

CONVERGENCE

The Christic Institute

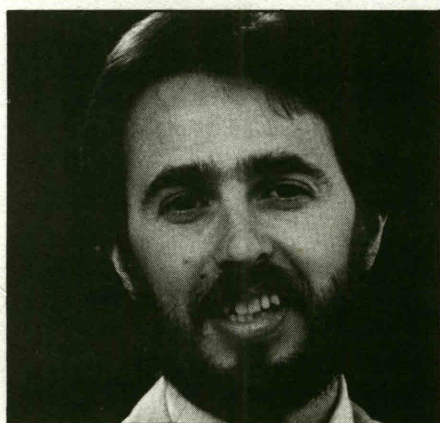
Spring 1988

Two Dollars

Washington, D.C.

Iran/contra network faces trial

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Christic investigation keeps books open on Iran/contra scandal

By DANIEL SIEGEL

While Government officials are closing the books on the Iran/contra affair, the Christic Institute's civil lawsuit against the private network behind the scandal is digging deeper into questions left unexamined by Federal investigators.

The lawsuit was filed in May 1986, six months before the Iran/contra affair broke nationwide, and names as defendants key figures implicated in the scandal.

The list of defendants includes Richard Secord and John Singlaub, both retired major generals; former Central Intelligence Agency officials Theodore Shackley and Thomas Clines; Iranian businessman Albert Hakim, and contra chief Adolfo Calero. They will face a Federal jury later this year on the Institute's charges of drug trafficking, gun smuggling, political assassination and international money deals.

The Institute now has investigative powers protected by the Federal courts, including the power to subpoena bank records and to examine scores of witnesses in the United States and Central America under oath.

The Institute's investigators believe that three Government probes into the Iran/contra affair—the Tower Commission, the joint Congressional hearings last summer and the investigation led by Independent Counsel Lawrence E. Walsh—have overlooked or ignored major issues linked to the scandal. Supported by a team of more than 60 lawyers and researchers, the Institute has already revealed:

- A large-scale operation involving contras, their private supporters, and certain United States Government officials to smuggle drugs—mostly cocaine—into the United States to help finance the contra war.

- The involvement by some of the defendants in illegal covert warfare activity, stretching back 25 years to secret wars in Cuba, Laos, Vietnam, Iran and Nicaragua.

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First election in fifty years

Christic Institute South wins right to vote for Keysville blacks

By ASHAKI M. BINTA

Voters in a small black community in Georgia elected their own town council on Jan. 4, effectively ending a 50-year ban on self-government in the town.

The 300 residents of Keysville, Ga., have not been able to elect councilors since 1933, when whites abolished a town government originally incorporated in 1890. Since then, the townspeople have had virtually no political rights and no municipal services. Few houses are equipped with plumbing, and most residents draw water from wells and carry it to their homes in buckets. There is no sewage system or fire department in the town. There are no schools.

Keysville is typical of hundreds of impoverished black towns throughout the South, many of which are controlled by whites. "State Highway 88, which meanders through part of the town, is virtually the only paved surface," the Associated Press reported in December. "Sandy roads lined by scrub brush, rusty cars and barking dogs lead to the shacks and mobile homes where most of the people live. Some people have wells and septic tanks. Others haul water and have crude homemade cesspools.

"The nearest doctor is 10 miles away," A.P. reported. "The town has two churches for blacks and one for whites. Whites live on one side of the highway, blacks on the other."

After a Keysville home burned to the ground in 1985 while three fire companies in the county argued about which should answer the alarm, the black majority decided to reorganize their defunct town government.

Residents discovered to their surprise that the town charter, inactive since whites stopped calling for local elections in the 1930's, was still in force. After nearly a year of maneuvering between the black majority and a faction in the white minority who opposed self-government, the residents formed a committee to supervise elections. Whites refused to participate. An unopposed slate of black candidates was nominated, and on Dec. 30, 1985, the town's first black mayor and five black city councilors were sworn into office. Five hours later, the white faction obtained a court order blocking the new municipal government from functioning.

In 1986 Christic Institute South agreed to provide legal and organizing services to the townspeople. Operating from offices in North Carolina, C.I. South is the Institute's division for racial justice and voting rights.

A petition drive, a demonstration at the Georgia State Capitol and a lawsuit against Gov. Joe Frank Harris put pressure on the state government to restore voting rights to the townspeople. In 1987 the General Assembly enacted legislation to provide for the reactivation of a defunct town government, creating a new legal basis for elections.

Despite the new law, the Burke County Board of Elections at first refused to schedule a new ballot for the Keysville

Town Council, but the Georgia Attorney General ruled in August that the board was required by the new state law to organize elections.

However, the faction opposing self-government did not give up. On Dec. 30, exactly two years after whites obtained a court order blocking the black council named in 1985, Superior Court Judge Albert Pickett issued an injunction halting new elections scheduled for Jan. 4. The faction disputed Keysville's boundaries and said the town line should be redrawn by 200 feet, producing a white majority.

Acting the following day on a motion filed by C.I. South, Judge Owen Forrester of the Federal District Court reversed Pickett's injunction. On the same day, the Justice Department in Washington announced it would send Federal observers to monitor the town's one polling place.

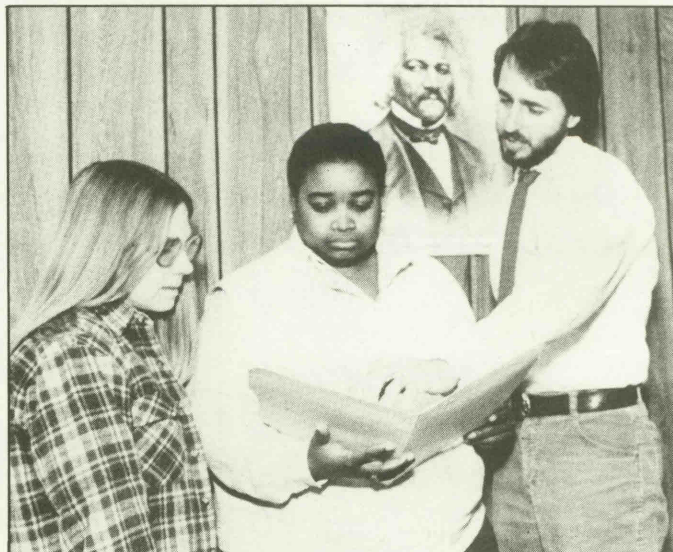
About 90 percent of the blacks and 80 percent of the whites eligible to vote participated in the election. Emma Gresham, 64, a black retired school teacher, won the mayor's race by 75 votes to 65. She is the same woman originally elected as mayor in 1985. "I'm convinced that we won a victory, but the battle is not over," she told the *New York Times*. "It's terrible, but it seems that people in this town want us to remain the way we were in 1933."

Blacks also won four out of five council seats.

C.I. South was organized in 1985 to support black community activists and elected officials in the region. In addition to the Keysville case, the southern office has:

- reversed guilty pleas and lifted fines for 39 indigent members of a tenant organization in Louisiana who were unconstitutionally arrested during a peaceful protest march.
- joined local counsel and the North Carolina Civil Liberties Union to ward off the threatened indictment on fabricated charges of an outspoken black alderman.
- worked with local attorneys in Alabama to win the acquittal of Frederick Douglass Daniels, one of eight activists

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Christic Institute South staff prepare for court. From left to right are attorney Gayle Korotkin, Development Director Ashaki Bina and Executive Director Lewis Pitts.

THE CONTRAGATE LAWSUIT

North spies on Institute

Secord and North allocate \$130,000 for investigation

Retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Richard V. Secord diverted \$130,000 from a secret Swiss bank account to pay for a covert investigation of the Christic Institute, according to reports by the *Washington Post* and Congressional sources.

At the same time, Marine Lt. Col. Oliver North set in motion an F.B.I. investigation of the Institute. The bureau closed the investigation when it could find no evidence to support North's suspicions that the Institute was supported by foreign powers.

In a related development, a Federal grand jury is now exploring allegations that Secord and North organized a covert operation to spy on United States citizens.

The attempt to use a Government agency and a retired C.I.A. operative to discredit the Institute reflected the fear, which Secord admitted to a Congressional investigating committee, that the Institute's lawsuit might "knock out" secret military aid to the *contras*.

The Swiss account, which Secord controlled, was a depository for profits from the illegal sales of weapons to Iran and other secret funds destined for the *contras*. The former general is one of 29 defendants in the Institute's lawsuit against the "secret government" which organized covert support for the *contras*. North is not a defendant.

In December, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that the special prosecutor investigating the Iran-*contra* scandal, Lawrence Walsh, had decided to ask a grand jury to explore allegations that Secord and North "ran an illegal domestic spying operation targeted at some Reagan administration critics." According to Christic General Counsel Daniel Sheehan, the new investigation will probably center on Glenn Robinette, a former official of the Central Intelligence Agency hired by Secord to dig up "derogatory information" about the Institute.

Robinette, Sheehan said, is a 30-year veteran of the C.I.A. who specialized in electronic surveillance, including wiretapping, and the preparation of forged documents. The Institute has obtained a copy of Robinette's business calendar, which shows that the private investigator met frequently with Secord and other defendants named in the lawsuit.

"The alleged decision by a senior Administration official to spy on United States citizens may become a far greater scandal than the sale of weapons to Khomeini," Sheehan said. "It's a warning that no United States citizen is safe from a single Government official obsessed with national security. The full truth has to come out on this."

According to the final report of the House and Senate committees investigating the Iran-*contra* scandal, North tried to use information from Secord's investigation to discredit

NEW WATERGATE

The Watergate scandal originated in the Nixon Administration's determination to protect the secrecy of plans, concealed from Congress, to escalate the war in Southeast Asia. When leaks threatened to expose these covert operations to the public, the White House created a "plumber's unit," an illegal team assigned to spy on Government officials, journalists and other United States citizens.

In early 1986 Lt. Col. Oliver North and retired Air Force Maj. Gen Richard Secord organized a similar operation to investigate and discredit the Christic Institute. The justification: The Institute's Federal racketeering lawsuit threatened to "knock out" the secret operation to aid the *contras*, Secord told the *Washington Post*.

"The Christic Institute," Democratic Congressman Richard Gephardt said late last year, "was targeted by Oliver North because it was close to the truth. We may still not know the whole story, but the American people owe a debt of gratitude to all those who helped expose the illegal acts of the Iran-*contra* affair."

Other attempts to discredit the Institute reflect a sense of desperation as the defendants' trial date nears. In Costa Rica, *contra* agents in the narcotics police attempted to frame the Institute and its plaintiffs on cocaine charges. And in the right-wing press, the Christic Institute has been transformed into a shadowy conspiracy run by foreign governments. See the stories on this page and pages four and five for further details. □

one of the key sources for the Institute's lawsuit.

Secord paid Robinette more than \$60,000 to "investigate the backgrounds of those behind the Christic lawsuit," according to the *Post*. The retired general told the newspaper he feared the lawsuit could expose the secret military supply operation for the *contras*, and therefore considered the payments a legitimate business expense.

In June, Robinette told Congressional committees investigating the Iran-*contra* affair that his assignment was to obtain "derogatory" information on the plaintiffs and attorneys in the lawsuit. Robinette said he paid \$7,000 to informants during a trip to Costa Rica in November, 1986. The former C.I.A. official's trip came shortly after the first press reports of the secret arms sales to Iran, but several months after the Institute filed its lawsuit against Secord and other figures in the secret *contra* supply operation.

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Cocaine frame-up in Costa Rica

Phony letter claims Institute, plaintiffs shipped drugs

On May 12 last year two American journalists were informed that a package was waiting for them at the local post office near their home in San Jose, Costa Rica.

The journalists were Martha Honey and Tony Avirgan, plaintiffs in the Christic Institute's lawsuit against the "secret team."

