

Opinion

Immorality and the downfall of the New Right

The New Right. It came to save our morally deteriorating society.

Yes, friends we, as a nation, were at the threshold of liberalist HELL. But, praise God, we were saved, yes, that's RIGHT saved. And I'll tell you, friends, it wasn't an easy task. There were small Caribbean nations to crush, reactionary right-wing dictators to support and deficits to expand exponentially.

Fortunately, it's almost over. In fact, outside the Brazos Valley the term New Right has almost become a political cliché.

What's most interesting however, is the movement's fall may come from its own lack of morality.

Their fearless and senile leader, Ronald Reagan, may actually be hung by his own words, or lies. With the Contragate hearings heating up, the light can be seen at the end of the tunnel.

This nation of sheep has seemingly awoken.

Granted, Reagan will not be

impeached but in the wake of his fall from grace, the New Rightists will be left drifting in a sea of ultra-conservatism, with only a Supreme Court ruling to damn to hell every now and then.

Are Americans finally aware that we as a nation don't own the destiny of the world simply because we have a higher fat content in our diet? Most polls taken since the revelations of the Oliver North for World Emperor campaign show the New Right falling flat on its ever-so-RIGHTeous face. But before it takes its leave, I'd like to ponder what its meaning was.

The New Right. It's not just the Moral Majority. It's an uninformed group of narrow-minded commie-bashers.

Join the New Right. Go to exciting rallies to touch the Ayatollah Ron. Meet other conservative hypocrites and tell each other how wonderful it is to be upper-middle class, white, and American.

Almost enough to make a fundamentalist weep (or speak in tongues) with joy.

The New Right, Moral Majority and the Reagan era fell upon us with

promises of revived spiritualism for our once holy nation.

And with Reagan's election in 1980 they were off and running, or is it praying. Suffice it to say they had the nation by the throat.

Did they deliver? Of course not. There was nothing from which to deliver us. To insinuate that America was, is, or ever will be morally corrupt is absurd.

This nation never had a more Christian president than Jimmy Carter. Unfortunately, Carter refused to trade on the nation's gullibility. Instead of talking morals, he actually spent his administration living them. Peace is what Carter strove for. He risked his entire foreign policy on the Middle East initiative and hammered out a treaty through diligent work. It's ironic that one of the most important peace accords of the 20th century wasn't morally righteous enough for the U. S. of A. But for Americans in 1980 peace was simply not morally chic.

Reagan, in all his self-serving political rhetoric, went for what was morally hot. Not something so inately liberal as peace, instead the nation threatening issues such as prayer in schools and abortion were his well chosen targets.

Suffice it to say that neither Reagan nor Jerry Falwell, the movement's other main proponent, has ever been pregnant. As for prayer in schools, well, I'll leave that to the Supreme Court.

At the same time he was SAVING our country from demons within, Father Ron was supporting oppressive governments around the world. All in the name of Democracy, of course. After all, the blacks in South Africa have neither the intelligence or the drive to run their own government. Or that is what the president would like Americans to believe, considering he has repeatedly sold arms to the Botha government in clear defiance of a United Nations arms embargo against South Africa. PRAISE THE LORD!!!

Reagan's morality, or lack thereof, is most evident in his ever-expanding defense budget. I'm sure that God appreciates the president's help in preparing the world for Armageddon. In fact, Jack Kemp's or Pat Robertson's new campaign slogan could be Nukes for Christ. After all, what this planet really needs is a good thermonuclear cleaning out. GLORY BE!!!

What's even more annoying about the administration's holier-than-thou posturing is while complaints of a

budget crisis rings from every corner of the legislature, the bible-beating conservatives have chosen to buy defective B-1 bombers rather than for social programs.

Very nice. Star Wars rather than college educations for the poor, or funding Sandinistas rather than programs for the unemployed. HALLELUJAH, Brother!!!

However, our Brazos bastion of young conservatism ignorance still breeds at an alarmingly commie-bash rate.

The days of the litmus test for AGS being utter political apathy naive are to be hopelessly upon.

Of course, that was the heart of New Right. Democracy thrives on information. The New Right thrives a lack of it.

Fortunately, with the details of Contragate filling the national air several hours a day and Ollie North getting closer to the witness stand, is nowhere for the administration to hide. The New Right and its dear beloved leader stand on the threshold of their own judgement day. AMEN!!!

Robert Morris is a senior journalist major and a staff writer for The Battalion.

It had to be bad to be so good

This is the last column I'm going to write about Jim and Tammy and Jerry and Jimmy and Oral and Gary and Donna, et al., for at least a while.



Lewis Grizzard

But I must admit the scandals of '87 have been the best thing to happen to me in my 10 years of getting up in the morning, making the coffee, reading the latest of those mentioned above and watching as the column literally writes itself.

It's time, however, to go back to the struggle and the bleeding. I feel I have grown fat and lazy writing of television evangelists and presidential candidates who can't keep their pants on. They are such easy targets.

But before passing onward, there are some loose ends, so allow me to clean out the notebook with the following retrospective:

BEST ORAL ROBERTS LINE: "God has told me if I don't get a lot of laughs during this monologue, he's going to call me home." — Johnny Carson.

