by migrating to Babel – a city that he claimed had been bestowed to the descendants of Shem.³⁰ He added that the same rebellious spirit evident at Babel was on display in their agitation for racial rights. Blacks’ subservient position in American society, he opined, represented divine punishment for not respecting the bounds of their habitation. Turning his attention to the matter of school desegregation, Kinney flayed the Supreme Court for its *Brown* decision, arguing that “co-mingling in cultural relationships will lead inevitably to marriage.” This violation of God’s plan, he remarked, would wreak divine judgment upon the nation.³¹

Kinney’s article generated vigorous response from readers, who revealed mixed opinions on this subject. One Phoenix, Arizona, preacher, for example, urged Kinney to reproduce his article in tract form, stating that it was the “best thing I have ever read on the subject.” James E. Bennet, who was McIntire’s legal advisor and an influential elder in the Bible Presbyterian Church, also concurred with Kinney’s interpretation. Prominent among those who objected to it was Wheaton College anthropology professor James O. Buswell, who also was the son of McIntire’s former ally J. Oliver Buswell. He pointed out that no anthropological or historical evidence existed to indicate that the African race descended from Ham or that his descendants ever migrated to sub-Saharan Africa. From there, Buswell began puncturing holes in Kinney’s segregationist interpretation of the scriptures. Since the Hamitic legend accounted for the

³⁰ He based this interpretation on the first two verses of Genesis 11, which stated, “And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there,” (Gn. 11: 1-2, KJV).

³¹ Kenneth R. Kinney, “The Segregation Issue,” *Baptist Bulletin* (November 1956), 9.

European, Asian, and African races, he asked, “What do you do with the native Australian and the American Indian, which do not belong to either of the three major groups?” Nor did he mince words in attacking Kinney for arguing that the Supreme Court needed to reverse the *Brown* decision in order to restore biblically sanctioned separate but equal cultures:

Now doesn't it occur to you that if this recommendation were followed out to its logical conclusion, that we should send all of the Negroes back to Africa and all the white folks back to their original countries and leave the American continent to the Indians? This is clearly ridiculous, and any arguing for segregation on the basis of equal *cultural* spheres has nothing to do with racial mixture whatsoever. The Negroes are already in the American *cultural* sphere. Segregation on the other hand, has only to do in this case with the basis of skin color, not on the basis of culture.³²

While it is clear that several influential ministers and laymen belonging to the ACCC subscribed to the Hamitic legend, it is not clear whether McIntire believed in it. He abstained from that debate during the late 1950s, and after that time fundamentalists ceased to invoke the book of Genesis to justify segregation. McIntire spoke little about civil rights or racial segregation during the 1950s. So his thoughts on Jim Crow are not completely known. In 1963, however, he remarked, “Society in the South was developed under the ‘separate but equal’ doctrine, and in less than 12 hours, nine justices of the Supreme Court changed it and threw the nation into convulsions.” Ironically, for someone who was so extremely sensitive to discrimination against fundamentalists as a religious minority group, the logic of equal protection for blacks as a minority racial group clearly escaped him.³³

³² “The Segregation Issue,” *Baptist Bulletin* (January 1957), 5-6. Buswell later published a book critical of the Hamitic myth. See James O. Buswell, III, *Slavery, Segregation, and Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1964).

³³ Carl McIntire, “A Preacher Replies to a United States Senator,” *Christian Beacon*, 23 May 1963, 8.

Civil Disobedience and the Doctrine of Submission

The momentum for racial civil rights within the northern mainline churches built gradually over a period of decades, and by the 1960s it represented a core social concern. Before that time, socially progressive ecumenists supported civil rights via declarations and resolutions. As sociologist Robert Wuthnow noted, this approach to civil rights reflected the traditional role of the churches in influencing public values through moral suasion.³⁴ That situation changed in the early 1960s when a new generation of social Christian clergymen displayed impatience at mere pep rally cheers for racial equality and cajoled the Protestant establishment to step onto the playing field in this moral crusade. Direct participation by these “new breed” clergymen in the civil rights struggle was followed by direct involvement from the churches.³⁵ This new form of public engagement took place about the same time that Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., excoriated the white churches for their lack of “sacrificial spirit” in his 1963 *Letter from Birmingham Jail*. Participation by mainline religious groups in the black freedom struggle was evident the following year when they collaborated with civil rights leaders in staging the Mississippi Freedom Summer voter registration drive.³⁶

Fundamentalists scoffed at the idea of the struggle for civil rights representing a moral crusade. Clergymen in the ACCC resolved that “[Segregation] is not unchristian nor contrary to

³⁴ James F. Findlay, Jr., *Church People in the Struggle*, 16; Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 65-66, 145.

³⁵ One of the few episodes during the 1950s in which the National Council intervened in the civil rights movement took place with its Southern Project, which was directed by Southern Baptist clergyman Will Campbell. The NCC launched this small-budget operation in 1956 and tasked Campbell to function as its liaison with civil rights activists. The NCC phased out the Southern Project in 1963. See Findlay, *Church People in the Struggle*, 22-26.

³⁶ Findlay, *Church People in the Struggle*, 27-28; Michael B. Friedland, *Lift Up Your Voice Like a Trumpet: White Clergy and the Civil Rights and Antiwar Movements, 1954-1973* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 5.

the specific commands of the Bible.”³⁷ Equally important, they rebuked sit-in demonstrations and other forms of civil disobedience protests for contravening biblical scriptures commanding submission to civil authority. Their argument on this matter drew from both Augustinian and Reformed theologies. Saint Paul’s epistle to the Christians in Rome served as the traditional foundation for this doctrine: “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God” (Rom. 13:1).³⁸

The use of civil disobedience to achieve racial rights exacerbated fundamentalists’ anathema to the black freedom struggle. McIntire castigated the sit-in protests used by the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee as “unlawful and revolutionary.” He and other fundamentalists stressed that legal change must come through petition and that no person or group possessed the right to resist a law simply because it was unjust. That prerogative would only lead to anarchy. In Reformed theology, the only condition under which a Christian had the right to disobey a law was when it violated Christian conscience or contravened God’s word. Fundamentalists contended that civil disobedience on behalf of civil rights did not fall into either category and found it inexcusable for clergymen to encourage or participate in this type of demonstration.³⁹ After police in Tallahassee, Florida, arrested a racially mixed group of northern clergymen for attempting to desegregate a seating area at the city’s airport in June 1961,

³⁷ “Resolutions Adopted at 16th Spring Convention of ACCC,” *Christian Beacon*, 8 May 1958, 4.

³⁸ Other biblical passages that defined the Christian’s relationship to the state included: “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (Matt. 22:21, KJV) and “submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors” (1 Pet. 2:13-14, KJV).

³⁹ “Civil Disobedience and the Sit-Ins,” *Christian Beacon*, 9 February 1961, 5; John G. Balyo, “Civil Disobedience,” *Baptist Bulletin* (Sept. 1966), 8-10.

McIntire protested that they had “invaded the South” and accused them of acting out of a “perverted, seared, and unenlightened conscience.”⁴⁰

McIntire vilified the NCC for sanctioning civil disobedience and frequently called attention to Eugene Carson Blake’s law-breaking activities. On July 4, 1963, Blake made headlines when police arrested him and several other clergymen for trespassing after they attempted to desegregate a whites-only amusement park outside Baltimore. The park’s owners had previously declined to integrate the park out of fear that such a move would result in a decline in revenue. Blake justified his arrest by stating “I am sure [the trespass law] is not right if it allows property rights to be a constant public affront to the Negro community.” Blake’s elevation of human rights over property rights grated on McIntire, who criticized him for aiding the forces of radicalism and socialism by “invading and trespassing on another man’s property.”⁴¹

Conservative Protestants in the South quite naturally disdained the NCC’s activism on civil rights, and their opposition intensified in 1964 when the council provided material support for the Freedom Summer voting project in Mississippi. As that project wound down, the NCC started the Delta Ministry as a long-term mission to eradicate racial poverty and discrimination in rural Mississippi. McIntire helped stir outrage in the South against this mission. Alluding to imagery made famous by Lost Cause proponents, he assailed the NCC for making Mississippi “a ‘whipping boy’ of the ecumenical movement” in its effort to achieve a social revolution. He

⁴⁰ Among the clergymen arrested were Robert McAfee Brown and Ralph Lord Roy, who were charged with unlawful assembly with incitement to riot. Carl McIntire, “Ralph Lord Roy Joins Lawbreakers in South: Arrested, Fined, Lectured by Judge in Florida,” *Christian Beacon*, 29 June 1961, 1. Friedland, *Lift Up Your Voice Like a Trumpet*, 57.

⁴¹ Mark Newman, *Divine Agitators: The Delta Ministry and Civil Rights in Mississippi* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 6; “Dr. Blake,” *Christian Beacon*, 11 July 1963, 8 (photographically reproduced from the *Baltimore Sun*, 5 July 1963).

asked rhetorically why the National Council did not “experiment on the Negro tenement sections of Philadelphia,” where the living conditions were far worse than in Mississippi. Others in the ACCC echoed McIntire’s sentiments. The editor of the *Evangelical Methodist*, a monthly publication of the Evangelical Methodist Church, painted a glowing picture of African-American life in Mississippi’s Delta region, which he claimed to have seen during the ACCC’s recent convention in Jackson.⁴²

Martin Luther King, Jr., did not escape criticism for his role in inciting this civil rights revolution. His ability to mobilize thousands of people for a demonstration and the political influence he amassed as a result of his civil rights activism clearly disturbed fundamentalists. In several of their writings, they criticized his use of civil disobedience to coerce civil rights legislation. McIntire referred to this strategy as a form of blackmail. He lectured Lyndon Johnson on this point in an open letter to the President opposing the pending Civil Rights Act in March 1964. “When lawlessness and mob action are used to induce legislation and intimidate legislators,” he argued, “the integrity of this Republic is under assault.”⁴³ Like other conservatives, McIntire worried about the potential for non-violent resistance to spiral out of control. To him, the race riots that rocked New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and other northern cities between 1964 and 1966 represented the fruits of civil disobedience. Commenting on the Watts riot in 1965, he contended that it marked a key turning point in the black freedom movement and predicted that any further outbursts of urban violence would discredit King and the racial rights movement.⁴⁴

⁴² Newman, *Divine Agitators*, xi-x; Harvey, *Freedom’s Coming*, 208-09; McIntire, *Revolution in the Delta*; “Jackson, Mississippi,” *Evangelical Methodist*, June 1964, 4.