When the notice arrived from the post office, several Christic attorneys and investigators were meeting with Avirgan and Honey at their home. The journalists sent their Costa Rican secretary, Carmen Araya, to pick up the package. Five officers of the narcotics police arrested her as she left the post office. The narcotics police force, a highly placed official in the Costa Rican Government has told the Institute, has been infiltrated with sympathizers of the *contra* cause.

Araya was then driven to the offices of Judge Carlos Araya Rivas, who authorized police to open the package. Inside two books and a letter were discovered. One of the books was hollow. It contained about 50 grams of a white powder which the police identified as cocaine.

The return address on the package was "T. Borge, Managua, Nicaragua," and the letter found inside was addressed to "Senores Martha Honey, Anthony Avirgan." The name "Tomas" was typed at the bottom of the page. Tomas Borge, as Nicaragua's Interior Minister, is the Sandinista official responsible for internal security.

The letter was clearly a fabrication, implicating Honey, Avirgan, the Christic Institute, a mysterious "Reverend" and possibly a United States Senator in drug deals with the Sandinista Government. "Dear Friends!" it reads in translation from Spanish. "Thanks very much for your phone call. We are very thankful for all of your work in Costa Rica which is definitely producing good results. The *commandantes* were very happy with your mission and want me to tell you that.

"The boss is interested in talking to you personally. I want to pass you some instructions that are very important.

"In accordance with our phone conversation, your trip to Managua has been planned for the end of May. He wants you to move it up as soon as possible since your presence here is urgent.

"The shipment you made in February got to Miami alright and the Institute already has advised us and soon we will pick up the money. What we don't understand is that what we discussed was a shipment of 500 kilos of top quality. Nonetheless, the Reverend told us that there were only 400 kilos of quality not like the sample we received from Bolivia. We are waiting for your arrival in our country to clear this up.

"I am sending you a sample of what we got from Colombia. The quality doesn't seem real good to me, nonetheless you can decide if we should go into business with them. It appears there are two tons ready at a magnificent price. We



Tony Avirgan and Martha Honey standing in front of their home in Costa Rica.

will fix the transportation to Costa Rica and to here. Depending on what you decide, let me know immediately."

The letter continued: "We are waiting for you to send us what your good friend J.K. left for us with you in Costa Rica. Humberto spoke with him by phone and everything is going just as planned here with Daniel.

"If you can't send J.K.'s gift, bring it when you come. I think that's all for today, brothers. A big hug to our friend Pavlov and to Lic. Castro."

"What we have here is a crude fabrication to frame the journalists who are alleging that the *contras* organized a massive drug supply operation to finance their secret war," said the Rev. William J. Davis, S.J., co-director of the Christic Institute. "Clearly some individuals in Costa Rica thought they could turn the tables by planting drugs and an incriminating letter. We have good reason to believe that agents working for the *contras* in Costa Rica set the whole thing up."

Father Davis, one of the Institute's key investigators, is well

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General Singlaub's newest war

Retired general spearheads campaign against Institute

"If I were back in Vietnam in a firefight, then I'd ask for an airstrike to blow the bastards away. But to win this fight we need money. To fight the damned Christic Institute lawsuit takes money."

■ Retired Maj. Gen. John K. Singlaub, from a funding appeal in the December 1987 issue of *Soldier of Fortune*

According to a "White Paper" released late last year by the "Friends of General Singlaub," the retired Army major general is "an American hero of sterling character" and "an acknowledged leader of anti-communist Freedom Fighters on eight fronts worldwide."

But Singlaub, one of the key figures in the Iran-*contra* scandal, says he has been forced to shelve programs to help counterrevolution on a global scale. The reason, Singlaub told the conservative periodical *Human Events*, is the Christic Institute's lawsuit naming him and 28 others as co-conspirators in a complex operation to supply the *contras* with weapons in violation of United States neutrality, banking, currency and arms export control laws.

Singlaub and several other defendants have decided to appeal directly to conservative public opinion in the United States. His supporters say the retired army general has lived for years on a humble soldier's salary. He therefore faces "ruinous legal costs," *Human Events* reported on Nov. 26. "Instead of going out and pursuing the fund-raising for the U.S. Council for World Freedom," an extremist organization with close ties to the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, "I'm forced to go out and raise funds to defend myself against this suit," Singlaub said. The lawyer defending *contra* chieftain Adolfo Calero also complained to *Human Events* that the Christic lawsuit was "costly and time-consuming." Calero is one of the 29 defendants named as co-conspirators by the Institute.

Singlaub supervised assassination programs in Indochina as chief of the Special Operations Group and later served as commander of United States forces in South Korea. Fired in 1977 by President Jimmy Carter for insubordination and transferred to a minor post, he retired from the army and became a dedicated anti-Communist activist. From 1984 to 1987 he was president of the World Anti-Communist League (WACL)—an international extremist organization that has recruited Latin American dictators, death squad leaders and avowed neo-Nazis—and continues to serve as president of the league's affiliate in the United States, the U.S. Council for World Freedom.

According to the "White Paper" published by Singlaub's supporters, the retired general has never "encountered an



Supporters of retired Maj. Gen. John Singlaub claimed the Christic Institute was more deceptive than the Nazis.

enemy more insidious, or an opponent more deceptive" than the "so-called Christic Institute," even when he "dropped behind Nazi lines to help the French Resistance." The Institute's charges against Singlaub are "shrill, outrageous, totally unsubstantiated," according to the paper.

Fellow defendant Richard Secord, a retired major general in the United States Air Force who served under Singlaub's command in Southeast Asia, believes there are sinister forces behind the Institute's lawsuit. They are "foreign intelligence services," he told *Human Events*, "working through witting and unwitting parties, trying to use our own judicial system against us."

"Secord's conspiracy theory is beginning to make the rounds in extremist circles," says *Convergence* Editor Andrew Lang. The claim originally surfaced in October during a debate on the C-SPAN cable network between Christic Institute General Counsel Daniel Sheehan and Cliff Kincaid, author of the article in *Human Events* and director of media

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INVESTIGATION

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- An attempt to assassinate former *contra* commander Eden Pastora planned by C.I.A. operative John Hull and other defendants in the lawsuit.

- Systematic attempts by the Reagan Administration—particularly the intelligence community—to obstruct law enforcement investigations into *contra* drug and gun smuggling.

"We as a nation cannot put the Iran/*contra* scandal behind us until we face and resolve these critical problems," says Sara Nelson, the Institute's executive director. "We cannot be satisfied with anything less than the whole truth. Otherwise this pattern of criminal activity and secret warfare will be repeated again and again."

Parallel investigations

The lawsuit originates from parallel investigations into the private *contra* aid network by Christic Institute General Counsel Daniel Sheehan; by journalists Martha Honey and Tony Avirgan, the two plaintiffs represented by the Institute, and a small group of investigative journalists in the United States.

On May 30, 1984, a terrorist bomb exploded during a press conference held by dissident *contra* leader Eden Pastora at his hideout in La Penca, Nicaragua. Eight people—including Religious News Service reporter Linda Frazier, a United States citizen—were killed. Two dozen were seriously wounded.

Tony Avirgan, who covered the press conference for ABC television, was seriously wounded during the attack. After recovering from his injuries, he joined his wife and colleague, Martha Honey, in an investigation of the forces behind the La Penca bombing.

Together, the two journalists discovered a shadowy network of C.I.A. agents, *contra* leaders and right-wing mercenaries based on farm property owned by John Hull, a North American rancher and C.I.A. operative, in northern Costa Rica near the Nicaraguan border. This group, according to Avirgan and Honey, was behind the La Penca bombing, and subsequently planned to assassinate the United States ambassador to Costa Rica to provoke direct United States intervention against Nicaragua.

Meanwhile, Sheehan discovered the activities of some of these same men while preparing to defend members of the sanctuary movement arrested in Texas. In early 1986 he was told by a former military intelligence officer that secret *contra* support operations were managed by retired United States military and intelligence officers such as Richard Secord, John Singlaub, Theodore Shackley and Thomas Clines.

Sheehan learned that these men—years before the Reagan Administration came to power—had created their own private, "off-the-shelf" weapons companies and secret bank accounts to conduct covert operations worldwide.

These investigations revealed that the Nicaraguan *contras* and their supporters were financing their secret war by

importing drugs into the United States. Planeloads of cocaine were flown from Colombia to a landing strip on John Hull's property in Costa Rica, then shipped to the United States. Profits from the drug sales were used to purchase weapons for the *contras*.

Avirgan and Honey released their report on the La Penca bombing in October 1985, and were immediately sued by Hull for libel in a Costa Rican court. Sheehan helped plan their defense during the trial, which resulted in the dismissal of all of Hull's claims. Shortly after the court victory, the Institute and the two journalists decided to put John Hull and the secret *contra* support network on trial in the United States.

The Institute charges under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) that the 29 defendants organized a "criminal racketeering enterprise" that engaged in drug smuggling, gun running, political assassinations, money laundering and other criminal acts in support of the *contras* and earlier covert wars.

Attempts by the defendants to throw the case out of court have failed. Early last year presiding Judge James L. King denied every motion to dismiss filed by the defendants, clearing the way for an investigation protected by the court and a subsequent trial.

Under RICO, the Institute has been granted broad powers to subpoena and examine bank, telephone, travel and other business records. Acting as "private attorneys general," the Institute began deposing defendants and witnesses last March 9 in Miami, a key center for racketeering activity alleged in the suit.

Judge King ordered Christic attorneys to focus the initial stage of discovery on the defendants' activities in Central America between December 1982 and November 1986. After evidence from this period is submitted to the court, King will decide on the scope of further discovery, which may postpone the trial, presently scheduled for June 29.

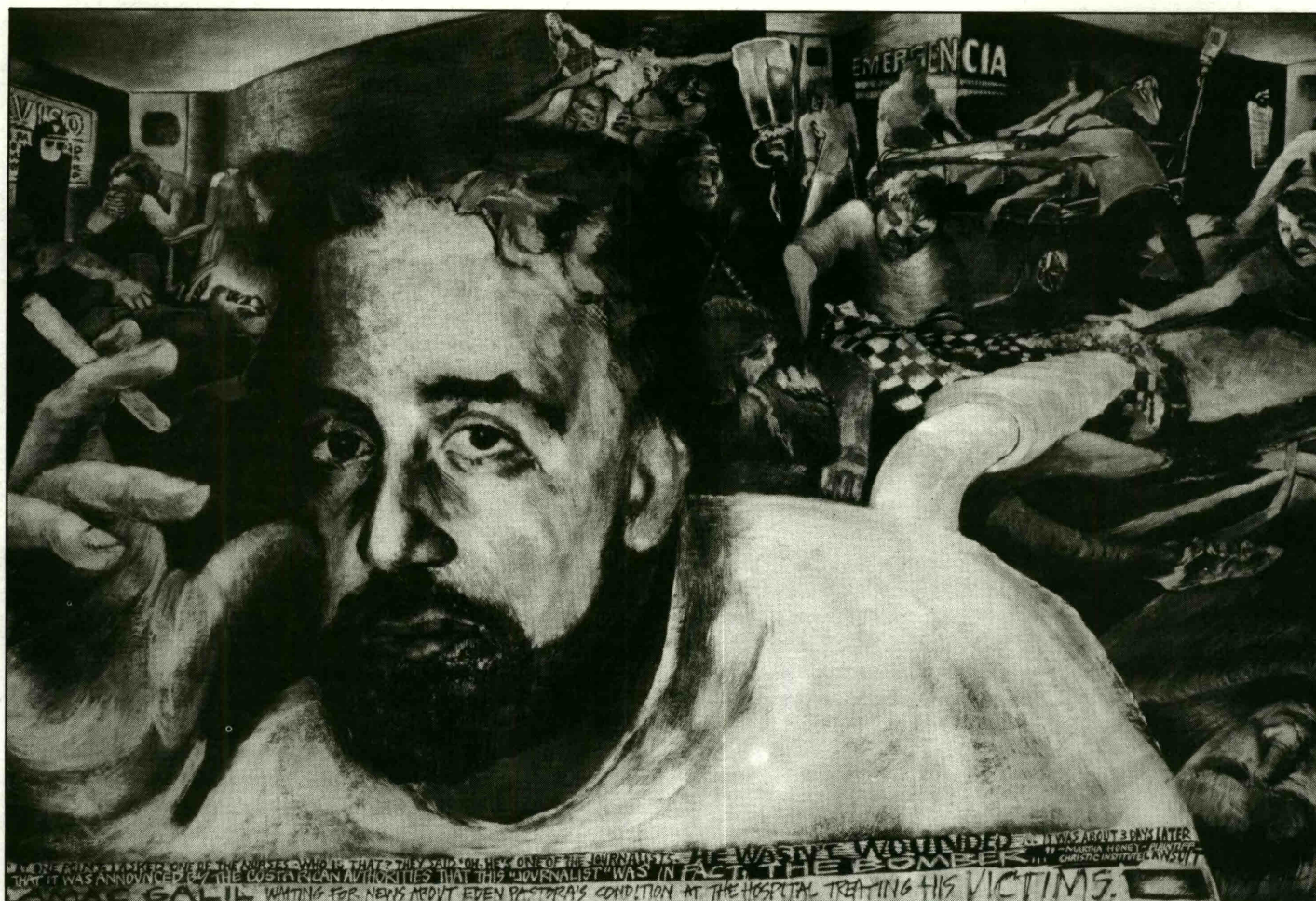
New evidence

The discovery phase of the suit has yielded important evidence to support the Institute's central allegations, which include:

- On May 4, 1987, Alberto Guevara, a former Costa Rican intelligence and narcotics officer, revealed in a sworn deposition that, on orders from a top official of Costa Rican intelligence, he personally assisted defendants John Hull and Amac Galil shortly before the La Penca bombing. Hull, a key member of Oliver North's secret *contra* support team, was seen directly assisting Galil, a terrorist who has been identified as the La Penca bomber. Guevara also testified that Hull's operatives delivered money through Guevara to a Costa Rican law enforcement official. The official called off the Government's investigation into the bombing.

- Former *contra* leader Eden Pastora charged that the La Penca bombing aimed at killing him was carried out by "Oliver North's group or certain sectors of the Central Intelligence Agency." During an eight-hour deposition last May, Pastora "identified C.I.A. attempts to destroy him and his organization," Sheehan says. "These attempts, according to Pastora, included the terrorist bombing at La Penca."

- Former *contra* drug pilot Michael Tolliver told Christic



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attorneys about a major “guns-for-drugs” operation between the United States and Latin America to help finance the *contras*. Tolliver testified that he flew *contra* weapons to Honduras and Costa Rica under the direction of veteran C.I.A. operatives Felix Rodriguez and Rafael “Chi Chi” Quintero, and returned to the United States with shipments of cocaine and marijuana. The pilot said he once returned with over 25,000 pounds of marijuana which he flew directly into Florida’s Homestead Air Force Base, where the drugs were unloaded.

- The former owner of a small toy company in Atlanta, Robert Fletcher, testified on Nov. 12 that his firm was taken over by arms merchants who used the business as a front to sell weapons and aircraft to Iran and support covert wars in Nicaragua, Angola and Southeast Asia. Fletcher said that defendant John Singlaub and retired Gen. Heine Aderholt were part of this operation, which tried to enlist him as a courier. He refused the offer after receiving death threats from Gary Best, an arms dealer who ran the company. Fletcher left the firm in late 1985 and moved his family to Florida.

● William Crone, an American landowner in Costa Rica and one of Hull's business partners, testified on Jan. 6 and 7 that as early as 1982 and 1983 the United States Government was secretly arranging airdrops of military supplies to the *contras* on property owned by defendants Hull and Bruce Jones. Crone said he received phone calls from the United States Embassy in Costa Rica, alerting him to scheduled airdrops of clothing and weapons for the *contras*. Crone

helped transport *contra* rebels to the drop sites, before quitting such activity in 1983.

The Institute's legal department expanded its investigative capacity in October when Trial Lawyers for Public Justice (T.L.P.J.) agreed to help take depositions throughout North and Central America. T.L.P.J. is a public-interest law firm based in Washington. Its members include many of the most prominent trial lawyers in the country.

The public impact of the suit's discovery phase was bolstered by two key rulings late last year. In October Judge King suspended a "gag rule" that usually prohibits attorneys from commenting publicly on issues not contained in documents filed with the court. The judge noted that intense public interest in this case called for suspending the rule.

Last December, in what is considered a landmark decision, Federal Judge Joyce Green of the United States District Court in Washington ruled that news organizations had the right to attend the Institute's pre-trial deposition of Glenn Robinette, a veteran C.I.A. operative hired by Maj. Gen. Secord to "develop derogatory information" on the Institute and its plaintiffs. Robinette had filed a motion to prevent reporters and the public from attending his deposition.

Judge Green's ruling, which noted the earlier lifting of the "gag order" by Judge King, influenced another Federal judge in Washington to allow the *Village Voice* and other newspapers to attend the Institute's deposition of Robert Owen, who served as Lt. Col. Oliver North's private liaison to the *contras*. According to the *New York Times*, First Amendment lawyers

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PRESS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS CONFIRM CHRISTIC CHARGES

The Institute's lawsuit against the secret contra aid network was filed in May 1986, six months before the Iran-contra story broke in the American press. Since then, many of the lawsuit's allegations have been confirmed by Government officials and investigative journalists. The following are excerpts from some of these reports.

Washington Post, Associate Press dispatch, Dec. 26, 1985

"Nicaraguan rebels operating in northern Costa Rica have engaged in cocaine trafficking, according to U.S. investigators and American volunteers who work with the rebels. These sources said the smuggling involves individuals from the largest of the U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary, or *contra*, groups, the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (F.D.N.)."

New York Times, Jan. 20, 1987

"Officials from several [United States] Government agencies said that by early last fall [1986] the Drug Enforcement Administration office in Guatemala had compiled convincing evidence that the contra military supply operation was smuggling cocaine and marijuana."

Newsweek, January 26, 1986

"[George] Morales, who provided the planes, and [Gary] Betzner, who flew them, both claim that C.I.A. agents and other U.S. officials helped the *contras* run the drugs-out, guns-in operation. 'I smuggled my share of illegal substance,' said Betzner, 'but I also smuggled my share of weapons in exchange, with the full knowledge and assistance of both the D.E.A. [Drug Enforcement Administration] and the C.I.A.'"

George Morales, *contra* drug pilot, quoted in **Out of Control** by Leslie Cockburn, 1987

"The C.I.A. knew I was working with them full-time. ... They needed the financial support for the *contras* and it [drug sales] was one more way for them to obtain that financial support."

Washington Post, June 30, 1987

"A money launderer for the major Colombia cocaine cartel [Ramon Milian-Rodriguez] has told Congress in secret testimony that he funneled nearly \$10 million to Nicaraguan *contras* through former C.I.A. operative

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"said the ruling was particularly important as a precedent to help the public gain timely access to information brought to light at the pre-trial discovery process in civil cases of public interest or significance."

Aside from sworn depositions, the lawsuits' allegations are being confirmed by investigations in Congress and the press.

The Iran/*contra* hearings that began last May in Congress—as well as numerous press accounts—confirmed the existence and many of the activities of the "enterprise" described by the lawsuit a year earlier. "When we originally filed our lawsuit," recalls Sara Nelson, "virtually everybody was skeptically asking us: 'Who is Richard Secord, Albert Hakim or Rob Owen?' Now, following the hearings last summer, they are household names."

Two current congressional investigations lend support to the lawsuits' allegations of drug trafficking by the *contras* and their backers. The Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on terrorism, narcotics and international operations under the leadership of Senator John Kerry, Democrat of Massachusetts, and the House Judiciary crime subcommittee chaired by Representative William Hughes, Democrat of New Jersey, are independently investigating *contra*-drug links.

Last summer, the Senate subcommittee heard testimony from an agent of the Colombian drug cartel who says he gave \$10 million of drug profits to the *contras* via former C.I.A. operative Felix Rodriguez.

"Vice-President George Bush has a lot of explaining to do about his relationship with Felix Rodriguez," says David MacMichael, a former C.I.A. analyst who now serves as the Institute's coordinator of investigations. "Bush met personally with him three times, and, according to the Vice President's own office notes, discussed 'resupply of the *contras*' with Rodriguez when such activity was clearly outlawed by the Boland Amendment. The Rodriguez meetings also took place while Bush chaired the Reagan Administration's Special Anti-Drug Task Force.

"Bush also directed the President's Anti-Terrorism Task Force during the time the White House was trading arms for hostages with Iran. Bush's preference for government by stealth is traceable to his days as C.I.A. Director, when he oversaw the work of our defendant, Theodore Shackley, who managed covert operations worldwide for the agency in 1976," MacMichael said.

The secret domestic activities of North and Secord suggest that the Institute's investigation has been on the right track. The Iran/*contra* report of Congress and accounts in the *Washington Post* reveal that both men coordinated a covert spying operation against the Christic Institute. Fearing that the lawsuit would, in General Secord's words, "knock out" the secret "enterprise" created to supply the *contras*, North and Secord spent more than \$130,000 from their Swiss bank accounts to discredit the Institute and subsidize a law firm representing defendant Calero. (See full story on page 3.)

Sheehan says the major factual and public policy questions raised by the Institute's lawsuit were ignored by the Government probes into the Iran/*contra* scandal.

"Each investigation contributes to our understanding of the scandal, but all three leave unresolved the central questions about the history, criminal nature and implications of

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'Contragate,'" says Sheehan. "They went little beyond damage control.

"The Tower board asked if the President was in charge, and ended up blaming his management style. Congress narrowly asked if the President knew of the Iran arms profit diversion to the *contras* and concluded he did not. The special prosecutor asked if the U.S. Government was defrauded by the "Enterprise," and has limited his indictments to five or six individuals.

"That is not enough," Sheehan believes. "These investigations overlooked the long and sordid history of this "Enterprise" predating the Reagan Administration. They downplayed how deeply Reagan officials violated the law and the Constitution. They ignored how drug trafficking has financed the *contra* war with the knowledge and even support of high government officials.

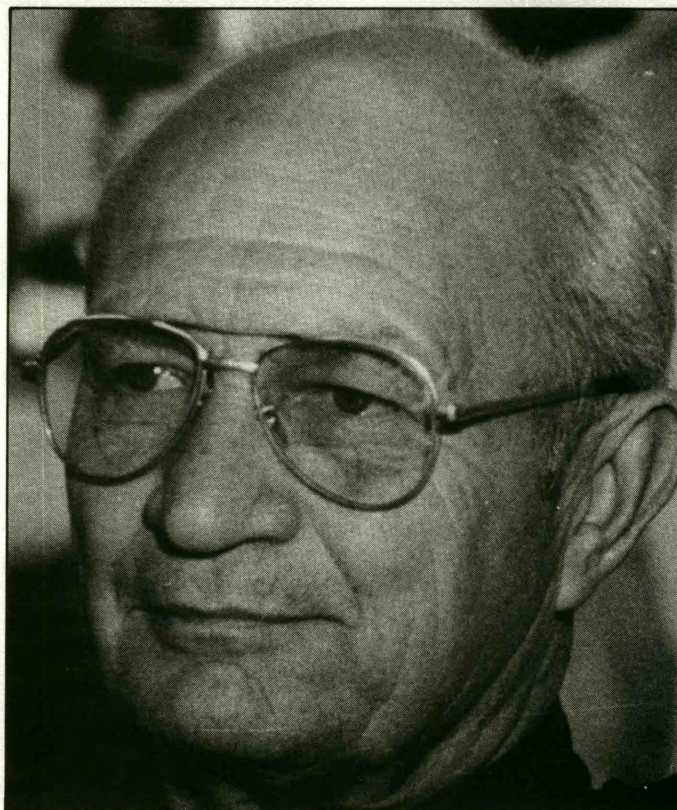
"Moreover, they failed to understand how this scandal has its roots in the National Security Act of 1947 that created the C.I.A., the National Security Council and the whole national security state system. Thus far, the post-Contragate reforms discussed in Congress merely would require the President to notify Congress of covert operations 48 hours ahead of time. We must demand that Congress publicly review the 40-year history of covert operations, and question the very policy premises they are based in Central America and throughout the world."