MOST MEMORABLE QUOTE FROM TAMMY FAYE: "Shopping helps me ease my tension."

MY REACTION TO THAT: "So that's why my three ex-wives always seemed so relaxed."

BEST HEADLINE THAT PROBABLY NEVER RAN: "Rice causes Hart problems."

PERSON I'D LIKE TO SEE GET HIS BEFORE THIS WHOLE THING IS OVER: Jerry Falwell.

ANONYMOUS ON GARY HART: "What does he say in a singles' bar? 'Your house or the White House?'"

BEST T-SHIRT: One with a picture of a lot of goo with the caption: "I ran into Tammy at the mall."

BEST LINE TO REMEMBER WHENEVER THINKING ABOUT SENDING MONEY TO AN EVANGELIST: "They all ask you to send your money to the Lord, but they give you their address." — Hank Williams Jr.

GOOD POINT: "It's great the Gary Hart story broke when it did. Now we can get sex out of the pulpit and back into politics where it belongs."

INNOCENT PERSON HURT MOST IN THE SCANDALS OF '87: Lee Hart. May she make her husband's life as miserable as possible for the damage he caused her.

WHO JIM BAKKER WOULD LOOK LIKE IF HE HAD RED HAIR AND FRECKLES: Howdy Doody. Falwell could play Clarabell.

BESIDES TAMMY, BEST TEARFUL BEGGER ON THE TELEVANGELIST CIRCUIT: Jimmy Swaggert, but I hate to see a grown man beg.

BEST LINE ABOUT WHY ALL THIS MADE SO MUCH NEWS: "It's like an automobile accident. You can't stop yourself from taking a look." — In essence, Ted Koppel.

BEST JOKE YOU CAN TELL IN A FAMILY NEWSPAPER: Jim Bakker and Jerry Falwell are seated together on an airplane.

The stewardess asks Bakker if he would like a drink. He orders scotch.

She turns to Falwell for his order. Says Falwell, "I'd rather commit adultery than partake of alcohol."

Says Bakker, excitedly, "Me, too, but I didn't know we had a choice." Amen.

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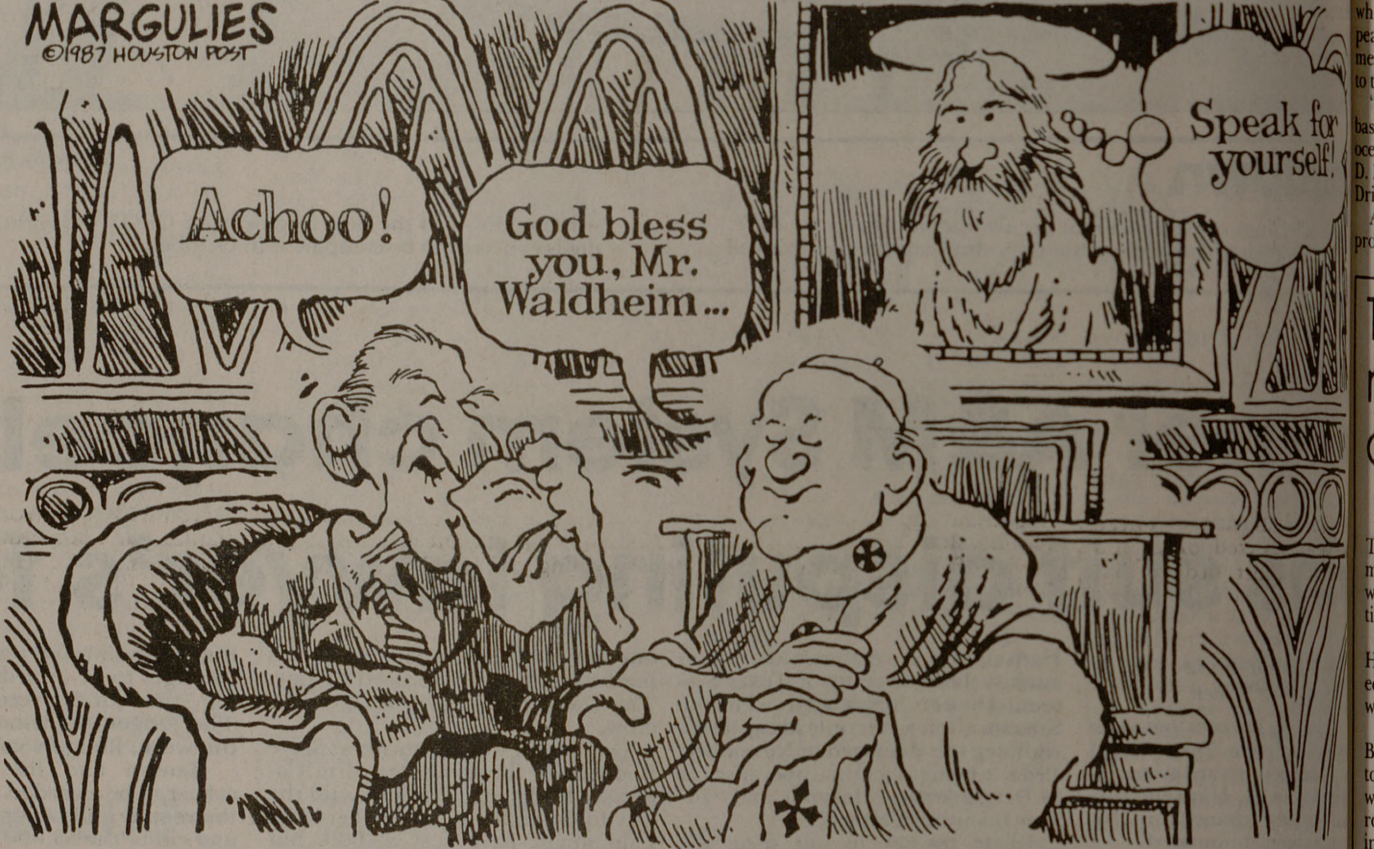
The Battalion is published Monday through Friday during Texas A&M regular semesters, except for holiday and examination periods.