⁴³ Carl McIntire, *The Bible versus Civil Rights* (Collingswood, NJ: Twentieth Century Reformation Hour, ca. 1964), 4. See also “Concerning Martin Luther King,” *Baptist Bulletin* (May 1965), 6; D.A. Waite, “Civil Disobedience & Rioting – A Chronology of Statements On,” Box 100, Folder 22, McIntire Collection.

Civil Disobedience Goes to Church: Black Power and the Christian Manifesto

The emergence of the black power movement in the late 1960s forced whites in the North to confront the issue of racism just as the civil rights movement had forced white southerners to face it. The rallying cry for black power came from a younger set of African-American activists influenced by Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael. Although it encompassed a range of ideologies, in the main it featured black consciousness, racial separateness, and political activism. Most conservative whites correlated black power with the urban race riots. This image served to further cultivate angst over black male violence, leading many conservative whites in the North to join their southern counterparts in an anti-civil rights backlash. Former Alabama Governor George Wallace tapped into this antipathy as a third-ticket candidate for President in 1968. Couching his racist politics in color-blind phrases such as “law and order” and “neighborhood schools,” Wallace polled fairly well among urban blue collar voters by skillfully exploiting popular resentment against liberal politicians and bureaucrats who allowed civil rights to spiral out of control.⁴⁵

In a manner and style similar to Wallace’s, McIntire seized the opportunity to exploit popular fears of black radicalism and use it as a sledge against mainline Protestantism’s hierarchy when he responded to James Forman’s Black Manifesto. In 1969 Forman, a former Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee organizer turned radical, wrote a report for a black activist religious organization critical of white religion’s role in black oppression. He

⁴⁴ “Anarchy Trend Seen by Hoover,” *Washington Post*, 31 October 1965, A2; Carl McIntire, *Whatsoever a Man Soweth* (Collingswood, NJ: Twentieth Century Reformation Hour, 1965). Other opinions against civil disobedience included: “Civil Responsibility,” *The Voice* (April 1967), 2; “Negroes and Civil Disobedience,” *Baptist Bulletin* (November 1966), 14; “Dr. Martin Luther King,” *Evangelical Methodist* (November 1965), 6.

⁴⁵ Allitt, *Religion in America since 1945*, 111-12; Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*, 233-34; Berlet and Lyons, *Right-Wing Populism in America*, 203-04.

created a stir within the Protestant community in May 1969 when he interrupted a Sunday communion service at New York City's Riverside Church to deliver his manifesto from the cathedral's chancel.⁴⁶ Bewildered parishioners listened as he accused white institutional religion of complicity in supporting a capitalist system that had exploited people of color for centuries. Forman demanded \$500 million in reparations (later raised to \$3 billion) from the nation's Christian churches and Jewish synagogues and threatened chaos if they refused. He proposed using that money to establish black controlled commercial enterprises and educational institutions to empower African Americans throughout the nation.⁴⁷

Forman's Black Manifesto sent shock waves through the Protestant establishment. While most of the laity in the white churches ridiculed the idea of reparations outright, officials in the mainline churches trod more cautiously on this subject. A number of them admitted that the churches needed to do more to assist African Americans and some granted Forman a hearing. Among them was the General Board of the National Council of Churches, which subsequently recommended the Black Manifesto to its member denominations for "serious study." Forman's confrontational style and violent, revolutionary rhetoric, however, alienated a large percentage of liberal Protestants. Most of them balked at apportioning any money to the organization he represented. In the weeks that followed, black power activists fanned out to present the Black

⁴⁶ Forman initially presented the Black Manifesto at the National Black Economic Development summit in Detroit in April 1969. His choice of Riverside Church as the venue to bring it to national attention had symbolic meaning. To start with, oil magnate John D. Rockefeller financed much of the church's construction cost. Therefore it provided an ideal setting to present a document steeped with Marxist language. Secondly, the church's membership comprised a cross-section of blue-blood liberals as well as social Christian intellectuals from nearby Union Seminary and Columbia University, some of whom had participated in the black freedom campaigns earlier that decade. Thirdly, Riverside's opulent spires stood in sharp relief to the urban blight that affected nearby Harlem. See Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, 436-37.

⁴⁷ James Forman, *The Making of Black Revolutionaries* (New York, Macmillan, 1972; reprint, Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1997), 544-46; "Black Militants Demand 500 Million Church 'Reparation,'" *Chicago Tribune*, 2 May 1969, A4.

Manifesto to congregations in various northern cities. In some instances militants occupied church buildings or disrupted worship services in pressing their demands.⁴⁸

McIntire mocked the Black Manifesto as “lunacy” and subsequently drafted a Christian Manifesto in response. He found it amusing that civil disobedience had found its way back to the very churches that supported it and crowed that the “chickens have come home to roost.” Calling Forman’s document “the voice of hell,” he demanded \$3 billion in reparations from the churches affiliated with the National Council of Churches for the “persecution and affliction” that fundamentalists experienced at the hands of liberal Christianity. McIntire vowed to read the Christian Manifesto wherever the Black Manifesto had been presented and staged theatrical events of his own. His first public presentation of the Christian Manifesto took place at Abington Presbyterian Church north of Philadelphia on July 20, where black power activist Muhammad Kenyatta had spoken a week earlier. When the church session rejected McIntire’s request for equal time to read his manifesto, he taped a copy of it to the doorpost and adjourned to a nearby cluster of trees and read it to a small assembly of followers, reporters, and onlookers. McIntire made news headlines again two months later when he attempted to read his manifesto from the chancel at Riverside Church in New York City. No sooner had he started reading it before the church’s minister, Ernest T. Campbell, interrupted him and informed him that he would be breaking state law if he disrupted the service. Proclaiming his respect for law and order, McIntire left the sanctuary and read the manifesto from the steps outside. When he finished, someone from his retinue lifted him to tape a copy above the cathedral’s main entrance.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty*, 437; George Morrison, “St. Louis Militants Tell Aims,” *Washington Post*, 21 June 1969, B6; “White Members Absent at Black-Occupied Church,” *New York Times*, 7 July 1969, 37.

⁴⁹ “McIntire to Write Christian Manifesto,” *Christian Beacon*, 12 June 1969, 1; “McIntire Stands in Rain to Answer Manifesto,” *Christian Beacon*, 24 July 1969, 1 (reprinted from *Philadelphia Inquirer* on 21 July 1969); “Church Reparations Demanded for Fundamentalists,” *New York Times*, 15 September 1969, 1.

McIntire well understood the growing dissonance between the pulpit and the pews over the black power movement. His manner of theatrical protest was intended to generate headlines and elicit public reaction from the liberal clergy. Several clerics took the bait. Riverside Church senior minister Ernest T. Campbell, who previously expressed sympathy for the Black Manifesto, derisively called the Christian Manifesto a “marshy foundation of innuendos and self-pity.” He added that McIntire was free to hold “16th and 19th century formulations of theology” but did not have the right to determine the disposition of Christian belief.⁵⁰

By the summer of 1971, the organization Forman represented, the Black Economic Development Conference, received only \$300,000 in reparations. While the Protestant establishment largely dismissed Forman’s demand directly, several denominations, which included the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Disciples of Christ churches, did appropriate several million dollars to various minority empowerment causes in the early 1970s. The diversion of some church funds to those groups together with the willingness of church leaders to debate the merits of Forman’s demand for reparations added to the problems of mainline Protestant churches, which at that time were experiencing precipitous membership declines resulting from their social activism.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Emanuel Perlmutter, “Reparations are Asked – Lindsay is ‘Shocked,’” *New York Times*, 5 May 1969, 1; George Dugan, “Minister Rejects McIntire Demand,” *New York Times*, 22 September 1969, 34; Jerry K. Frye, “The ‘Black Manifesto’ and the Tactic of Objectification,” *Journal of Black Studies* (September 1974), 68; Findlay, *Church People in the Struggle*, 222.

⁵¹ Thomas C. Reeves, *The Empty Church: Does Organized Religion Matter Anymore?* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1996), 138-40; Jason S. Lantzer, *Mainline Christianity: The Past and Future Shape of America’s Majority Faith* (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 55-56.

The Antiwar Movement and the “New Morality”

The culture of dissent set loose by the Vietnam War helped further polarize the nation’s religious landscape. Questions about the morality of the war raised by mainline church leaders and participation in the antiwar movement by new breed activist clergymen became yet another significant issue that drove a wedge between laity and the hierarchy. Evangelical churches were not immune from these debates either. Although less inclined to oppose the war, a handful of evangelical seminarians and younger clerics challenged the hawkish anticommunist position of their elders.⁵² Fundamentalists, on the other hand, exhibited few such divisions. Clergymen from the ACCC, in keeping with their anticommunist heritage, never wavered in their support for the war. Rather than questioning the morality of the war, they criticized the Johnson and Nixon administrations for not bringing the full power of the American military to bear in Vietnam. This sentiment was evident already in the spring of 1966, when an Evangelical Methodist Church minister from the northern Maryland community of Westminster wrote the President urging all-out military engagement in Vietnam. “A no-win policy,” he remarked, “has never been American.” A group of ACCC clergymen conveyed this same sentiment to Defense Secretary Robert McNamara when they met with him the following year and urged him to hit enemy sanctuaries in neighboring Laos and Cambodia.⁵³

The ACCC demonstrated its support for the war in other ways. In 1967, it dispatched a team of four representatives on a “Churchmen for Victory in Vietnam” mission to preach the gospel and provide encouragement to America’s fighting men in Indochina. Led by council

⁵²Jill K. Gill, *Embattled Ecumenism: The National Council of Churches, the Vietnam War, and the Trials of the Protestant Left* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011), 150; Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 105; Williams, *God’s Own Party*, 78.

⁵³ “Vietnam War is Supported by Council,” *Washington Post*, 6 May 1967, C5; “Rev. Burke Writes the President,” *Evangelical Methodist*, April 1966, p. 9; “ACCC Leaders Meet with Secretary McNamara,” *Evangelical Methodist*, April 1967, 3.