To raise the deeper and broader issues of the Iran/*contra* scandal in public, the Christic Institute has expanded its media, public education and organizing effort. Its staff has grown from 12 to more than 60 in less than 12 months. New offices have opened in Los Angeles and San Francisco to support the lawsuit. Fifty thousand people now receive the Institute's reports on Contragate.

Christic staff have visited nearly all of the 50 states, increasing the lawsuit's visibility through press articles, television and radio interviews, speeches, seminars, and strategy meetings with citizens who have formed local groups to support the lawsuit. Institute organizers are based in Iowa, New England and the South to help citizens raise key questions about the Iran/*contra* scandal in public meetings with Republican and Democratic candidates for President and Congress. Videos, audio tapes and printed materials continue to circulate throughout the country.

At the national level, the Institute has enlisted over 70 national organizations in its "Communications Alliance," including the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the National Organization for Women and SANE/Freeze. These groups have endorsed the lawsuit and are distributing information through their networks which reach millions of Americans.

"The Institute is the only organization to launch a major national and grass-roots public education and outreach campaign around the Iran/*contra* scandal," Nelson says. "The congressional hearings clearly failed to inform the public about the serious illegalities and immoralities committed in our name. Our citizenry must understand that the ultimate threat to our Republic is not Nicaragua. Rather, it is the idol of anti-communist ideology that drives our Government to play global cop. Sadly, this worldwide crusade often results in serious law-breaking at home.



Christic Institute defendant John Hull

"Every person running for President or Congress in 1988 must take a stand on the Iran/*contra* affair. No candidate is worthy of support unless he or she satisfies the public demand for a thorough investigation and resolution of the issues raised by the scandal.

"Our goal is to create an open and moral foreign policy, one that respects the rights of other peoples and addresses complex realities that beg for just solutions," Nelson continued. "The Iran/*contra* scandal cannot become a closed book. It must be kept alive as an historic opportunity for creating an enlightened foreign policy abroad and preserving our constitutional democracy at home.

"The hidden facts of the scandal are admittedly painful to face. However, they contain the very seeds that can give birth to America's new role in the world. Facing the truth can indeed set us free. But it takes work to make the truth known, and that is our task in the coming year."

Does the Christic Institute believe it can win such a complex case against 29 defendants? "I'm totally optimistic," says Sheehan. "It is simply a question of how much we can win and against how many defendants."

Nelson says that gaining justice for Avirgan and Honey is the primary aim of the lawsuit. She also believes that winning means more than courtroom victories. The broader objective of the case, she says, "is raising a national public debate about the outdated ideology and tragic costs of 40 years of Cold War thinking and policy. In this sense, we are already winning. Thousands of concerned Americans are joining with us to demand answers and alternatives to a foreign policy out of control." □

SINGLAUB'S WAR

■ *continued from page 5*

analysis for Accuracy in Media, a group organized several years ago to politicize the mass media with conservative ideology. The Institute, Kincaid said, is an organization of "legal terrorists."

Kincaid shares Secord's suspicions that "foreign intelligence services" are behind the Christic Institute. Secord noticed that the conspiracy charges against the 29 defendants, most of whom were later linked with the Iran-*contra* scandal, were filed in Federal civil court several months before the scandal surfaced in the press. "General Secord has suggested, and I think it's worthy of an investigation, that these names were obtained through communications intercepted at the Soviet intelligence facility at Lourdes, Cuba, and this information was provided via Communist channels to the plaintiffs and/or the Christic Institute," Kincaid said during the C-SPAN debate. Moreover, the Institute may actually have been subsidized by an unknown "hostile foreign government," suspects Kincaid. "Oliver North asked the FBI to investigate whether the Christic Institute lawsuit was being secretly financed by the Sandinistas or some other hostile foreign government. The FBI refused to investigate, but I think an investigation is called for."

According to Institute Development Director Stephen Deal, the lawsuit is financed entirely by individual donations and grants from church agencies and private foundations. "Naturally our list of major contributors is available to anyone who wants to see it, and of course the case receives no funds from foreign governments," he said.

Charges of links with Communist organizations and foreign governments seem to play a major role in the defendants' public relations strategy. "The charges are never substantiated, but seem to be calculated to win support from the more paranoid anti-Communist fringe in our country," says the Rev. William J. Davis, S.J., one of the chief investigators in the case. "And of course it's entirely possible that some of the defendants, who live in an imaginary world populated by Communist spies and ideological enemies, sincerely believe what they say."

"To fight us, they need to dehumanize us," says Lang. "Therefore we have to be more than an organization of religious Americans who happen to believe in a moral foreign policy. In the ideologized minds of extremists, the Christic Institute must be part of a global conspiracy of terrorists, Communists and spies."

Vern Kepler, chairman of the North Dakota chapter of Citizens for America, believes that the Institute, "founded by a Jesuit priest, is housed in the Foreign Service Ministry in Managua, Nicaragua." Kepler's source, he wrote to the *Grand Forks Herald*, was Lewis Tambs, the former United States Ambassador to Costa Rica.

Ironically, Tambs is identified in the lawsuit as the assassination target of a *contra* death squad in Costa Rica. According to documents filed in Federal court, the *contra* leadership hoped that the death of an American diplomat would be blamed on the Sandinista Government. The operation was later called off, the Institute says, after Martha Honey and Tony Avirgan warned the United States embassy in San Jose.

During his debate with Sheehan on C-SPAN, Kincaid pro-

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PRESS CONFIRMS

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Felix Rodriguez, Congressional sources disclosed. . .

"[The source] said that Milian-Rodriguez testified that the cartel, which is led by Pablo Escobar, Jorge Ochoa and, until his seizure earlier this year by U.S. officials, Carlos Lehder, believed Rodriguez was in the employ of the C.I.A. He said that Milian-Rodriguez testified that the money went to the C.I.A."

Newsday, July 16, 1987

"A major cocaine dealer implicated four *contra* officials yesterday in arms-for-drugs deals he said were aided by John Hull, an American who has been described as a top C.I.A. operative in Costa Rica.

"Internal *contra* records obtained by *Newsday* say that Hull traveled from Colombia to Miami in 1983 with two of those *contra* officials, flying in two planes then owned by the main *contra* army operating out of Costa Rica.

"That trip, convicted drug dealer Jorge Morales told a Senate subcommittee yesterday, marked the beginning of a relationship in which he helped *contras* smuggle thousands of tons of arms from the United States to Central America in return for several hundred kilograms of cocaine brought back on the return flights."

Washington Post, Jan. 20, 1987

"Independent Counsel Lawrence E. Walsh has received a report, allegedly given short shrift at the Justice Department last fall, of a connection between a Colombian cocaine kingpin and Southern Air Transport, the former C.I.A. airline involved in the Iran-*contra* affair.

"According to informed sources, a witness told the Federal Bureau of Investigation last summer of having seen a cargo plane with Southern Air markings being used for a guns-for-drugs transfer at an airfield in Barranquilla, Colombia in 1983."

Tico Times, San Jose, Costa Rica, May 31, 1985

"The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration in San Jose has linked cocaine smuggling to the United States with gun-running for the Nicaraguan rebels, The *Tico Times* was told in an exclusive interview with the chief of the D.E.A. office in San Jose Wednesday. He asked that his name not be disclosed.

"We have reports that certain groups, under the pretext of running guns to the rebels, are smuggling drugs to the United States," the D.E.A. chief said."

Newsweek, March 9, 1987

"*Newsweek's* own reporting, conducted by a team of more than a dozen correspondents over the past three

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NORTH INVESTIGATES

■ *continued from page 3*

Sheehan said he does not know if the "derogatory information" supplied by Robinette to Secord includes suspicions voiced by North and Secord that the Institute's lawsuit was based on information supplied by "foreign intelligence sources." These charges have recently been repeated by various extremist groups linked with the defendants, along with allegations that the Institute cooperates with "Marxist-Leninist organizations" and that the Institute operates from the Nicaraguan foreign ministry in Managua.

Secord told the *Post* in June that the Institute's lawsuit was "an outrageous fairy tale," but that he feared the legal action might "knock out" the secret operation to supply the *contras* with weapons and military supplies. In addition to the \$60,000 allocated for Robinette's investigation, Secord told the *Post* that he used funds from the Swiss account to pay Shea and Gardner, a Washington law firm representing Adolfo Calero, the *contra* chief and a co-defendant in the lawsuit. The firm, which failed to convince a Federal judge to expel Sheehan from the case on the grounds that he testified before Congress, no longer represents Calero. According to Calero's current attorney, Secord's payments to the lawyers added up to \$45,000.

The special prosecutor's investigation of Secord and North raises the possibility that the two men may have organized a "plumber's" unit, an illegal operation inside the Government

to spy on United States citizens. The original "plumbers" were private investigators hired by White House aides during the Nixon Administration to investigate political opponents. Although law firms and journalists may investigate individuals, provided their activities are within the law, it is illegal for a Government official to organize a private investigation of political opponents or to arrange for electronic surveillance without a court order.

After the lawsuit was filed in May 1986, North contacted the F.B.I. to urge an investigation of Martha Honey and Tony Avirgan, the two plaintiffs who have charged Secord and the other defendants with a conspiracy to violate United States neutrality, banking, currency and arms export control laws. North told Oliver Revell, the FBI's chief of criminal investigations, that he suspected the two plaintiffs "were probably being funded or supported by the Sandinistas," according to the Congressional report. Revell replied that "the FBI did not engage in that type of investigation," the report said.

But sources close to the F.B.I. have told the Institute that the bureau did investigate North's suspicions that the Institute was an agent of a foreign power, dropping the matter when no evidence supporting the charge was found.

In June 1986, the report reveals, North met again with FBI agents and complained that the bureau had failed to investigate Daniel Sheehan. When the bureau failed to act, the report says, "North ultimately hit on a better formula, however, with Secord's assistance." □

DRUG FRAME-UP

■ *continued from page 4*

known in Costa Rica. During a visit in January 1987, he was arrested by narcotics police in San Jose and held for several hours without charges. After a lengthy interrogation, the police attempted to deport him to the United States, although they had no authority from a court to do so. Father Davis resisted deportation and met the next day with President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica, who apologized for the incident. Davis was in Costa Rica at the time as an officer of the Federal Court, attempting to serve subpoenas on defendants named in the Institute's lawsuit.

Davis believes he is supposed to be the "Reverend" who, according to the fictitious letter, told the writer "that there were only 400 kilos of quality not like the sample we received from Bolivia." "The other characters are pretty obvious," Davis said. "The '*commandantes*' are supposedly the leaders of the Nicaraguan Government and the 'Institute' is the Christic Institute.

"J.K." is probably meant to be Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts, who leads a Congressional investigation of *contra* drug-trafficking and therefore has been a major headache for the 'freedom fighters,'" Davis explained. "Humberto" is Humberto Ortega, Nicaragua's Minister of Defense, and 'Daniel' is his brother, the President of Nicaragua. 'Pavlov' is the Soviet Ambassador to Costa Rica, Yuri Pavlov, and 'Lic. Castro' is Oto Castro, the Costa Rican attorney for Martha and Tony. *Lic.* is the Spanish abbreviation for attorney."

After the package was opened, Judge Araya accompanied

several police agents to the Avirgan-Honey home, which they searched despite objections raised by Christic Institute attorneys. Araya permitted one C.I. attorney to accompany each team of officers on their search. "We insisted, for the obvious reason that they could try to plant more drugs if they were unobserved," said Davis.