Mail subscriptions are \$17.44 per semester, \$34.62 per school year and \$96.44 per full year. Advertising rates furnished on request.

Our address: The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-4111.

Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77843.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77843-4111.



Pope's meeting with Waldheim echoes church's silence on nazi atrocities

Every New Year's, the pope issues a call for world peace and every year the world ignores him. The papacy's sorry record in this area is never taken into account by the world press. It always carries his message and it does so for two worthwhile reasons: The pope is both the leader of the Roman Catholic Church and a figure of towering moral standing. When it comes to peace, would that his wish were our command.



Richard Cohen

But the present pope, John Paul II, seems to have lost sight of his special responsibility as a universal moral figure. He met with Kurt Waldheim, the president of Austria — a Catholic head of state of a mostly Catholic nation. Waldheim is also a man who lied about his past, who covered up and denied his participation in — and unbelievably even his knowledge of — Nazi atrocities, in the very areas where he served as a German army intelligence officer. He professed an ignorance as a German army intelligence officer. He professed an ignorance so absolute as to make the three monkeys — hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil — seem like investigative reporters.

A pope has many obligations. During the Holocaust, a timid Pope Pius XII felt his primary obligation was to the church. Genocide was a secondary matter and so the pope remained silent. He failed to rebuke the Nazis. And even after they occupied Rome and deported Italian Jews to their death, the pope held his tongue. This was largely true of the church in general, although there

were some clerics, such as the Berlin priest Bernhard Lichtenberg, who in 1941 publicly prayed for the Jews. For this, he was jailed and then transferred to a concentration camp.

As a consequence, some believe the church has a special obligation to the Jews — to both make amends and reassure them. John Paul II seems mindful of this. He has reached out to the Jewish community and last year made an unprecedented visit to Rome's main synagogue. And as a Pole, he needs no lessons about the horrible fate that befell his country during its occupation by the Nazis. Millions of his countrymen perished. Among them were three million Jews.

History both recent and ancient provides the context for Waldheim's meeting with the pope. But Waldheim is not a major historical figure. He is a marginal — a weak, slippery man whose role in wartime atrocities was, unfortunately, both ordinary and routine.

His real importance is contemporary because his crime is a contemporary one: denial. Waldheim's denial is so absolute, so bald, that he claims not only innocence but epic ignorance. The gruesome transport of Greek Jews from Salonika in Greece to Auschwitz in Poland, the massacre of Yugoslav partisans... all this was news to Waldheim, even though he served in those areas. In his autobiography, he lied about his wartime service, denying truth to advance his diplomatic career. Now exposed, he concedes he was an officer in the German army but denies what our own Justice Department — much as it wanted otherwise — could not. It has banned Waldheim from visiting this country.

Little wonder Austrians elected Waldheim their president. Their presidency is a symbolic office and Waldheim is a fitting symbol. Most Austrians supported unification with Nazi Germany (the Anschluss), 55 percent of 7 million Austrians were Nazi Party members and Austrians played a disproportionate role in the killing of Jews. Austrians commanded four of six main death camps and comprised one-third of the S.S. extermination units. If the occasion was anti-Semitic little Austria showed it could rise.

It is a bit late to punish the Austrians nor should one generation pay for the sins of another. But acknowledgment is a different matter. That would ensure that sons do not repeat the mistakes of fathers. It would prevent the Holocaust, like the genocides of Armenia and Cambodia, are not the works of a few diabolical men, but millions who participate and millions more who do nothing. Kurt Waldheim was a little of the former and all of the latter.

There is no institution more dedicated to memory than the Catholic Church. But in agreeing to see Waldheim, the pope lent his moral authority to Waldheim's amoral amnesia. Waldheim is not just an abhorrent head of state who the pope must dutifully see, but one whose sins of his wartime activities is an echo of the church's own silence during that period.

Unless the pope rebuked Waldheim when they met, the audience probably only two results, both of them unfortunate. The standing of Waldheim was increased and that of the pope diminished.

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