President Marion Reynolds, Jr., the team undertook this visit to offset the NCC's call for a bombing moratorium over North Vietnam. The four ACCC representatives met with General William C. Westmoreland, commander of U.S. troops in Vietnam, during their tour of southeast Asia and offered him a prayer for victory. In a statement issued after their return, ACCC General Secretary John C. Millheim, who was among the four representatives, proclaimed the war in Vietnam "a holy, righteous crusade because of our faith in God and communism's repudiation of God."⁵⁴

The ACCC also challenged the antiwar activism of new breed clergy with their own street counterdemonstrations. The first of these took place in response to an antiwar campaign organized by the inter-faith group Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam (CALCAV) in Washington, D.C., at the very end of January 1967. CALCAV's two-day event drew about 2,000 liberal clergy and lay people to the nation's capital, where they lobbied public officials for a reappraisal of the government's Vietnam policy and held a peace vigil in front of the White House. The ACCC disparaged CALCAV for not representing the sentiments of most of the nation's Christian believers. Its Churchmen for Victory counterdemonstration drew several hundred fundamentalists who followed behind CALCAV's picketers as they paraded in front of the White House.⁵⁵

While the antiwar position of Protestant establishment angered fundamentalists and alienated mainline churchgoers, religious conservatives voiced greater alarm at antiwar radicalism on college campuses and the concomitant disease of civil disobedience spreading

⁵⁴ "ACCC Team Goes to Vietnam," *Baptist Bulletin* (August 1967), 13.

⁵⁵ "ACCC to Counter Liberals Viet Mobilization," *Christian Beacon*, 5 January 1967, 8; "Churchmen for Victory Issue Washington Call," *Christian Beacon*, 26 January 1967, 1; William R. MacKaye, "Clergymen Critics of Vietnam War Stage Protest at White House Today," *Washington Post*, 31 January 1967, A11; William R. MacKaye, "Churchmen March to Protest War," *Washington Post*, 1 February 1967, A16.

through youth culture during the late 1960s and early 1970s. An editor for the IFCA *Voice* articulated this sentiment in early 1967 in response to a recent antiwar demonstration where Yale University Chaplain William Sloane Coffin, Jr., induced thousands of young men turn in their draft cards. The magazine's editor condemned Coffin, who was vocal antiwar activist with CALCAV, for inciting civil disobedience in the name of religion and argued that "the growth of lawlessness if unchecked will lead to anarchy or even civil war."⁵⁶

Fundamentalists' periodicals most frequently coupled criticism of the antiwar movement with Bible injunctions commanding Christian obedience to civil authority. Some of them offered up blunt remarks against antiwar radicalism in public statements. After National Guardsmen shot and killed four college students at Kent State University in Ohio during antiwar protests in May 1970, Bob Jones, Jr., famously remarked during chapel service, "Those young people got exactly what they were entitled to." He added that student protesters out in Berkeley, California, which was the hub of 1960s student radicalism, needed to be dealt with in a similar manner. "I'm all for the police shooting to kill when anyone is in mob violence attempting to destroy property and attack law enforcement officers," he stated brusquely.⁵⁷

Fundamentalists frequently lumped student antiwar radicalism with the "new morality" of permissiveness permeating youth culture. Regular Baptist minister Francis Phillips elaborated on the causes for this countercultural revolution in 1969 when he asked rhetorically, "REBELLION ... RIOT ... ANARCHY. Why this seemingly spontaneous spirit that is expressing itself in the disruption of our universities, the alarming increase in the use of drugs, moral perversion and undisguised antagonism to civil government?" He argued that the chief cause for these problems

⁵⁶ "Civil Responsibility," *Voice* (April 1967), 3.

⁵⁷ Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt*, 295-98; Dalhouse, *An Island in a Lake of Fire*, 106; "Kent State and the National Guard," *Baptist Bulletin* (August 1970), 6.

stemmed from a breakdown of the family. Too many women, Phillips opined, abdicated their role as nurturing mothers to enter the job market, while too many fathers neglected their patriarchal responsibilities in providing guidance and discipline. “This is what has produced hippies and yuppies and near chaos,” he declared.⁵⁸

The new morality, or situation ethics, that fundamentalists fretted about took its name from Joseph Fletcher’s 1966 book *Situation Ethics: The New Morality*. Fletcher, along with Anglican Bishop John A.T. Robinson and academician Harvey Cox, became the most notable proponents of this religious ethic. This trio of theologians discarded the legalism of moral absolutes for a relativistic ethical code based on love, tolerance, individual expression, and personal fulfillment. The most controversial aspect of the new morality they espoused was its approval of sexual relations outside of marriage. Fletcher articulated this principle most succinctly when he stated, “even a transient sex liaison, if it has the elements of caring, of tenderness and selfless concern, is better than a mechanical, egocentric exercise of conjugal 'rights' between two uncaring or antagonistic marriage partners.”⁵⁹

The new morality ethic sparked a firestorm of criticism in the mid-1960s. An array of religious conservatives lambasted it as a godless Christianity. The GARBC blasted it in a statement issued in 1967: “Situation ethics erroneously teaches that in some situations unmarried love is infinitely more moral than married unlove; lying is more Christian than telling the truth; stealing is better than respecting private property; no action is good or right in itself – it depends on whether it hurts or helps people. In other word the ends justifies the means.” In a similar

⁵⁸ Francis Phillips, “The Cause of Rebellion,” *Baptist Bulletin* (April 1969), 10.

⁵⁹ Joseph Fletcher, *Situation Ethics: The New Morality* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966); John A.T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (London: SCM Press, 1963); Harvey Cox, *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective* (New York: Macmillan, 1965); Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 1101; Fletcher quoted in “Situation Ethics,” *Time*, 21 January 1966, 67.

manner, Bible Presbyterian missionary William Leroy remarked, “Freedom without [moral] law becomes anarchy, licentiousness, eroticism and perversion of the lowest type, and this is degrading our nation before the whole world, and is making Communist nations very happy, for we are destroying ourselves internally.”⁶⁰

In the late 1960s, fundamentalists’ rhetoric demonstrated greater concern about the cultural manifestations of the new morality than with the threat of communism. Sexual sin especially became a new rallying point for grassroots resistance to countercultural trends. In the mid-1960s, fundamentalists voiced concern on a number of issues related to sexual immorality that included the Supreme Court’s liberalization of obscenity laws, rising divorce rates, increased openness about homosexuality, and permissive attitudes towards fornication. These cultural trends together with the Supreme Court’s 1963 *Abington v. Schempp* decision prohibiting school-sanctioned prayer and Bible reading helped make public education the new battleground for fundamentalists seeking to shield their children from the permissive influences of hippie culture. One reaction involved removing children from public schools and enrolling them in private religious academies. During the second half of the 1960s the number of Christian day schools in the nation expanded tremendously.⁶¹

A second strategy centered on religious conservatives’ attempts to purify public education of immoral influences. In 1968, a backlash erupted in response to sex education in the public schools. The first skirmish in this crusade took place in Anaheim, California, where a disparate collection of social and religious conservative groups waged a grassroots battle against

⁶⁰ “A Seattle Resolution: The New Morality,” *Baptist Bulletin*, (August 1967), 7; William A. Leroy, “Christianity without God,” *Christian Beacon*, 19 May 1966, 7.

⁶¹ Karl B. Smith, “Educating Our Children in Times Like These,” *Baptist Bulletin* (September 1964), 27; James C. Carper and Thomas C. Hunt, *The Dissenting Tradition in American Education* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2007), 203.

a value-neutral sex education program designed by the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS). Orange County fundamentalists became a significant oppositional force to Anaheim's sex education curriculum. Arthur Ramey, pastor of the GARBC Calvary Baptist Church in Anaheim, rallied his congregation against the SIECUS program, calling it "a diabolical plot to destroy the morals of our precious children." An even more significant source of resistance came from Bob Wells, who was one of McIntire's long-time allies in southern California. Wells delivered several jeremiads against Anaheim's sex education curriculum to his 3,000-member Central Baptist Church congregation in the weeks before the 1969 school district election that helped marshal a conservative takeover of that governing board.⁶²

The new discourse that emerged in this conflict was "secular humanism." *Anaheim Bulletin* education columnist John Steinbacher played an instrumental role in reacquainting evangelicals with this phrase by criticizing the school district's progressive educators for trying to "make good little Humanists out of our kids." From his perspective, sex education along with new morality and the sexual revolution formed an interlocking set of movements that fell under the rubric of humanism. In the 1970s, secular humanism would replace communism as the paramount moral specter haunting American society and give rise to a new generation of religious warriors to mobilize conservative Christians against it.⁶³

The grassroots campaign that unfolded in Anaheim was replicated in communities across the nation. Fundamentalist magazines helped draw this battle line with frequent articles

⁶² McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 104; Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 100-14; Williams, *God's Own Party*, 82-83; Arthur Ramey, "Sex Education," *Baptist Bulletin*, (August 1969), 6; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 300.

⁶³ Steinbacher quote from Williams, *God's Own Party*, 134; Allan Lichtman, *White Protestant Nation: The Rise of the American Conservative Movement* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2008), 269; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt*, 300; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 218-21.

condemning the teaching of sex education in the public schools. In general, those articles condemned SIECUS for treating sex as a recreational activity and argued that sex education usurped parental moral authority. In a number of local school battles, fundamentalists offered the greatest opposition. In Warrensburg, New York, for example, members of the Regular Baptist church were largely responsible for forcing the school board to withdraw a sex education course from the district's curriculum. And in Montgomery County near Washington, D.C., ministers from the Maryland chapter of the ACCC played a key role in mobilizing opposition to a 1967 state law mandating sex education at every grade level beginning in kindergarten. Baptist minister Richard Grammar from neighboring Anne Arundel County disparaged the sex education curriculum during a public rally as part of the "new morality" that taught students about petting, fornication, and "how to have an abortion without missing a class." The Maryland ACCC scored a partial victory in this fight when the school board voted in August 1969 to delay offering sex education to students until the fifth grade and permitted parents to withdraw their children from those courses.⁶⁴

The Palace Revolt and the Limits of Public Activism

The moral backlash unleashed by the sexual revolution created a new paradigm for evangelical political engagement that marked the wave of the future. However the ACCC experienced internal conflict just as this new dynamic came into focus. Tensions between McIntire and other leaders in the ACCC had been festering for a few years before they erupted into the open conflict in 1968. Members of the executive committee had grown weary of McIntire's imperiousness and his accusations of disloyalty against anyone who disagreed with

⁶⁴ "Objections in Order," *Baptist Bulletin* (June 1969), 8; Richard M. Cohen, "700 Demand County End Sex Ed," *Washington Post*, 27 May 1969, B1; Lawrence Feinberg, "Montgomery Alter Sex Course Curriculum," *Washington Post*, 13 August 1969, C1.

him. GARBC National Representative Paul R. Jackson summed up this sentiment in an informational bulletin he wrote in November 1968:

Anyone who stands for his own convictions contrary to those held by Dr. McIntire has become his enemy. When actions are taken by the Executive Committee, or the Council, contrary to his desires, he views this as a repudiation of his leadership. However, in the ACCC he is one member of the Executive Committee and has only one vote. His counsel is welcomed but his domination has been rejected.