The search revealed nothing, but police kept Carmen Araya in custody, ignoring the judge's instructions that she could not legally be held. Police also handcuffed and arrested Christic attorney Tom Kellenberg when he protested their actions.

The secretary was released that evening. Charges against her, used by police as an excuse for her arrest, were never mentioned again. Kellenberg was held overnight and charged the following day with failing to show proper respect for a police officer. A Costa Rican court dismissed the charge in July. Charges relating to the package of cocaine were never filed.

It is still not known why Avirgan and Honey were framed on a narcotics charge. The story of a drug-smuggling "Reverend" working with the highest officials in the Nicaraguan Government was too bizarre for the North American press, which ignored the incident. But the arrests had political uses in Costa Rica. At the time of the incident, President Arias was out of the country. On May 13, the day following the arrests, Legislative Assembly President Fernando Volio spoke on national radio, demanding the expulsion of Avirgan and Honey within 24 hours. Volio is a leader of Costa Rica's extreme political right, which supports the *contras* and opposes President Arias' attempts to steer a middle course between the Nicaraguan and United States governments. □

SINGLAUB'S WAR

■ *continued from page 10*

duced "evidence" of the Christic Institute's "real and actual Communist activities."

- The Christic Institute was one of hundreds of religious and political organizations which endorsed the "Mobilization for Justice and Peace in Central America and Southern Africa," a demonstration last year against United States policy in those regions. Kincaid claimed that the Communist Party, U.S.A., also endorsed the protest. The official list of endorsers does not list any Communists, but does name hundreds of bishops, ministers, rabbis and union presidents, including the primate of the Episcopal Church and the president of the United Auto Workers.

- The *Peoples Daily World*, a newspaper published by the Communist Party, printed an interview with Father Davis. "It's our policy," Davis explained, "to talk to any journalist. We'll even talk to Cliff Kincaid."

- A newsletter published by the World Peace Council printed a story "glorifying the Christic Institute's lawsuit." The World Peace Council is listed in a State Department publication as a Soviet front organization. "The Institute has no connection with the council," says Father Davis.

- *Convergence* Editor Andrew Lang wrote an article for a journal published by the Christian Peace Conference, which Kincaid also described as a "Soviet front." "In fact, the C.P.C. reprinted a lecture I gave in 1986 on the theology of the religious right, a subject unrelated to the lawsuit, at an international conference of theologians meeting in West Germany," Lang said. "In any event, the Christian Peace Conference is no Soviet front."

But the clinching argument for Kincaid was that Communist interests are allegedly served by the Institute's lawsuit. "Who benefits from the Christic Institute litigation?" he asked rhetorically during the debate with Sheehan. "The Communists!"

Another link to "Communists" was uncovered by the Council for Inter-American Security, or so it believed. The right-wing organization was shocked to learn, and duly reported in the November issue of its newsletter *West Watch*, that the Christic Institute has "openly defended acknowledged Communists" in court.

The council did not report that five of the Communists, members of the Communist Workers Party, were killed and several others wounded when a death squad organized by the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party ambushed demonstrators in Greensboro, N.C. The Institute, fearing that the assassinations signalled a new era of political violence in the South and threatened to undermine freedom of speech and assembly, agreed to represent the survivors and their families. After two juries refused to convict the assailants on state and Federal criminal charges, the Institute organized a third trial in Federal civil court, where a jury found the Klansmen and Nazis responsible for the deaths and forced them to pay heavy fines to the victims' families.

"Of course we are not a Communist front, are not run by the Nicaraguan foreign ministry and do not receive information from foreign intelligence services," says Father Davis. "These accusations say nothing about the Christic Institute, but they speak volumes on the psychology of the extreme right in the United States. They reveal the paranoia that

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PRESS CONFIRMS

■ *continued from page 10*

months ... suggests that the roots of the North-Secret network can be traced back 25 years, to the C.I.A.'s plots against Fidel Castro and its secret war in Laos."

Report of the Congressional Committees Investigating the Iran-Contra Affair, November 1987

"The Enterprise ... had its own airplanes, pilots, airfields, operatives, ships, secure communications devices, and secret Swiss bank accounts. For 16 months, it served as the secret arm of the N.S.C. staff, carrying out with private and non-appropriated money, and without the accountability restrictions imposed by law on the C.I.A., a covert *contra* aid program that Congress had prohibited."

Washington Times, July 24, 1987

"The C.I.A. paid a controversial American rancher here (in Costa Rica) \$800 a month to cover the cost of bodyguards, in return for his help in the covert war against Nicaragua's Marxist government.

"In the past, 66-year-old John Hull has adamantly denied involvement with the C.I.A. and has said he had little contact with the Nicaraguan resistance. But in an interview this week, he conceded he has been intimately involved in the anti-Sandinista cause since it got underway here in 1983."

Air Force Maj. Gen. Richard Secord, retired, quoted in Playboy, October 1987

"Naturally the President knew what was going on. I testified that McFarlane told me the President had cleared it [the airlift to the *contras*] in July of 1985. McFarlane did tell me that. I did not dream that up!

"What people are saying in this case is that private individuals, more or less led by me, have seized control of this piece of foreign policy. And that's not true. I was working under the watchful eye of the White House and in accordance with U.S. policy that was described for me."

Miami Herald, July 5, 1987

"Some of President Reagan's top advisers have operated a virtual parallel government outside the traditional Cabinet departments and agencies almost from the day Reagan took office, congressional investigators and Administration officials have concluded.

"Investigators believe that the advisers' activities extended well beyond the secret arms sales to Iran and aid to the *contras* now under investigation." □

Religious counterrevolution

Religious right attempts to pacify Central American poor

By **TOM BARRY and ANDY LANG**

The *Tigre de Ixcán* lay dead. It was Spring 1975 in the far reaches of the Guatemalan highlands. Jose Arena Barrera, owner of the La Perla coffee plantation in the isolated Ixcán region, was known among fellow oligarchs and his own farm workers as the ruthless "Tiger of the Ixcán." His murder by members of the Guatemalan Army of the Poor was an opening salvo in the beginning of the guerrilla war in the Indian populated highlands.

In the following years, rebellion swept through the mountainous provinces of western Guatemala. But the army cracked down with unprecedented terror, slowing the advances of the guerrilla bands and seriously eroding popular support for the incipient revolution.

Today, La Perla's farmers still earn less than one dollar a day, live in rows of thatched huts and shop at the plantation store. The estate is now guarded on three sides by military outposts strictly controlling all entry into this roadless area. Besides the Government's soldiers and the plantation managers, the only people using the La Perla airstrip are various missionary groups. In fact, Roberto Arena Barrera, the son of the Ixcán Tiger, claims he has "turned La Perla over to the Lord."

Also saving souls in La Perla is Florida-based "Facts of Faith." Using the Guatemalan army's civil affairs division to transport supplies, it supplies medical aid and food to the malnourished coffee pickers. Missionary work in this region is also aided by the Mission Aviation Fellowship, whose planes give fundamentalists and pentecostals access to the most isolated and politically sensitive areas in Central America.

It is well known that Central America is torn by economic, political and military turmoil. Less understood is that the region is also experiencing religious upheaval. Johnny Carrette, a prominent evangelical businessman in Guatemala who makes a point of telling listeners that he was a Green Beret officer in Vietnam, asserts that a "religious revolution" is transforming the region. The revolution crosses class lines. Evangelical converts from the middle and upper classes meet frequently in luxury hotels throughout Central America. Most recruits for the religious revolution, however, come from the urban and rural poor. Small churches representing hundreds of evangelical sects are multiplying in urban shantytowns and isolated villages.

God's time for Central America

For mission organizations like the Overseas Crusade, based in California, the precipitate increase in the number of born-again Christians during the past decade is proof that this is "God's time for Central America." The Crusade's "Mission 90" campaign in Guatemala aims to convert 50



Mass baptism in Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala. The region's poor are flocking to neo-pentecostal sects.

percent of the population to its type of Christianity by 1990. Since the mid-1970's, the percentage of Central Americans professing fundamentalist or pentecostal faith has doubled. Johnny Carrette glows when talking about the spread of born-again religion. "I was trained to take over countries using arms," he muses, "but now I see there is a better way."

Ask any of the new breed of evangelicals to explain their success, and they will immediately give the credit to God. Stanley Herod of the Overseas Crusade believes that all of Central America's tragedies, from earthquakes to massacres, "are willed by God to create a reawakening of devotion for Jesus Christ." The booming evangelical movement, he says, is not simply the product of North American missionary zeal and financing, but "totally and exactly the sovereign will of God." According to Herod's apocalyptic reasoning, "disasters cause people to contemplate more spiritual things."

Fundamentalist and pentecostal missionaries gravitate to the disaster zones, conflict areas and refugee camps of Central America. The harvest of the "born-again" is bountiful wherever there is death, disruption and despair. But they are also discovering that the entire isthmus is in the grip of a multidimensional crisis that creates the perfect climate for revival and conversion.

Promises of industrialization and trickle-down economic prosperity have fallen flat, leaving Central Americans malnourished, underemployed, illiterate and increasingly desperate. Development has only created new forms of destitution. The ties that bind families together are unraveling, violent crime in both city and countryside is soaring, and old patterns of living and believing are eroding.

The boom in cotton and beef production following World War II increased the power of wealthy landowners, who seized thousands of small plots tilled by peasant families. As the population expanded, landless peasants streamed into the

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CENTRAL AMERICA

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sprawling cities. Land reform was an obvious solution, but governments in the region were dominated by the owners of the biggest ranches and farms.

Meanwhile, Central America's historic allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church, itself rocked by division and change, is failing. The church reached a turning point in 1968, when Latin American bishops meeting in Medellin, Colombia, redirected Catholic theology from abstract issues to the concrete problems of economic and social injustice. In the following years, thousands of priests and nuns decided to live with the poor and work for their liberation. They organized Bible study groups and "basic communities" to increase the political awareness of peasants and slum dwellers. In El Salvador and other Central American countries, these small communities expanded into Christian "mass organizations" uniting workers, peasants and the unemployed.

Many of the region's bishops, especially the higher clergy in Brazil, supported this movement. Others, fearing a challenge to their power, argued instead for a pastoral policy of "compassion" that left economic and social structures intact.

The new theology of social justice alienated many Roman Catholics of the middle and upper classes. Distrustful of their clergy, they began to organize small charismatic house churches, inspired by the Catholic charismatic movement in North America, which in turn was learning a new style of worship and spiritual ecstasy from Protestant neo-pentecostalism. These small groups developed into charismatic sects which are careful not to call themselves Protestant or evangelical, just "Christian."

In pentecostal religion, forgiveness comes easy to those who declare their faith in Jesus. Some members of the elite and the military are therefore seeking a secure haven in churches where there is no burden of social responsibility and no crisis of conscience.

In the 1970s the armies and security forces in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua retaliated against the basic communities and Bible study groups, and the new mass organizations of the poor which they had inspired. Roving death squads murdered priests, nuns, deacons and lay "delegates of the Word." Governments deported hundreds of foreign Roman Catholic missionaries. Bible study groups were forcibly dissolved.

In general, the Roman Catholic hierarchy has not risen to the challenge. Fearful for their own prestige and closely tied to the structures of power, most bishops have failed to support their priests and nuns. They remain distant and paternalistic at a time when the faithful, the majority of whom live in squalid slums or impoverished villages, are searching for self-dignity and self-worth. Desperate for a sense of community and for ways to cope with their suffering, many of the poor are turning to the evangelical sects.

Roman Catholics are not the only Christians in Central America challenged by the new sects. Every day the division deepens between conservative and progressive elements of Protestant and evangelical churches throughout the isthmus. Evangelicals in Nicaragua, for example, are split into camps that support and oppose the Sandinista Government. In Guatemala evangelical pastors were among the victims of the neo-pentecostal dictatorship of Gen. Efraim Rios Montt.