To illustrate his case about McIntire's domineering personality, Jackson recounted an episode that took place the previous year. McIntire arrived late for an ACCC executive committee meeting and missed a vote on an important matter. Despite the fact that the committee's decision had been unanimous, McIntire insisted that the committee reopen the matter and reverse its action, stating, "I was not here to mold the thinking of this committee."⁶⁵

A primary source of conflict revolved around the activities of the commission on International Christian Relief (ICR). The ACCC created the ICR at McIntire's insistence in 1961 for the purpose of distributing money, surplus clothing, and food to Christians in the developing world. It was understood that the ICR would collaborate with the ICCC in dispensing those resources. As a commission of the ACCC chaired by McIntire and administered by James Shaw, its salaried director, the ICR operated with little oversight during its first several years. But in the late 1960s, the executive council began demanding an audited report from the ICR after Shaw distributed funds to some dubious characters. McIntire and Shaw refused to comply with this mandate. When push came to shove, McIntire in 1968 surreptitiously shifted control of that commission and all its assets— which included the \$62,000 in its bank account, its office equipment, and its mailing list – to the ICCC rather than submit to this requirement.

⁶⁵ Paul R. Jackson, "Special Information Bulletin," November 1968, Folder McIntire, Carl, Guy Archer Weniger Collection, Fundamentalism File, Mack Library, Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC.

A number of secondary matters helped fuel ill feelings in the ACCC as well. They included: 1) the credential committee's rejection of Episcopal separatist minister James Dees for membership in the ACCC over McIntire's objection because his book of common prayer taught spiritual regeneration of baptized infants, which the council's Baptist members considered subversive to the doctrine of justification by faith; 2) budgetary constraints that prohibited the ACCC from committing material resources to McIntire's battle to retain control of station WXUR; 3) the proposal to move the ACCC's headquarters from Manhattan to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, in order to reduce overhead expenses. To McIntire, this move signaled a decline in prestige for the organization.

These matters and others came to a head during the council's 1968 fall meeting in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. The executive committee during the first session called James Shaw to account for the ICR's finances. The recalcitrant Shaw refused to comply with the committee's demand and instead launched into a character assassination against others, prompting ACCC President Marion Reynolds, Jr., to rule him out of order. Expecting more such disruptive actions by either Shaw or McIntire, the convention subsequently adopted Robert's Rules of Order with the intent of conducting the meeting in a more dignified parliamentary manner. The convention also stipulated that any accusations of impropriety against others be submitted in writing. McIntire interpreted these procedural modifications as a "gag rule" against him and insisted that it was part of a duplicitous plot to "dump McIntire."

From that meeting forward, McIntire became increasingly estranged from individuals and church groups that were once loyal to him. In the weeks and months after his falling out with the ACCC's leadership, McIntire used his *Christian Beacon* as a platform to retaliate against those who had prevented him from getting his way. He accused Marion Reynolds, the departing

president of the ACCC, of “suppression and internal sabotage” for his part in this division. McIntire strongly suggested in a December 1968 *Christian Beacon* editorial that communist influences had breached the ACCC through its weakest point. He cast suspicion on ACCC General Secretary John Millheim and President-Elect J. Philip Clark by stating that they had “skipped off and went to Moscow” during the WCC assembly at Uppsala, Sweden, earlier that summer. McIntire, however, failed to mention that the two men went to the Soviet Union on a pre-planned trip to collect evidence for an anticommunist filmstrip the ACCC was producing. Since many of the individuals involved in this so-called mutiny were from the GARBC, McIntire accused leaders from that church body of going mushy in the fight against apostasy. The GARBC subsequently disassociated itself from the McIntire altogether when its messengers voted to withdraw from the ICCC in 1969.⁶⁶

McIntire’s ever-deepening preoccupation with politics figured prominently in those tensions. A number of ministers and lay people who had allied with McIntire for decades thought that grassroots political activism had its limits. In February 1968, GARBC minister Donald Parvin published an article in an Ohio Baptist magazine titled “The Work of the Church: Is the New Testament Church to Become a Right-Wing Political Organization?” Parvin appealed for more thoughtful deliberation on the line between politics and religion. While he justified opposition to the NCC and WCC, Parvin called into question the propriety of clergymen protesting against the AFL-CIO, Anti-Defamation League, United Nations, the American Civil Liberties Union and other similar liberal organizations. McIntire interpreted Parvin’s article as a personal attack against him and replied, “If the New Testament church is doing its duty to God

⁶⁶ Hendershot, *What’s Fair on the Air*, 115-16; Carl McIntire and James Shaw, “What Has Happened to the GARBC?” *Christian Beacon*, 17 July 1969, 2; ACCC circular letter, 15 November 1968, Box 40, Folder 44, McIntire Collection; M.H. Reynolds, Jr., “A Personal Statement,” 1968, Folder McIntire, Carl, Weniger Collection; Ketcham to McIntire, 31 December 1968, *ibid.*

and country, as it should, it may be that it actually is being called to be a right-wing organization.” McIntire’s rejoinder provided one of his clearest statements on the duty of the church to enter the arena of cultural politics when necessary, which was a notion that his old colleague Robert Ketcham repudiated.⁶⁷

Those in positions of leadership in the ACCC sought to prevent the council from engaging in the free-wheeling type of political activism that McIntire conducted under the auspices of the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour*. In August 1968, J. Philip Clark, who was then president of The Associated Missions (TAM), which was the mission arm of the ICCC, lodged a complaint with that council’s executive committee arguing for the need to take “remedial measures” in curbing McIntire’s activism “in the area of politics, race, and civil rights.” According to Clark, McIntire’s outspoken opposition to civil rights and his alliances with unsavory segregationist politicians were causing “irreparable damage” to TAM’s overseas mission work. ACCC General Secretary John Millheim expressed similar sentiments when he called for more “responsible criticism” of religious and cultural trends after the council’s 1968 fall meeting. Millheim hoped these actions would attract a new generation of “articulate young men” to the movement.⁶⁸

McIntire’s Ky to Victory in Vietnam

Despite his personal estrangement from the ACCC, McIntire still retained a loyal following of *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* radio listeners. Thousands of them turned out

⁶⁷ Clyde W. Field memorandum, “The 1968-1970 Rebellion in the ACCC,” 1971, Folder McIntire, Carl, Weniger Collection.

⁶⁸ Ibid.; “Rift in McIntire’s Movement,” *Christianity Today*, 22 November 1968, 43; George Dugan, “Fundamentalists Planning Shift to ‘Responsible Criticism’ Role,” *New York Times*, 10 May 1969, 31.

for his pro-war Bible Believers March in Trenton on October 25, 1969, where Georgia Governor Lester Maddox delivered the keynote address. McIntire and Maddox were two peas in a pod in their political and religious views. Georgia voters elected Maddox governor in 1966 after his well-publicized legal battle with the federal government to exclude black patrons from his Pickrick cafeteria in Atlanta. McIntire's first encounter with Maddox apparently took place in March 1969 at a *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* rally in Atlanta to oppose the Consultation on Church Union (COCU), which was holding its annual meeting that spring at Emory University.⁶⁹ First proposed by Presbyterian Eugene Carson Blake in 1960, COCU met annually throughout the decade with the intent of reaching accord on a plan to unite 25 million Protestants from nine mainline and African American churches into one denomination.⁷⁰ Fundamentalists led the charge in opposing this proposed superchurch. But thanks to the activism of the liberal churches on the issues of civil rights and the Vietnam War, COCU earned the enmity of non-fundamentalist conservatives like Maddox, who remarked that this ecumenical venture, if successful, would "completely destroy Christianity in America."⁷¹

⁶⁹ Maddox famously pulled a .38 revolver on a trio of African Americans who attempted to integrate his establishment on July 3, 1964 – just a day after President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act into law. He repelled them with aid of patrons wielding axe handles that he kept at the front entrance for just this purpose. Maddox closed the Pickrick several months later rather than comply with a court order to serve blacks. Justin Nystrom, "Segregation's Last Stand: Lester Maddox and the Transformation of Atlanta," *Atlanta History* 45 (Summer 2001), 34-51.

⁷⁰ Denominations participating in COCU were the African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ), Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (Southern Presbyterian), United Presbyterian Church, and United Church of Christ. George Dugan, "9 Protestant Groups Meet in Atlanta to Map Unity Plans for Presentation in '70," *New York Times*, 17 March 1969, 13; Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 1083-84; Mark Silk, *Spiritual Politics: Religion and America since World War II* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988), 139.

⁷¹ Carl McIntire, "Maddox and COCU," *Christian Beacon*, 03 April 1969, p.1, 4; Wallace Henley, "Maddox Joins Ranks of Opponents to Church Union," *Christian Beacon*, 3 April 1969, 2 (reprinted from *Birmingham News*, 19 March 1969).

The Bible Believers March in Trenton served as a warm-up for McIntire's March for Victory rally in Washington, D.C., on April 4, 1970. In promoting that demonstration, McIntire called upon the "silent majority" of Americans to lend their support. President Richard Nixon popularized the term silent majority in a nationally televised speech in November 1969. Nixon used this term to refer to the vast swath of patriotic, law-abiding middle-class Americans who wanted peace with honor in Vietnam. But unlike Nixon, who appealed to the silent majority to support his "Vietnamization" policy aimed at gradual disengagement from Southeast Asia, McIntire sought to mobilize them behind a campaign for total victory. In the weeks leading up to his March for Victory, he urged them to deluge the White House with letters protesting the policy of Vietnamization.⁷²

The March for Victory began at the capitol, paraded down Pennsylvania Avenue, and concluded at the Washington Monument, where Lester Maddox and Louisiana Congressman John Rarick joined McIntire on the speaking platform. Each of these individuals reiterated the demonstration's main slogan "there is no substitute for victory" and disparaged Nixon for appeasing the forces of communism. McIntire insisted on placing the speaking platform on the knoll near the Washington Monument so the demonstration would be in sight line of the Oval Office. At one point in his speech, McIntire instructed the audience to turn towards the White House and shout in unison, "We want victory now!" Estimates on the size of the demonstration varied. Metropolitan Police Chief Jerry Wilson stated that between 10,000 and 15,000 people turned out for the march. The U.S. Park Police, on the other hand, pegged the crowd at 40,000, while McIntire claimed it was 50,000. *Washington Post* reporter Betty Medger wrote that

⁷² Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2002), 38-39; Williams, *God's Own Party*, 90; "In the Name of God We Will Set Up Our Banners," *Christian Beacon*, 12 February 1970, 1; "Write to the President: Come to Washington, D.C.," *Christian Beacon*, 12 February 1970, 1.

regardless of the figure, it was the largest pro-Vietnam War event held in the nation's capital. This feat was quite remarkable given the fact that other than the *Christian Beacon* and the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* the march received very little outside publicity. McIntire complained afterwards that only a few news outlets mentioned the demonstration beforehand and surmised that with more advance coverage it could have easily attracted two million people.⁷³

He put this assertion to the test when he scheduled a second March for Victory for October 3, and devised a surefire plan that guaranteed widespread publicity. A month before the demonstration he announced that South Vietnamese Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky had accepted his invitation to speak at the demonstration. *Washington Post* columnist Murrey Marder remarked that McIntire's announcement "landed like a live hand grenade" on the desks of the Nixon's political advisors. He speculated that Ky's participation in a pro-Vietnam march had great potential to create a problem for Nixon by inflaming antiwar sentiments a month before the midterm election. Other political commentators made similar assessments and contended that Nixon had ample reason to dissuade Ky from participating in McIntire's march. Ky attempted to defuse the situation by announcing that he would be attending McIntire's rally as a private citizen rather than a foreign dignitary and asserted that he had no intention of interfering in America's internal political affairs.⁷⁴

On his way to the U.S. for McIntire's march, Ky stopped in Paris to attend the ongoing peace negotiations. National Security Advisor Henry A. Kissinger intercepted him there and importuned him to reconsider. Ky subsequently announced during a pre-broadcast tape interview

⁷³ "Knoll Area for Stand Finally Granted," *Christian Beacon*, 2 April 1970, 1; Paul Valentine and Neil Maurer, "Big Rally Demands Victory: Thousands Protest Viet War Policy," *Washington Post*, 5 April 1970, A1, A8; Betty Medger, "Minister Aspires to Victory," *Washington Post*, 11 April 1970, B9; "The Great Contender," *Christianity Today*, 24 April 1970, 25; Carl McIntire, "A Victorious March," *Christian Beacon*, 9 April 1970, 2.

⁷⁴ Murrey Marder, "Ky's Political Bomb," *Washington Post*, 4 September 1970, A23; "Is This Trip Necessary?" *Washington Post*, 6 September 1970, B6.

of *Face the Nation* that he was postponing his visit to the United States because he feared the eruption of antiwar violence. Word of this announcement reached McIntire before the program aired. He and his wife Fairy immediately booked a flight to France to meet with Ky and persuade him otherwise. But to no avail. McIntire fumed that the Nixon administration had sabotaged his march. “We are witnessing a monstrous conspiracy,” he remarked, “reaching up to the very top levels of the government and involving one of our biggest television networks.” This cabal, he insisted, “impaired the freedom of speech of the American people.”⁷⁵

A day before his victory rally, McIntire dropped another bombshell when he announced that Madame Nguyen Cao Ky would deliver her husband’s address in his stead. However, she never arrived in the United States. According to the official account, Madame Ky boarded an Air France flight bound for New York. Sometime after take-off, the 747 jet she was on developed engine trouble and returned to Paris. She allegedly decided at that point to cancel her trip to New York rather than reboard, reportedly stating that “it would have been very difficult and tiring.” One *Washington Post* reporter questioned some of the inconsistencies surrounding her story. He wondered whether Madame Ky had ever boarded the original Air France flight and suggested that the whole affair might have been a ruse to boost attendance at McIntire’s victory parade.⁷⁶

Washington, D.C., police estimated that 20,000 turned out for this second March for Victory. That number was a far cry from the crowd of 200,000 to 250,000 that McIntire claimed had turned out for it. In the absence of either Vice President Ky or his wife, an envoy from the South Vietnamese embassy read a statement prepared by Ky. That speech neither criticized President Nixon nor the course of the war but rather praised the American people for their

⁷⁵ Carl McIntire, “Ky Stopped at Paris,” *Christian Beacon*, 1 October 1970, 1; “Ky Says He Won’t Come Here for Victory Parade,” *Washington Post*, 27 September 1970, A1.

⁷⁶ Sanford J. Unger, “Victory Rally Set for Noon,” *Washington Post*, 3 October 1970, A1; Sanford J. Unger, “Travel Journal About the Kys Who Never Came,” *Washington Post*, 10 October 1970, A16;

sacrifice in helping South Vietnam repel communism. It stood in stark contrast to other speeches delivered that day by McIntire, Billy James Hargis, John Rarick, and retired Army Major General Thomas Lane, who each denounced Presidents Johnson and Nixon for their ineptitude in fighting the war. In the wake of this event, McIntire announced that he was planning a series of patriots' marches in different cities throughout the nation during the coming months, including San Clemente, California, and Key Biscayne, Florida, where President Nixon often spent vacation time.⁷⁷

Religious leaders from both the liberal and evangelical camps called out McIntire for his politicking during the Ky episode. Kenneth Neigh, an executive with the National Council of Churches, remarked that it was quite interesting how McIntire, who for years had criticized the NCC for involving itself in politics had now clearly done so himself. He added, "I welcome Dr. McIntire to the rest of us activists."⁷⁸ An editor for *Christianity Today* found it appalling that McIntire had cloaked this political venture "with the blanket of the Gospel" and admonished him for his hypocrisy on the matter of separatism:

This is a man who consistently labels Billy Graham and other leading evangelicals "compromisers" because they work with evangelicals in denominations that McIntire calls apostate. Yet here is McIntire bringing together masses of people who share his war views but who could not possibly be in agreement with his theology. Is it not "compromise" for him to hold hands with those who are hostile to the Gospel or indifferent to it?⁷⁹

In an effort to further distance the ACCC from McIntire's actions, General Secretary John Millheim also criticized him for compromising separatist principles. "If fundamentalists are in control of the program and platform," he asked, "how can the chairman of the march justify on

⁷⁷ Paul W. Valentine, "20,000 Rally for Victory; Envoy Reads Mild Ky Text," *Washington Post*, 4 October 1970, A1; "Victory March Challenges Nation," *Christian Beacon*, 8 October 1970, 1.

⁷⁸ "A Military-Ecclesiastical Complex," *Christianity Today*, 9 October 1970, 39.

⁷⁹ "McIntire's Unholy Alliance," *Christianity Today*, 25 September 1970, 19.

a biblical basis inviting a Buddhist as a key speaker and Catholics and Jews to stand with him?” McIntire’s overt political actions in this and other instances acted as a catalyst in forcing the ACCC to reappraise its position on separatism. The organization shared the stage earlier in the decade with non-fundamentalists in its anticommunist faith and freedom rallies. However Millheim’s comment in the wake of second March for Victory indicated that separatism extended to civic engagement as well as religious fellowship. McIntire, on the other hand, harbored no such sentiment. He did not see an inconsistency in collaborating with people belonging to outside faith groups who shared a similar political theology when it came to waging war on a cultural front.⁸⁰

Conclusion

The civil rights and antiwar movements unleashed social and cultural forces that transformed institutional religion in America. This religious realignment featured a conservative-liberal divide that replaced old denominational allegiances. Facilitating this process was the direct participation of new breed liberal clergy in street protests and the social justice activism of mainline denominations. The unraveling of society in the 1960s provoked a militant reaction from evangelicals, which brought them much closer to the political theology staked out by McIntire and other separatist fundamentalists. Those upheavals rocked southern Protestantism the hardest. According to religious historian Sam Hill, fundamentalism attained unparalleled prominence in the South as a result of the civil rights movement and other social movements in the 1960s. McIntire exploited that opportunity and contributed to this religious realignment by

⁸⁰ “A Military-Ecclesiastical Complex,” 39.

using his *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* radio program to pull southern white evangelicals in a militant direction.⁸¹

By 1970, anxieties over sexual immorality began to eclipse civil rights and the Vietnam War as the primary cultural concern among evangelicals. The first skirmishes in this culture war took place in Anaheim, California, in 1968 and 1969 when social conservatives launched a grassroots campaign against a SIECUS-designed sex education curriculum in the public schools. Crusades against sex education quickly spread to school districts across the nation, and in a number of instances fundamentalists led the charge. However divisions within the ACCC over McIntire's efforts to control that organization inhibited its ability to capitalize effectively on the moral outrage generated by that issue. This breakdown coupled with his lack of discernment in choosing political allies caused the cash-strapped ACCC to retreat from the type of direct action it had conducted in the past. While McIntire demonstrated an enormous will to rally his radio audience to political action, those battles led to a quagmire of self-serving confrontations. He expended a significant amount of energy battling the FCC to retain the broadcast license of WXUR and became locked in a dispute with the state of New Jersey over Shelton College's accreditation. More curiously, his Victory in Vietnam marches in 1970 and 1971 were out of step with the times. He was stuck in a world of Cold War anticommunism, while many evangelicals were turning their attention to below the belt issues relating to sexual morality. In refusing to accept any substitute for total victory, he failed to realize when to cut his losses.

⁸¹ Hill, "Fundamentalism in Recent Southern Culture," 357-59; Williams, *God's Own Party*, 78.