The new charismatic sects and the older pentecostal

churches share a number of strengths that enable them to reap an abundant soul harvest in the strife-torn region. They invite believers to share an intense personal religious experience. There are no complex rites or doctrines to learn. In sharp contrast to the Roman Catholic church, there are few institutional or educational barriers to advancement. Anyone can become a preacher. Religion is not confined to the village church, but overflows into the town plaza and the home.

One of the most important instruments for conversion is the crusade, a mass revival meeting which submerges the individual personality into a powerful experience of salvation shared by thousands of worshippers. When televangelist Jimmy Swaggart tells the region's poor that the solution to their poverty and hunger is not revolution but conversion to Christ, he is not preaching in an empty church. His emotional crusades in San Salvador, Guatemala City and other capitals have filled sports stadiums to capacity.

Personal testimony is the center of this new spirituality. Pentecostal religion is a palpable experience, a spiritual rock to which the poor can cling in times of class warfare and economic crisis. Although pentecostals do not stress social ethics, they do emphasize the family and offer the "born-again" experience as a solution to alcoholism, adultery and gambling. Most of the fundamentalist and pentecostal churches teach the doctrines of dispensational premillennialism, an apocalyptic system that anticipates global warfare against Antichrist as a precondition for the Second Coming of Christ. Living in the expectation that the present age will soon perish in an orgy of violence, dispensationalists historically have believed that social and political reform is irrelevant in societies doomed to destruction. Christians will rule in the age to come, not in the present. Other pentecostals, especially the followers of the new neo-pentecostal and charismatic sects, teach some form of "kingdom" or "dominion" theology. They believe that born-again Christians will seize political and military power in this age. Subjugating God's enemies by force, they will create the social conditions for the Second Coming. Divided by eschatology, both groups agree that Marxists, the Nicaraguan Government and their fellow travellers in the liberation theology movement are controlled by satanic forces.

Political pastors spend fortunes

Jimmy Swaggart, Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell and other political pastors spend fortunes every year to support their own mission activities in the Southern Hemisphere and to subsidize other evangelical ministries. Dollars finance the media barrage of the televangelists, pay the salaries of local preachers and give evangelicals an image of progress and success, an image that attracts families struggling to rise above poverty. Moreover, many pentecostal and neo-pentecostal missionaries preach a success theology that promises material rewards in this life. Accept Jesus as your personal savior, they tell their hungry and landless followers, and God will give you a job, increase your salary and heal any sickness.

Most large evangelical organizations have social service departments or "mercy ministries" aimed to attract prospective believers. When entering new areas, missionaries frequently distribute food, pills, clothing and toys to the poor.

Some missionary teams build churches and organize Bible study meetings. Others, like the "Salt and Light" organization

in Honduras, conduct "medical sweeps" in which missionary brigades hand out aspirins and pull teeth in rural villages. A frequent stop for some pentecostals is the city dump in Guatemala City. Equipped with public address systems, they sing and dance on pickup trucks and hand out food to the desperate scavengers who compete with vultures for edible garbage.

In Honduras, one pentecostal crusade offered beans and rice to participants in a mass meeting in the national stadium. "Youth with a Mission" is currently distributing tons of Jockey underwear, while Pat Robertson's "700 Club" is handing out thousands of boxes of a dietary chocolate pudding called "Slim-Fast." The pentecostals are not alone. Two right-wing Roman Catholic organizations, *Americares* and the Knights of Malta, also distribute boxes of Slim-Fast to poor communities.

This practice of converting souls and pacifying the poor through charity is not new. In Asia, missionaries from the United States produced a multitude of converts known as "rice Christians" because of their dependence on handouts. Today, charity has reached new extremes. Pentecostal relief agencies are handing out all kinds of surplus, discarded and often useless products, including mouthwash, underwear, obsolete pills and diet aids. Attracted to the easy faith and give-aways of these groups are masses of Slim-Fast Christians.

Cooperate with governments

Neo-pentecostals flock to places where the right believes United States interests are under attack by subversives. Right-wing governments and right-wing churches often discover that their interests coincide. It is not entirely clear if some groups in the region hope to supplant or at least reduce the influence of a Roman Catholic Church that is no longer politically reliable, but there is certainly evidence of close cooperation among preachers, politicians and generals. One popular leader in Guatemala describes this cooperation as a "religious-military strategy" to pacify the region. In Nicaragua, the Somoza family and the National Guard provided official and logistical support to conservative evangelical churches. Following the 1982 military coup in Guatemala led by General Rios Montt, the State Department encouraged evangelical relief organizations to supply humanitarian aid. In Honduras and El Salvador, the military has recently asked evangelical churches based in the United States to give orientation lessons to its troops.

In Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, conservative evangelical organizations qualify for access to isolated rural areas that remain off limits to other religious and relief organizations. One evangelical agency, *Friends of the Americas*, provides key non-military support to *contras* along the Nicaraguan border in Honduras. The organization—which cooperates with the Pentagon, the State Department and the Agency for International Development—says its operations target "the most strategic place in the world." Pat Robertson's Operation Blessing also supports the *contras*, supplying Bibles, chaplaincy services, medicine and clothing.

Pentecostals and neo-pentecostals often work directly with the military during counterinsurgency campaigns. In Guatemala's "bullets and beans" strategy under neo-pentecostal dictator Gen. Efraim Rios Montt—a campaign of military terror which cost thousands of lives, followed by humanitarian aid to survivors herded into protected villages—evangelical mercy missions provided the beans, although not

the bullets.

The Rios Montt dictatorship was the most extreme example of cooperation between neo-pentecostal missionaries and a terrorist regime.* Montt ruled for only 17 months, from March 1982 to August 1983, but during that period international human rights organizations reported 112 cases of mutilation, torture and mass executions. Montt declared a "final battle" against leftist rebels in the countryside, but the victims also included Roman Catholic priests and evangelical pastors suspected of sympathy for the guerrillas. According to one count, evangelical Christians paid a heavy price when born-again Christian Rios Montt seized power. Twelve evangelical pastors were assassinated; 69 were kidnapped; 45 'disappeared'; 15 were jailed; 11 foreign missionaries were expelled; 88 evangelical churches were destroyed, and 50 churches were occupied by the army.

Rios Montt was converted by "Gospel Outreach," a neo-pentecostal sect based in Eureka, Calif. Gospel Outreach controls 50 churches in the United States and eight congrega-



Televangelist Jimmy Swaggart fills sport stadiums to capacity when he preaches in Central American capitals.

tions of its Latin American affiliate, the "Church of the Word." At present, there are three "Verbo" churches in Guatemala, three in Nicaragua and one each in Ecuador and Brazil. Montt is an active member of the sect.

The Montt regime quickly established cordial relations with the religious right in North America. Within a week of the military coup, Pat Robertson flew to Guatemala City. Three months later, Robertson and Jerry Falwell met in Washington, D.C., with Montt's deputy Francisco Bianchi, an elder in the Church of the Word. Also present were Presidential Counselor Ed Meese, now Attorney General of the United States; Interior Secretary James Watt; United States Ambassador to the Organization of American States William Middendorf, and United States Ambassador to Guatemala Fred Chapin.

The religious right responded to the State Department's appeals for private humanitarian aid to the new regime. An "International Love Lift," organized by Gospel Outreach and promoted on Robertson's network, supplied food, clothing, medicine and building materials to refugees. Relief workers from Robertson's Operation Blessing and other pentecostal agencies headed for concentration camps where half a mil-

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CENTRAL AMERICA

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lion Indians were forcibly relocated after the army destroyed their homes and villages.

Although pentecostal missionaries from the United States have not been linked with acts of violence against "subversives" in Central America, the "dominion theology" of some neo-pentecostal churches clearly incites violence. Extremists of the right believe they are fighting a holy war against political forces controlled by Satan. According to a report published in Chile by the Latin American Institute for Transnational Studies, members of Montt's Church of the Word interrogated suspected leftists and participated in torture sessions. "The army doesn't massacre Indians," one pastor of the church told several North Americans. "It massacres demons, and the Indians are demon-possessed; they are Communists. We hold Brother Efraim Rios Montt like King David of the Old Testament. He is the king of the New Testament."

The complicity of neo-pentecostals in the Montt dictatorship was, of course, an extreme case. Generally, the evangelical churches and sects fight revolutionary ideas by instilling a profound fear of Communism and telling believers they should await the Kingdom of God while leaving civil matters to rulers ordained by God. For the most part, they encourage a strict separation between the spiritual and the political, steering their followers away from community organizations, trade unions and movements of protest.

In spite of the mixed record of evangelical charity, there is no doubt that thousands of families in the region have been fed and clothed, yet on balance the religious revolution is harmful. Pentecostals and neo-pentecostals leave communities divided, unorganized, and ignorant of the economic and political forces that are shaping their lives. Instead of helping the poor to take responsibility for their own liberation, they create dependency on handout programs or teach an ethic of competition for wealth and success.

The new sects are exporting much more than Bibles to Central America. Their main export is a pacifying ideology that forgives the guilty and soothes the poor with promises of personal salvation. It is an ideological antidote, manufactured in the United States, to the theologies of liberation and social justice. □

The preceding article was adapted with permission from Resource Center Bulletin, published by the Inter-Hemispheric Resource Center. Through its Private Network Alert Project, the center is now tracing the national and overseas activities of hundreds of pentecostal and fundamentalist organizations. For more information, write the center at Box 4506, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87196

KEYSVILLE

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in the "Black Belt" of Alabama indicted on Federal charges of vote fraud.

• won dismissal of charges against the Rev. Cozelle Wilson, a black minister who registered 205 new voters in a rural North Carolina county. She was indicted on a legal technicality by state officials seeking to intimidate black voters.

C.I. South is headed by attorney Lewis Pitts. A native of South Carolina, he was chief counsel in the "Greensboro Massacre" case, a Federal lawsuit against members of a death squad organized by the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party. The defendants had ambushed and murdered five leftist demonstrators in Greensboro, N.C., but were acquitted of criminal charges in state and Federal trials. The Institute's lawsuit brought the assailants to court a third time, resulting in a conviction on civil charges and heavy fines. The office's assistant director is attorney Gayle Korotkin. She was a poverty law attorney for the Vista program in New York before moving to North Carolina to work on the Greensboro case. □

SINGLAUB'S WAR

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drove these defendants to commit crimes in the name of freedom."

The Institute's investigation, Kincaid wrote in *Human Events*, may hamstring efforts to reactivate the private operation to supply the *contras* if Congress ever decides to cut off military and "humanitarian" aid. "Some of the defendants, who are now tied up in court, may find it impossible to resume their roles in a vitally necessary private aid network for the freedom fighters." The defendants must now "take care of the Christic Institute," he wrote. One of the targets singled out by Secord is Institute General Counsel Daniel Sheehan. "We will definitely deal with this guy," Secord told Kincaid. "It will be a service to the country." □



Retired Air Force Gen. Richard Secord, one of 29 defendants in the Institute's lawsuit, says that plans to "deal with" Christic General Counsel Daniel Sheehan "will be a service to the country."

What makes Pat Robertson run?

Jerry Falwell's rival believes Satan controls politics in America

By ANDY LANG and FRED CLARKSON

Pat Robertson is undoubtedly the only Presidential candidate who has declared, "I firmly expect to be alive when Jesus Christ comes back to earth."

Many evangelical Christians believe that Jesus will return one day, perhaps very soon, to rule the earth. But not every evangelical would agree with Pat Robertson's claim that he and his followers have been ordered by God to orchestrate the Second Coming. Many evangelicals would find Robertson's other beliefs equally extreme:

- The present world system is controlled by Satan, but will soon be replaced with a new social and political order dominated by a ruling class of born-again Christians.

- Believers and unbelievers are engaged in spiritual and political warfare, a struggle for the souls of men which will intensify in the "end-time" before the Second Coming.

- Believers will win this war partly because they possess supernatural powers.