IX. Conclusion:
The Crisis of Separatist Fundamentalism
and the Rise of the New Christian Right

During a morning recess after the opening session of the ACCC's 1970 fall convention at the Huntington Sheraton Hotel in Pasadena, California, Carl McIntire rushed to the speaker's rostrum, seized the microphone, accepted a nomination to serve as temporary meeting chair, and called the business session to order. With every ACCC officer save for one out of the room, McIntire quickly had himself elected president of the council by a voice vote from a rump of fifty-five pre-pledged delegates. In short order, he installed a new vice-president and secretary. McIntire refused to relinquish control of the podium when ACCC President J. Philip Clark returned to the room, declaring that he had been elected president by a proper vote.

Whereupon the meeting devolved into an hour-long scrum in which confusion reigned. At one point ACCC Treasurer Robert Hayden shouted at McIntire "You're out of order! You're out of order with Christ and you're out of order with the Bible!" At another interval McIntire's former ally Robert Ketcham cried out, "This is piracy of the worst order." Despite persistent pleas for him to leave, McIntire remained planted firmly behind the rostrum. He reprimanded his critics repeatedly during this confrontation, asserting that the ACCC had lost its direction. Still bearing a grudge over ACCC General Secretary John Millheim's repudiation of his Victory in Vietnam marches earlier that year, he scolded his critics, "You're a bunch of softies. You won't fight for your freedom."¹

¹ Hendershot, *What's Fair on the Air*, 117-18; "McIntire Attempts ACCC Seizure," *Baptist Bulletin* (January 1971), 6; John Dart, "Church Group Meeting Erupts into Shouting Match," *Washington Post*, 31 October 1970, B9; Press release, "Statement Concerning Dr. Carl McIntire's Attempted Take Over of the American Council of Christian Churches," loose insert in *Evangelical Methodist* (November 1970), loose insert; Civil action complaint, *American*

Nervous laughter erupted when Clark tried to wrest control of the microphone from McIntire. He won that battle only when the hotel's management brought in a second one, at which point Clark called the second session to order. He invited the next speaker, John Grawley, to give his address on the sexual ethics of new morality. McIntire, however, refused to leave and hovered near Grawley, interrupting him frequently during his presentation. At the conclusion of his address McIntire irreverently remarked, "In all my years in the American Council, I've never heard so much talk about sex." McIntire departed the meeting at the lunch recess with his retinue of followers – many of whom had not attended an ACCC meeting in years – still proclaiming himself the duly elected president of the council. In response to this disruption, the council bounced the Bible Presbyterian Church and four other denominations from the ACCC and severed its affiliation with the ICCC.

The following week McIntire tried to raid the ACCC's bank accounts. Although he was thwarted in that attempt, competing claims over jurisdiction of those accounts resulted in the council's funds being frozen. The ACCC filed suit against McIntire to regain access to its assets and stop him from using the council's name. It ultimately settled this matter out-of-court when faced with a mortgage default on its Valley Forge headquarters. The agreement they reached required McIntire to relinquish his claim to the ACCC's funds and its name. He subsequently designated his group the American Christian Action Council. The ACCC in exchange surrendered its right to the International Relief Commission, which McIntire had seized for the ICCC in 1968.²

Council of Christian Churches v. Carl McIntire et.al., Box 354, Box 29, McIntire Collection; ACCC press release, n.d., Folder, McIntire, Carl, Weniger Collection.

² Dart, "Church Group Meeting Erupts into Shouting Match," B9; McIntire to Suburbia Federal Savings and Loan, 2 November 1971, Box 354, Folder 33, McIntire Collection; "Decree," *Christian Beacon*, 22 July 1971, 3;

The Isolation of Carl McIntire

The spectacle that unfolded at Pasadena ostensibly put a punctuation mark on the break between the ACCC and McIntire. Although he had alienated a number of allies over the course of his career, in retrospect this split signaled the beginning of his isolation as a fundamentalist leader. Council President Philip Clark observed after the meeting in Pasadena that support for McIntire had largely evaporated among the fundamentalist churches and that much of the backing he still received came “from a heterogeneous mass of people through his Reformation broadcast.” According to Clark, McIntire’s domineering personality lay at the heart of this problem: “He must rule or he will ruin.”³

To be sure, Clark was neither the first person nor the last to articulate this sentiment. Bob Jones, Jr., and his son, Bob Jones III, made a similar observation a few years later when McIntire tried to sabotage support for their World Congress of Fundamentalists. The Joneses initially conceived of this event as a one-time meeting for fundamentalists from around the world to fellowship and scheduled it for June 1976 in Edinburgh, Scotland. They invited McIntire to assist in staging it. But he rebuffed their offer, viewing it as unwarranted competition to the ICCC’s congress. McIntire disparaged the World Congress of Fundamentalists on several occasions thereafter and at one point referred to it as a “motley crew” of religious inclusivism.⁴

His remarks infuriated the Joneses. Bob Jones, Jr., called him a “spoiled brat who resents anybody else’s having a toy that he does” and told him that he was his own worst enemy. They subsequently pulled his *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* from the university’s radio station.

³ ACCC press release, 1970, Folder McIntire, Carl, Weniger Collection.

⁴ McIntire to Jones, Jr., 24 April 1975, Folder Carl McIntire, Fundamentalism File, Mack Library, Bob Jones University, Greenville, SC; McIntire to Jones, Jr., 12 May 1975, *ibid.*; McIntire to Fred Channing, 6 March 1976, *ibid.*

When McIntire protested, Bob Jones III, who succeeded his father as president of the university in 1971, replied:

We want to be brotherly, but you have tried our patience and made it difficult by your repeated attacks on the Congress and your repeated slurs (such as calling those of us who gathered at the Congress a “motley crew”). You have asked to be reinstated on the station, but there is not one word of apology for what you have said against us in print...One word of apology, one request for forgiveness, would make us willing to consider putting the program back on in a few months; but in the absence of that, our hands are tied and we are sorry.⁵

Bob Jones III remained firm on his demand for an apology. When he received a note two-years later indicating that McIntire was interested in patching up their differences, Jones scrawled at the bottom, “Not interested until McIntire does what I have said he must do to be reconciled. He cannot get ‘off the hook’ until he comes clean.”⁶

McIntire’s estrangement from the ACCC represented one of several episodes during the early 1970s that signaled the unraveling of his Twentieth Century Reformation movement. In July 1970, the FCC dealt a blow to embattled WXUR when commissioners voted 6-0 not to renew Faith Seminary’s broadcast license. The FCC’s ruling marked the first time it revoked a broadcast license for failing to abide by the Fairness Doctrine’s guidelines. WXUR managed to stay on the air for another three years until McIntire exhausted all judicial appeals. In 1971, he moved embattled Shelton College to Cape Canaveral, Florida, after the state of New Jersey stripped the school of its academic accreditation. That same year he faced dissent within his own congregation when a group of about fifty members formed a “truth squad” to confront him about his neglect of ministerial duties and sagging church membership.

⁵ Bob Jones, Jr., to McIntire, 8 April 1976, Folder Carl McIntire, Fundamentalism File; Bob Jones III to McIntire, 21 September 1976, *ibid*.

⁶ Bob Harrison to Bob Jones III, 16 February 1978, *ibid*.

On top of that, a *Wall Street Journal* reporter exposed McIntire and ICR Director James Shaw as unwitting accomplices in a fraudulent trade scheme that bilked American Express out of \$425,000. This incident took place in 1970 when the ICR undertook a humanitarian relief drive for the starving Igbo people in war-ravaged Biafra. Bristol-Myers donated to the ICR its warehouse stock of Metrecal and Nutrament, which were dietary beverages recently pulled from the market because they contained the banned artificial sweetener cyclamate as an ingredient. McIntire and Shaw decided not to ship its donation of weight-loss beverages to the malnourished people of Biafra but rather swap it for cash and purchase other more useful supplies. They located a third-party trader to sell this lot on the international market. But the transaction went south when the trader absconded with the loan he received from American Express, which had been obtained using bogus stock as collateral. The reporter who broke this story, Jonathan Kwitny, questioned McIntire's ethics and integrity in this deal. He pointed out that records indicated the ICR received a partial payment of \$100,000 before the buyer disappeared. Yet McIntire denied receiving a penny of the loan money and ended his interview with Kwitny abruptly when pressed about the conflicting evidence.⁷

As for the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour*, that too stumbled after hitting full stride in the mid-1960s. One of the early signs of trouble came in 1971 when the "truth squad" from McIntire's church accused him of not being honest about the program's finances and the number of stations broadcasting it. Throughout the 1970s the number of stations broadcasting McIntire's radio program plummeted. He blamed this situation on enforcement of the Fairness Doctrine and claimed that in the weeks following WXUR's demise more than 200 stations dropped his program out of fear of FCC sanction. While the Fairness Doctrine likely contributed some to the

⁷ Edward E. Plowman, "McIntire's Mélange," *Christianity Today*, 7 May 1971, 36; Jonathan Kwitny, *The Fountain Pen Conspiracy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), 126-29.

decline in the number of stations broadcasting his program, it is questionable whether it had such a dramatic effect.⁸

By the early 1990s, McIntire's empire stood on the brink of insolvency and his radio program aired on only two stations. As a preacher who made his fortune with the surge of right-wing anticommunism in the early 1960s, McIntire's waning popularity needs to be considered in relation to the trajectory of that movement. Historian Lisa McGirr pointed out that by the late 1960s conspiratorial anticommunism failed to resonate deeply among grassroots conservatives. She argued that the John Birch Society, which stood at the pinnacle of populist conservatism during the first half of the 1960s, found itself following the lead from below by the end of the decade as local activists shifted their attention to family-focused moral issues.

In a similar manner, McIntire's cold warrior mindset impaired his ability to reorient his discourses to this new set of social concerns. In hindsight the series of Victory in Vietnam marches that he organized in the early 1970s were anachronistic in an era when skirmishes against sex education signaled the beginning of a protracted cultural war to contain the sexual revolution. But the declining fortunes of popular anticommunism can also be explained by the fact that many grassroots conservatives went from reactive protestors to active participants in political campaigns and single-issue causes. Along the way they began to shed their status as political outsiders and embarked on a quest to attain respectability and influence through more powerful and established channels.⁹

⁸ Farabaugh, "Carl McIntire and his Crusade Against the Fairness Doctrine," 124-26.

⁹ Ibid.; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 217-23.

The New Christian Right

The New Christian Right movement that emerged during the 1970s consisted of a number of different groups that advanced a range of public policy goals. Although Protestant evangelicals comprised the bulk of its constituency, religious conservatives from the Catholic, Jewish, and Mormon faiths became co-belligerents on a number of shared concerns. The ideology of antistatism together with a belief in premillennial biblical prophecy shaped evangelicals' political worldview in the 1980s just as it had for fundamentalists in the 1930s and in the 1960s. This intellectual framework drove New Christian Right crusaders to push for strong foreign policy commitments in containing Soviet communism's global threat and defending the security interests of the nation of Israel. When modern state liberalism intruded on their value system, they decried big government regulation and spending and started working to shore up their interests in the political arena. The Supreme Court's ban on school prayer and Bible reading smoldered as a political issue throughout the 1970s. Additionally, the Internal Revenue Service sparked an outcry from Christian conservatives when it promulgated edicts that denied tax-exemption to private schools that discriminated on the basis of race.

While matters such as these formed part of the New Christian Right's political agenda, social issues related to homosexuality, feminism, and abortion stood at the core of their public activism. Christian conservatives in the 1970s engaged in local and state battles against homosexual rights and against ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. More significantly, their opposition to the Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion gave rise to a vocal pro-life movement. By the end of the 1970s anti-abortion became an anchor issue for

the Religious Right that would significantly help to remap the nation's electoral landscape for the coming decades.¹⁰

Scholars generally date the beginning of the New Christian Right to the late 1970s when organizations such as the Moral Majority, Christian Voice, Concerned Women for America, and Religious Roundtable sprouted up for the purpose of constructing an evangelical voting bloc that would shape national political culture. Ironically, these organizations were created in reaction to the presidential policies of Jimmy Carter, a church-going Southern Baptist and self-professed “born-again” Christian who they thought was one of their own before he took office. The singular intent of these groups to impact directly the electoral process distinguished them from older organizations such as the ACCC and NAE, which lobbied public officials for policies that served the interests of their respective constituencies. These new groups also differed from the ACCC and NAE in that they were broadly inclusive of moral conservatives from Judeo-Christianity. Fundamentalist minister Jerry Falwell, for example, made a well-publicized appeal for Catholics, Mormons, and Jews to join the Moral Majority.¹¹

Although Falwell belonged to the separatist Bible Baptist Fellowship, he played down the biblical principal of separation when he changed hats from fundamentalist minister to cultural warrior. He represented a new breed of religious militant that historian David Beale termed “neo-fundamentalist.” Beale stated that in the late 1970s church leaders, with Jerry Falwell as their most prominent spokesman, led a movement of fundamentalists back into the broad camp of evangelicalism. George Marsden offered a similar review and noted that the most notable characteristic of this new fundamentalism was its political dimension. “It is built upon a base of

¹⁰ Sutton, “Was FDR the Antichrist?” 1053; Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 1100; John Butler, Grant Wacker, and Randall Herbert Balmer, *Religion in American Life: A Short History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 402-04.

¹¹ Williams, *God's Own Party*, 160.

doctrinal fundamentalism,” he observed. “But these concerns do not seem to raise the same fervor as moral-political issues.” The restructuring of American religion around a conservative-liberal axis together with changes in religious affiliation undergirded neo-fundamentalism’s upsurge. Beginning in the 1960s and continuing into the 1970s, membership among the major mainline liberal denominations dropped precipitously, while adherence among conservative denominations soared. Church bodies such as the Southern Baptist Convention, Assemblies of God, Jehovah’s Witness, and Latter Day Saints came out the big winners in this “seismic shift” of the nation’s religious economy. This move from mainline to sideline for the nation’s liberal churches brought about a concomitant decline in political and cultural influence. As a result, the imperative for Protestant conservatives to separate from apostasy lost much of its urgency. To paraphrase an old idiomatic expression, the ecclesiastical battles against mainline Protestantism seemed to this new generation of fundamentalists somewhat akin to passengers squabbling over deckchairs on the Titanic as the entire ship sank into an abyss of immorality.¹²

Falwell’s ecumenism on behalf of the Moral Majority infuriated old-school ecclesiastical separatists such as Carl McIntire and Bob Jones, Jr., both of whom had been long-time allies of his. In April 1978, a full year before he formed the Moral Majority, McIntire chastised Falwell for the cultural relationships he had forged with neo-evangelicals in his crusades against abortion. Two years later, he rebuked Falwell again, this time for his recent switch in self-identification from fundamentalist to evangelical. “You can be anything you desire to be in the political arena,” he told Falwell. “But shifting from a fundamentalist to an evangelical with the major ecclesiastical issues of the day involved, is a major tragic turn. You did not have to do

¹² Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity*, 9; Marsden, “The New Fundamentalism,” 10; Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *The Churching of America: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy, 1776-1990* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 245-46; Silk, *Spiritual Politics*, 170-72.

it.”¹³ Bob Jones, Jr., meted out even harsher criticism when he referred to Falwell in 1980 as “the most dangerous man in America today as far as Biblical Christianity is concerned,” because he “uses such good things as morality and reform in an attempt to deceive Christians into alliance with apostasy.”¹⁴

More than any other individual, McIntire’s former Bible Presbyterian protégé Francis Schaeffer helped in the rise of the Religious Rights by making abortion its driving issue. Schaeffer inculcated evangelicals with the idea that the God-less moral philosophy of secular humanism stood behind the nation’s moral slide and pressed them to work for the prohibition of abortion. After he broke with McIntire in the mid-1950s, Schaeffer and his wife Edith started L’Abri (French for “The Shelter”) as a mission retreat that they operated from their Swiss chalet home. It attracted spiritual seekers from around western Europe, most of whom were university students raised in Christian unbelief and schooled in the philosophical discourses of G.W.F. Hegel, Søren Kierkegaard, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Albert Camus. Schaeffer shed his militancy but not his orthodox theology in engaging young adults in debates about the verity of the Bible. He crafted the image of an evangelical guru thanks to his unorthodox style of proselytizing and his trademark Swiss hiking knickers, long hair, and goatee. College-age evangelicals in the U.S. turned-on to Schaeffer in the late 1960s when he began lecturing to them on America’s Christian college campuses. Students found his approach to evangelism inviting and became intrigued with his method of critiquing art, music, and literature from a Christian perspective.¹⁵

¹³ Markku Ruotsila, *Fighting Fundamentalism: Carl McIntire and the Politicization of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming); Dalhouse, *An Island in the Lake of Fire*, 103-07; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sun Belt*, 404; McIntire to Falwell, 21 July 1980, Folder McIntire, Carl; Fundamentalism File.

¹⁴ Quoted from Harriet A. Harris, *Fundamentalism and Evangelicals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 45.

¹⁵ Michael S. Hamilton, “The Dissatisfaction of Francis Schaeffer,” *Christianity Today*, 3 March 1997, 22-30

His significance to the Religious Right stemmed from his appeal for evangelicals to transform society by engaging with culture and subverting its secularity with a Christian moral philosophy, an idea made popular by early twentieth century Dutch Reformed theologian Abraham Kuyper. Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, Schaeffer characterized humanism as a secular philosophy in direct competition with Christian values. But beginning with his 1976 film series *How Should We Then Live?*, which his son Franky produced, Schaeffer began to argue that secular humanism was an insidious conspiracy against Christianity. For that film, Franky convinced his father about the need to take a bold stand against abortion. Until then, Schaeffer had considered abortion a Catholic Church issue. He devoted a segment of that film to a critique of abortion in order to illustrate the devaluation of human life that resulted from the secularization of Western society. Schaeffer's critique of abortion became sharper in *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?*, which was released in 1979 as a book and five-part film. Schaeffer and his son produced that film in cooperation with Philadelphia pediatric specialist C. Everett Koop, who would later serve as President Ronald Reagan's Surgeon General. That film series played a large role in cementing evangelical opposition to abortion and channeling it into a political program to repeal *Roe v. Wade*. By the time of the Moral Majority's formation in 1979, Schaeffer had convinced fellow fundamentalists Jerry Falwell and Tim LaHaye to organize evangelicals against abortion.¹⁶

Interestingly, the only substantial opposition to abortion from the Protestant camp before then came from separatist fundamentalists. Members of the ACCC began speaking out against it nearly three years before *Roe v. Wade*. In 1970 Evangelical Methodist minister Thomas Miller argued in an article titled "The Bible and Abortion" that conception was a gift from God and that

¹⁶ Williams, *God's Own Party*, 137-41; Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 194-97; Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 245; Hankins, *Francis Schaeffer*, 176, 201-02.

no one possessed the right to terminate the development of an embryo. Several months later the *Baptist Bulletin* drew attention to the sharp rise in the number of so-called therapeutic abortions performed in California since the state had enacted broader codes in 1967. This new law allowed for the termination of pregnancy when the fetus jeopardized the mother's health, in cases of rape and incest, and when the girl was under the age of fifteen. The co-authors of this article expressed grave concern that the state's law might pave the way for abortion on demand and euthanasia. "Therapeutic abortion rulings," they argued, "may just possibly have served as the door to a frightening Pandora's Box of legislation against life which may eventually affect all Americans." And in 1972, members of the ACCC's Pennsylvania regional chapter cooperated with Pennsylvanians for Human Life in opposing legislation that would permit abortion on demand in that state. The ACCC's position on abortion in the early 1970s stood at the vanguard of religious right activism on this issue.¹⁷

The Influence of Carl McIntire and the ACCC on the New Christian Right

Carl McIntire continued to draw attention to a variety of public issues during the 1970s and rejoiced at the belated mass awakening of evangelicals to political activism at the end of the decade. Although he criticized Falwell in August 1980 for shunning the fundamentalist label, McIntire applauded him for leading Christian conservatives into electoral politics:

The fact that you are going into the political arena as you are and as you feel led to do is something that we are constantly encouraging God's people everywhere to do. The separation of church and state does not mean separation from the ballot box. And every effort must be made by everyone everywhere to get the Bible-believing, Fundamentalist Christians

¹⁷ Allitt, *Religion in America since 1945*, 157; Butler, Wacker, and Balmer, *Religion in American Life*, 395; Thomas Miller, "The Bible and Abortion," *Evangelical Methodist* (October 1970), 2; David R. Nicholas and George F. Howe, "The Problem of Abortion," *Baptist Bulletin* (April 1971), 10-12; "Abortion in Pennsylvania," *Christian ACCCent* 2 (Spring 1972), 2.

into this present political decision. Our duty to our God and our country is of the highest order.¹⁸

McIntire's excitement at the prospect of electing conservative Republican candidate Ronald Reagan to the White House became evident in the weeks before the 1980 election. As a battle-seasoned cultural warrior, McIntire could not resist offering the neophyte Falwell unsolicited advice on strategies to get the faithful out of the pews and into the polls. McIntire advised him to keep the issues of abortion and homosexuality front and center. Additionally, he urged Falwell to arouse Christian conservatives' resentment against big government spending and the Panama Canal treaty. In addition to this, McIntire delivered a sermon titled "Born-Again Vote" in which he instructed his own remnant of followers that it was their Christian duty to become involved in the electoral process. He subsequently published that sermon as a pamphlet. Yet for all his excitement in this campaign, the aging minister was well past his prime, and he remained outside the mainstream of the New Christian Right movement.¹⁹

As for the ACCC, in the post-McIntire era its members continued to engage in politics. Gone, however, were the days of mass protest rallies and headline-generating escapades. Certainly it became a participant group in the New Christian Right movement, but the council's commitment to the principles of ecclesiastical separation limited its role in mobilizing a critical mass of conservative Christians on public issues. Therefore, its activism remained largely confined to its own religious community. The ACCC kept its constituents abreast of pertinent

¹⁸ McIntire to Falwell, 21 August 1980, Folder Carl McIntire, Fundamentalism File.