- Secular humanists and Communists will either be destroyed or subjected to Christian rule.

"In the case of our world," Robertson wrote in 1982, "God has decreed destruction."

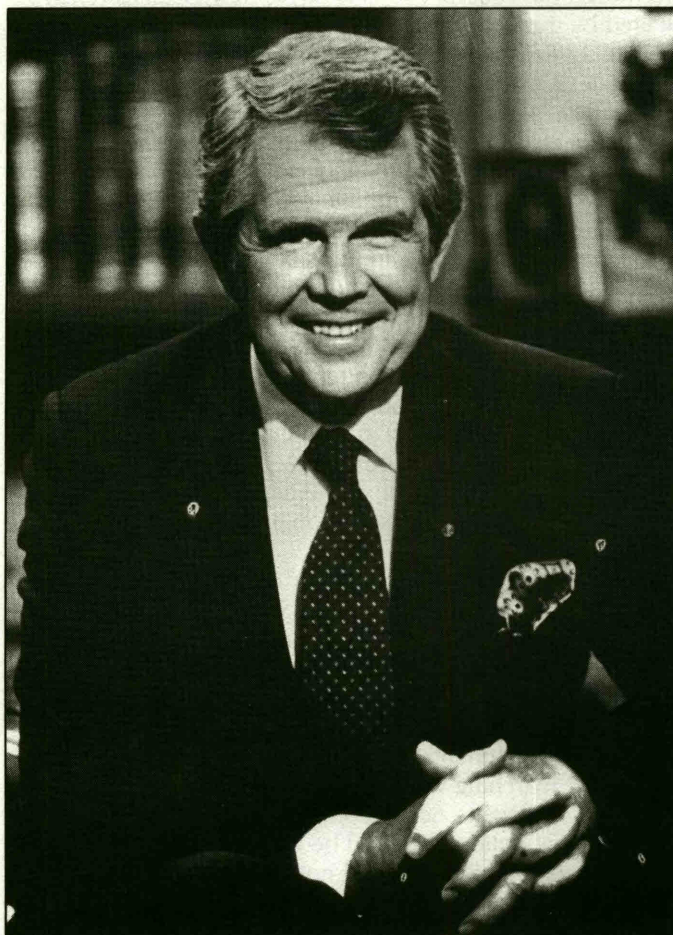
As a candidate for President, Pat Robertson now avoids discussion of religious ideology and insists that "there should not be an established religion in the United States of America." Throughout his career as a television evangelist, however, Robertson has identified his political enemies with the enemies of God. As recently as last September he said that atheists could not serve in a Robertson Administration.

Falwell's heir apparent

Although Jerry Falwell and many other evangelical leaders refuse to support Robertson's candidacy for President, the affable televangelist from Virginia is clearly Falwell's heir apparent as the leading personality in the religious right, a mass movement of fundamentalists and pentecostals organizing for political power. Falwell has retired from politics, leaving a vacuum Robertson is eager to fill.

Robertson claims a political base of "70 million evangelical Christians in this country," a base he built over decades as president of the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN), now the nation's fifth largest cable network with 34 million subscribers. A number of polls, however, indicate that evangelical opinion about Robertson is divided. A survey of evangelical leadership last year showed that Robertson ranked only fourth—behind George Bush, Jack Kemp and Robert Dole—as a preferred Republican nominee. And in polls of Republicans who expect to vote in the primaries, Robertson consistently registers as the most unpopular candidate.

Nevertheless, the Robertson campaign has organized thousands of loyalists in virtually every state. Most of his precinct



Robertson's professional organization is the envy of his rivals for the Republican nomination.

workers are newcomers to politics, recruited by their pastors and trained by seasoned professionals. His state organizations—which emphasize the basics of effective campaigning—are the envy of his rivals, and only George Bush has raised more money. In January Robertson qualified for \$5.5 million in Federal matching funds, nearly 20 times the amount collected by the other minister running for President, Jesse Jackson.

Robertson may not win many primaries, but in 21 states delegates to the Republican National Convention will be chosen in caucuses, where strong local organization usually pays off. Robertson's strategists believe their candidate will do extremely well in these states. Virtually no one expects him to win the nomination, but in a brokered convention Robertson's bloc of delegates may be decisive.

The candidate's aggressive tactics, however, have bitterly divided the Republican Party. In the first test of his campaign strategy—the struggle last year for control of the GOP organization in Michigan—Robertson's loyalists took over the state central committee and purged Vice President George Bush's supporters from positions of leadership. Robertson may ultimately fail to win a majority of Michigan's delegation to the Republican National Convention, but only because

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Bush used the Federal courts to strike down caucus rules drafted by the Robertson-controlled state committee. Moderate Republicans say this power struggle will weaken the Michigan GOP for years to come.

Robertson's coup was engineered last year when his faction in the state convention combined forces with a smaller number of delegates pledged to Jack Kemp. This alliance may have been a foretaste of a future heavenly banquet between Robertson and Kemp. Kemp discovered last year that he is really a born-again Christian. Hoping to build bridges to evangelical voters, he hired extremist pastor Tim LaHaye as deputy campaign manager, a short-lived experiment that ended abruptly when the *Baltimore Sun* discovered that LaHaye, who has written extensively on Bible prophecy, believes that God's plan for the end of the age includes the annihilation of Roman Catholics. Kemp's alliance with Robertson may be more durable, however. At present he is in the best position of all the Republican contenders to negotiate for Robertson's support in a deadlocked national convention.

Questions have been asked about Robertson's religious views, usually the wrong questions. Some critics are uncomfortable with the candidacy of a Christian evangelist, seeing a dark threat to the separation of church and state. As Robertson's supporters have pointed out, ministers have been active in United States politics since the American Revolution, sitting in the Continental Congress, leading the anti-slavery movement, marching with a Baptist minister—Martin Luther King—for civil rights. Separation of church and state does not mean that believers should be excluded from civil society or that ministers should not compete for public office. By concentrating its attention exclusively on this issue, the secular press is missing the real story about Pat Robertson, that the candidate's political ideology is inherently authoritarian, projecting a future world crisis in which Christians will "take dominion" and "exercise authority" over political enemies.

Future global conflict

Pat Robertson and many of his followers believe that the Bible is a sourcebook for predictions of future global conflict. He once predicted that Russia might invade Israel in the fall of 1982 as the first in a chain of disasters scheduled in Bible prophecy prior to the Second Coming. Soviet armies, of course, did not descend on the Middle East, but this disappointment has not deterred Robertson's conviction that this age is the final age before the return of Jesus. He still believes that a Soviet invasion of Israel is inevitable and, until recently, speculated in public that God's plan for the end of the age might include a nuclear war.

Robertson believes that the Kingdom of God, the new world system ruled by born-again Christians in the age to come, will be a theocracy. He therefore believes that Christians have a right to seize political power. "A kingdom is being prepared to be manifested," Robertson has declared. "The whole world of the created universe stands on tip toes waiting for the apocalypse, the unveiling of the Sons of God."

This future kingdom, Robertson believes, is "a one-world government under the leadership of Jesus with the nation states subject to Him." God will "entrust to us the gover-

nance of the world. . . . As a matter of fact, the kings of this earth, the rulers, the mighty men, many of whom have mocked God, and opposed God, are going to be shut up in prison. And God is going to turn the systems of this world over to his saints."

Robertson believes simultaneously in future global crisis and a new order in which Christians rule the earth, and so do most of the political pastors in the religious right. But Robertson combines these two themes—apocalypse and dominion—in a political ideology that motivates his supporters and confuses his enemies. In a political culture hungry for "new ideas, Robertson's philosophy is definitely new.

Between two ideologies

Robertson occupies an ambiguous position between two competing ideologies of political power in the religious right: *premillennialism* and *postmillennialism*.

Premillennialists in the religious right usually believe that the present economic and social order will collapse in a global purge of God's enemies, the "Great Tribulation," reaching a savage climax in the Battle of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Christ. There is therefore no hope for the present age, only the possibility of delaying actions while the church attempts to rescue sinners from the wrath to come.

Postmillennialists in the movement hold that there will be no Great Tribulation but a steady increase in the power of the church, leading eventually to the gradual establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. Christians will seize state power, establish a theocracy on the lines of Hebrew scripture and enforce biblical laws against homosexuals and criminals. The belief that Christians will "take dominion" in the present age and "reconstruct" a Christian social order provides two of the familiar labels for this movement: "dominion theology" and "reconstructionism."

Both of these positions can claim authority dating back to the first centuries of Christian history. Many Christians, of course, hold various views on God's plan for the future. None of these views necessarily support the ideology of the religious right or any other political movement. Even when Christians connect these ideas with politics, the results are not predictable. Many of the evangelicals who struggled against slavery were postmillennialists, and the doctrine of the coming Kingdom of God is the core of liberation theology, religious socialism and other theologies of social justice. Billy Graham, a premillennialist and arguably the greatest evangelist of our time, has organized crusades in East Germany, Hungary, Romania and the Soviet Union. Risking charges from the right that he has become an "agent of Soviet influence," Graham now advocates disarmament and dialogue with Communists.

But with the eruption of the religious right as a force in American politics, both premillennialism and postmillennialism have been transformed into extremist ideologies. Premillennialists in the movement, including Jerry Falwell and Tim LaHaye, believe that God will destroy their enemies and the enemies of the nation in a global purge of atheists and heretics. "The Tribulation will result in such bloodshed and destruction that any war up to that time will seem insignificant," Falwell writes. "There will come a day when God will unleash His wrath and judgment upon unbelievers. He will crush them beneath His thumb." Postmillennialists in the religious right are equally extreme. They believe they will dominate and rule the earth, using the power of the state to



Robertson believes he has the power to control natural forces through faith. Here he demonstrates on the "700 Club" how prayer diverted Hurricane Gloria away from his headquarters in Virginia Beach, Va.

suppress homosexuals, secular humanists and Communists.

Although the political views of these two factions often converge, they disagree sharply on the timing of the Second Coming. Premillennialists believe Christ will return *before* the Millennium as a military commander, exterminating his enemies in the Battle of Armageddon and establishing his Kingdom on earth. Postmillennialists believe Christ will return *after* the Millennium, that is, after a long period of Christian rule. Many reconstructionist and dominion theologians therefore do not plan to wait for Christ's return to settle accounts with His enemies. The execution of sinners will be one of the policies of the future Christian state.

The nuclear Bible

After the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, many premillennialists "nuclearized" the Bible, reading texts describing the annihilation of God's enemies in a lethal rain of "fire and brimstone" as prophetic images of nuclear war. Over the years an ideology of "nuclear premillennialism" was systematized, linking the destruction of Soviet power with God's plan for the end of the age. Sometime within the next fifty years, Jerry Falwell told a reporter in 1981, Soviet forces will invade the Middle East and meet their doom "on the mountains of Israel." This holocaust, he wrote, will "purge Israel." The surviving Jews will convert *en masse* to Christianity. The Soviet Union will be "totally destroyed," either by

nuclear weapons or by fire from heaven. Armageddon will be the final catastrophe of this period—a war between Christ and Antichrist fought on Israeli territory.

No premillennialist, however, equates the coming wars of the end-time with the extinction of humanity. In fact, the theorists of Armageddon contemplate the future with joy. The secret of their optimism is the doctrine of the *Rapture*, the theory that God will rescue born-again Christians before the planet is engulfed in Tribulation violence.

Falwell explains: "Those Christians who are alive when the Lord returns will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. All of this will take place in a split second and will be a glorious time for all believers. This will, however, be a terrible time of confusion for those who are left on earth."

The Tribulation is therefore only the agonized birth of a new age, a messianic era of peace under the kingship of Jesus Christ. Born-again Christians should not fear "the coming war with Russia," Falwell once told his followers. "If you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, none of this should bring fear to your heart, because we're going up in the Rapture before any of it occurs."