¹⁹ Ruotsila, *Fighting Fundamentalist*; Carl McIntire, *Born-Again Vote* (1980) <<http://www.carlmcintire.org/t-sermons-politics.php>>, accessed 4 November 2013.

cultural and public policy issues through various publications and newsletters such as the *Fundamentalist News Service* and *Accuracy*.²⁰

Occasionally, the ACCC rallied its base to political action. Such was the case in late 1978 when the Internal Revenue Service proposed punitive action against private “segregation academies” that discriminated on the basis of race. Since 1970, the IRS had banned federal tax-exemption to private educational institutions that refused to admit African-American students. The agency in 1978 decided to add teeth to that policy by requiring private schools formed at the time of public school desegregation to meet minority admission quotas in order to maintain their tax-exempt status. When the IRS announced this new policy, it failed to make a distinction between private schools formed in reaction to school desegregation and the large number of Christian academies established at that same time in response to the Supreme Court’s ban on school prayer and Bible reading.

Fundamentalists in the ACCC launched an intensive letter-writing campaign to block the IRS from implementing this policy. Dublin, Maryland, Evangelical Methodist minister Donald McKnight, who was also vice-president of the ACCC, testified at an IRS hearing protesting the agency’s attempt to force his church’s school to become “race conscious.” He decried this plan as an attempt to construct a state religion. “We preach that God’s people should be color blind,” he told commissioners. “We do not recruit, as the IRS suggests; we evangelize.” The sharp protests that this policy elicited from Protestant evangelicals and other faith groups ultimately compelled the IRS to scrap it.²¹

²⁰ The ACCC today claims a membership of about 2 million. See Eileen W. Lindner, ed., *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches, 2012* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012).

²¹ Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 171-72; Donald McKnight, “A Protest to the IRS,” *Baptist Bulletin* (April 1979), 8-9.

Until recently, much of the scholarly literature examining the origins of the New Christian Right overlooked the contributions of McIntire and the American Council of Christian Churches. Writers and researchers most often attributed the rise of this movement to the politicization of religious conservatives aligned with Billy Graham and the National Association of Evangelicals. This proclivity obscured the fact that the New Christian Right was formed from many tributaries with origins that extended further back in time. While much of the New Christian Right's immediate momentum came from an evangelical constituency, many of whom were southern converts to the Republican Party, the movement's militancy and its style of public engagement reflected the influence of fundamentalism.

Additionally, the intellectual framework of Christian Americanism, while not foreign to evangelicalism, saw its fullest expression among the constellation of churches and clergymen aligned with ACCC. At the end of World War II McIntire presciently understood that the Soviet communism represented the next great threat to the nation. He provided expansive overviews of fundamentalist antiliberalism in *The Rise of the Tyrant* and *Author of Liberty*. His essential arguments that the principles of liberty and economic free enterprise were inherent to Christianity served as a bulwark against the collectivist prescriptions emanating from the Federal Council of Churches. Those two works established McIntire as the foremost champion of Christian Americanism in the post-war era and served as a foundation for the ACCC's engagement with public culture during the early Cold War. The antiliberal political philosophy embedded in those discourses percolated through fundamentalism and eventually became part of the Religious Right's ideological framework.²²

²² Sutton, "Was FDR the Antichrist?" 1053; Ruotsila, "Carl McIntire and the Fundamentalist Origins of the Christian Right," 407

An understanding of the influence that McIntire and other fundamentalist separatists had on the formation of the New Christian Right can be gained by examining the network of personal connections that existed between the two movement cultures. To start with, the spiritual guide for the New Christian Right, Francis Schaeffer, became the first minister ordained in the Bible Presbyterian Church and until the early 1950s collaborated with McIntire in militantly defending the faith from theological corruption. In the mountains of Switzerland, however, he transformed into an evangelical philosopher and Kuyperian critic of modern culture. He returned full circle to his roots, his biographer Barry Hankins argued, when he reengaged with American evangelicalism again in the 1970s. In this latter transformation the militancy of his separatist past comingled with intellectual currents emanating from Dutch neo-Calvinism to shape Schaeffer into a Religious Right cultural warrior.²³

A more direct connection between the two waves of religious right activism can be located in the personal relationships that McIntire formed with fundamentalists who would later become key architects of the New Christian Right movement. Several of those individuals came from the separatist subculture rather than new evangelicalism. This was especially true for the leaders of the Moral Majority. Three of its founders – Jerry Falwell, Tim LaHaye, and Greg Dixon – were ministers in the Baptist Bible Fellowship. The ACCC along with McIntire’s own *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* drew support from the BBF long before the founding of the Moral Majority. The BBF became a constituent member of the ICCC, but it declined to formally join the ACCC. However, many of its ministers allied themselves with the ACCC and some of them established close ties with McIntire. Jerry Falwell cultivated a cooperative relationship with McIntire several years before he founded the Moral Majority. He organized a

²³ Hamilton, “The Dissatisfaction of Francis Schaeffer,” 29-30; Hankins, *Francis Schaeffer*, xii, 147-48; Ruotsila, *Fighting Fundamentalist*.

McIntire rally in his hometown of Lynchburg in the early 1970s and contributed several thousand dollars to his ministries over the course of the decade. Although relations between the two individuals strained as a result of Falwell's evangelical ecumenism when he headed Moral Majority, he nonetheless remained respectful of McIntire well into the 1980s.²⁴

LaHaye, on the other hand, built rapport with McIntire much earlier than Falwell. An alumnus of Bob Jones University, LaHaye migrated to California and started Scott Memorial Baptist Church in San Diego in the late 1950s. He then fell into the company of McIntire and other Christian crusaders who barnstormed through southern California during the heyday of popular anticommunism. And in 1962 he coordinated a Christian anticommunist rally in San Diego that featured McIntire as the guest speaker. About 1500 people turned out for that gathering, which was held at a local public school auditorium. Although a bomb threat cut short that event, LaHaye nonetheless considered it a success and remarked afterwards, "The conservative people of the city rallied in an amazing manner." LaHaye's anticommunist activism became the springboard for his involvement in moral politics. In 1966, he became an advisory board member for the California League for Enlisting Action Now (CLEAN), an ad-hoc committee that pushed for an anti-obscenity ballot referendum known as Proposition 16. And in the late 1960s, he joined with other ministers to form California Christians Active Politically with the mission of helping to elect Christian candidates to political office.²⁵

When McIntire led the formation of the ACCC in 1941, he envisioned that it would effect a reformation of American Protestantism by winning over a vast army of worshippers disaffected by the rot of modernism and political liberalism filtering into mainline Christianity from above.

²⁴ Ruotsila, *Fighting Fundamentalist*.

²⁵ Ruotsila, *Fighting Fundamentalist*; Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt*, 231, 301, 344; McGirr, *Suburban Warriors*, 226.

Although the outcome was not what he envisioned, his prediction was prophetic. Membership in the American Council of Christian Churches stalled after the late 1940s in part because of his domineering personality but also as a result of militant separatism's limited appeal. Despite those constraints, the ACCC served as an important organizational base that drew together fundamentalists from across the nation in the post-World War era. The ACCC together with the *Christian Beacon* and the *Twentieth Century Reformation Hour* served as vehicles that allowed McIntire to capture the ideas and values prevalent within fundamentalism and present them to a wider evangelical audience. Moreover, the petition drives, mass rallies, and protests that the ACCC organized between the 1940s and 1960s served as models for public action that evangelical leaders from the Religious Right adopted. In essence, although McIntire's Twentieth Century Reformation movement foundered institutionally, his militancy, political theology, and methods for political action found wider acceptance among evangelicals in the wake of the social revolutions of the 1960s.

When McIntire died in 2002, religious historian Randall Balmer penned his obituary for *Christianity Today*. "Many of McIntire's followers over the decades considered the sage of Collingswood as a prophet. As often as not, he made a good case against the perils of communism, liberal theology, and the erosion of freedom." Balmer contended that although history vindicated some of McIntire's arguments, he will likely never attain the same posthumous stature as J. Gresham Machen, his mentor, or Francis Schaeffer, his former protégé, in large part because of his practice of sacrificing friends and potential allies to the cause of religious purity. Fuller Theological Seminary President Richard Mouw offered a somewhat similar assessment about McIntire's intellectual legacy. Mouw stated that he dismissed McIntire's conspiracy theories as "fanatical rantings" during the heyday of the *Twentieth*

Century Reformation Hour. But he conceded that in retrospect McIntire was right on a number of things, most notably the later discovery that the Soviet clergymen who came to the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s were indeed agents for their government. Mouw remarked, “I for one, believe we owed him an apology.” Their statements serve as tidy yet insightful summaries on McIntire reputation as a flawed giant of fundamentalism. While some of McIntire’s observations were quite prescient and prophetic, reckless accusations, inattentiveness to administrative detail, and inflammatory rhetoric occluded his effectiveness as a messenger.²⁶

²⁶ Balmer, “Fundamentalist with a Flair,” 56; Richard J. Mouw, “You’re Right, Dr. McIntire,” *Christianity Today*, 21 May 2002, 54.

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