Until the early 1980s, when Robertson's views began to shift ambiguously in the direction of postmillennialism, the candidate's theories about the end-time were close to Falwell's premillennialist scenario. But Robertson, unlike

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Falwell, is a "posttribulationist." He believes that the Rapture will evacuate Christians from the planet, but at the *end*, not the beginning, of the Great Tribulation. This distinction may seem trivial or obscure to many readers, but its implications for Robertson's political ideology will soon become apparent.

How do nuclear weapons fit into Robertson's scenario for the end of the age? Over the years he has equivocated on this question, which occupies, as we have seen, an important place in the apocalyptic speculation of pentecostal and fundamentalist circles. His position seems to have evolved along with his political ambitions. "I was a little overzealous when I said there had to be a nuclear war," Robertson admitted in 1979. "I hope and pray there isn't. I think there is clearly going to be a *conventional* war [with the Soviet Union]." [Emphasis added.]

In an undated lecture on Bible prophecy, probably recorded in 1980, Robertson speculates that the Soviet Union will be destroyed by fire and earthquakes, not by nuclear war. "When Russia invades Israel . . . God himself will send fire upon them, and earthquakes. Now I believe that the Mount St. Helens eruption was just a foretaste of what's going to happen. I do not foresee a nuclear war."

In a book published two years later, however, Robertson refuses to tie God down to a military strategy of fire and earthquakes. The nuclear option is still open. "God will intervene on Israel's behalf with a great shaking—earthquakes, volcanic activity, fire, confusion and even fighting among the allied invaders. He also speaks of fire falling on Magog [Russia]. . . . This could of course be a vision of nuclear bombing. But it may also be the direct, miraculous intervention of God. . . ."

By 1984 Robertson's position was still equivocal. In a book published that year, *Answers to 200 of Life's Most Probing Questions*, he wrote that "we have the ability with nuclear weapons, to obliterate all life, or to kill, as *Revelation* puts it, at least one third of all people in a single war." Antichrist, the future world dictator whose defeat in the Battle of Armageddon will terminate the Great Tribulation, cannot appear on the world scene before the inevitable "breakdown of the world system as we know it," Robertson wrote. "There would have to be breakdowns in currency, in law and order, and in the power structures of the national states. A financial panic could help pave the way for him. *So could a nuclear war.*" [Emphasis added.]

The central issue in Robertson's ideology, however, has never been whether the coming apocalyptic warfare is nuclear or conventional. Other weapons of mass destruction described in scripture—famine, pestilence, earthquakes or a deadly rain of fire and burning sulfur—will serve just as well. Both Robertson and Falwell are very flexible on this point. To be fair, Robertson has been more honest than his rival. Admitting that his views on nuclear war have evolved over time, he told the *Wall Street Journal* in 1985 that "he no longer believes . . . that the Bible predicts a nuclear war and the beginning of the end of the world in the 1980s." Falwell, on the other hand, simply denies that he ever held any extreme views on the subject. In 1984 he insisted that his expansive remarks on God's plan to destroy the Soviet Union with nuclear weapons—expounded to a reporter from the *Los Angeles Times* in 1981—were nothing but "misquotes." In

a sermon preached later that year, he retreated to the more conservative position that God will use divine power, not nuclear weapons, to kill the Communists. Presumably Falwell believed that this adjustment would make him appear more moderate.

It is not known, perhaps because reporters have never asked the question, if Robertson has similarly modified his views on future war in the Middle East. These views center on the doctrine, which Robertson shares with Falwell and many other premillennialists, that the rebirth of the Jewish state in 1948 and the conquest of Jerusalem in 1967 were preconditions for the Second Coming of Christ.

Robertson originally believed that Israel was due for an invasion by the Soviet Union and its allies by the fall of 1982. The future Presidential candidate repeatedly stressed this prediction beginning in January 1982. In the February 1982 issue of his *Perspective* newsletter (since discontinued), he described Israel as "an obvious and ultimate battle ground." He continued: "Sometime this fall we should expect a clear and dramatic move by the Soviets to extend their grip on the Middle East. The onrush of events toward the end of the year may see the world in flames. Remember that these events are clearly foretold by the prophet Ezekiel."

When Israel invaded Lebanon several months later, Robertson again warned of imminent holocaust in the Middle East: "I guarantee you by the fall of 1982, that there is going to be a judgment on the world, and the ultimate judgment is going to come on the Soviet Union. They are going to be the ones to make military adventures, and they are going to be hit. . . . This whole thing is now in place. . . . It can happen any time. . . . But by fall [1982] undoubtedly something like this will happen to fulfill Ezekiel."

After nearly a year of urgent predictions, complete with maps and diagrams, the Soviets did not invade Israel on schedule. Robertson was not discouraged. In 1984 he again asserted that "[t]here will be an invasion of the nation of Israel by the Soviet Union, as described in Ezekiel." This time he did not set a date.

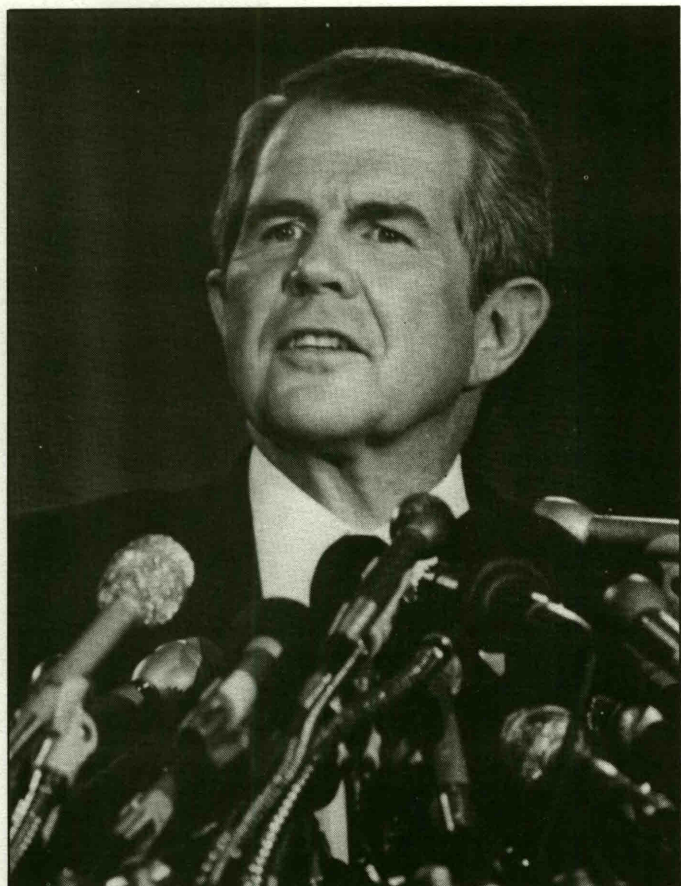
Chosen to usher in the Kingdom of God

Robertson, unlike the fundamentalist Falwell, is a pentecostal. The relationship between fundamentalism and pentecostalism is complex and the differences between the two movements are not always clear. Both fundamentalists and pentecostals agree, for example, that every word in the Bible is literally and inerrantly true. But the two camps disagree passionately on the issue of "spiritual gifts," an issue on which much of Robertson's political theology depends.

Pentecostals believe that certain spiritual powers described in the New Testament—including the power to heal the sick, raise the dead, speak in new languages, command the forces of nature, prophesy the future and exorcise demons—are still operative today. Fundamentalists do not believe in these powers. They do not, for example, "prophesy" the future: They simply read the Bible for information about God's plans.

Robertson himself has claimed many gifts of the spirit, including the power to change the courses of hurricanes and storms. "There is the power, as a matter of fact, to speak to a mountain and command it to be cast into the sea," he said in a taped lecture on Bible prophecy. "There is enormous power if you know the rules and the principles of miracles."

"I have in my mouth the power to kill and to make alive,



Robertson's political ideology mixes themes of apocalypse and the future political "dominion" of born-again Christians.

and you do too if you're a Christian," he added. "You have authority in the Kingdom . . . anointed of God, and the way you exercise authority is to command something to happen."

A nation purged of sin might even be able to win wars through the power of prayer, Robertson believes. "Prayer can be used of God to win wars, even today," he wrote in *Answers*. "However, secular nations such as the United States can establish their foreign policy based on the miraculous intervention of God only if their people and policies reflect obedience to His will."

By becoming a politician, Robertson has transferred this doctrine of power to the political sphere, a development which is still not fully understood by his critics in the Republican party. Robertson believes that demonic activity will increase at the end of the age, and he has detected the invisible hand of Satan in Communism, secular humanism, the gay rights movement and other political forces. Believers have the power to control these forces, and should begin to exercise "authority" over Satan in the political system.

In recent years Robertson's rhetoric on the subject of "authority" and "dominion" has begun to approximate the ideology of the dominion theologians. God "intends to reestablish His reign and His dominion," he wrote in 1986. "Proper order will be restored to the creation and chaos and anarchy will be ended."

Mixes dominion and apocalypse

As a "posttribulationist," it is not particularly difficult for Robertson to hold postmillennial and premillennial views simultaneously, to mix the themes of dominion in the

present and apocalypse in the future. Christians will not be raptured before the Tribulation, Robertson believes as a posttribulationist, but will remain on the world stage while Antichrist rules and global warfare rages. They will be actors in the last days of the present age, fighting spiritual, political and military warfare against satanic forces in a world increasingly dominated by violence.

There is therefore no clear demarcation in Robertson's mind between the political power of Christians in the present age and the Kingdom of God in the age to come. Even in a system dominated by Satan, believers begin to apply "Kingdom principles" that prepare them for global rule.

This philosophy is most clearly spelled out in Robertson's 1982 book, *The Secret Kingdom*. Here the evangelist writes that even during the Tribulation the "Kingdom of God will move forward" and that "those who choose to live under its rule will do so and be continuously prepared for that time in history when Jesus Christ will return to earth." "It is clear," he adds, "that God is saying I gave man dominion over the earth, but he lost it. Now I desire mature sons and daughters who will in my name, exercise dominion over the earth and will subdue Satan . . . take back my world from those who would loot it and abuse it, rule as I would rule."

"Now I believe in the second coming of Jesus and I believe in the millennium, but I also believe in the principles of the Kingdom of God. . . . Jesus Christ gave principles of living which are so revolutionary that they can change government" and all other human institutions.

In 1984 Robertson asked television viewers to "imagine a society where the church members have taken dominion over the forces of the world, where Satan's power is bound by the people of God and where there is no more disease and no more demon possession." It would be, he speculated, a society with schools where children pray, read the Bible and no longer learn the evil doctrines of secular humanism; a society with no abortions, no juvenile delinquency, no alcoholism, no hungry and poor people; where business is motivated by profits but not by greed, where workers and managers love and respect one another. "It's like a fairy tale," said Robertson, "godly people in high places, men of the Word as judges . . . judges speaking in tongues on the bench. . . . He [God] is going to restore his people to the rightful position they should have had in society all along." There will be a "spirit-filled President in the White House, the men in the Senate and the House of Representatives are spirit-filled and worship Jesus, and the judges do the same. . . ."

This pentecostal utopia would become a reality "as more and more of God's people take dominion in this earth, as we see the coming of the Lord drawing near," Robertson speculated. "You say that's a description of the Millennium when Jesus comes back . . . [but] these things . . . *can take place now in this time* . . . and they are going to because I am persuaded that we are standing on the brink of the greatest spiritual revival the world has ever known!"

"[H]undreds of millions of people are coming into the Kingdom," continued Robertson. "In the next several years . . . God is going to put us in positions of leadership and responsibility and . . . you mark my words, in the next year, two years . . . the next three or four, we're going to see things happen that will absolutely boggle our minds. Praise God!" Robertson therefore equates his movement to seize political leadership with the great charismatic revival sweeping the world. Believers will rebuke demons not only in

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12 WAYS TO SUPPORT THE CHRISTIC LAWSUIT

- 1 Tell a friend about the Christic Institute lawsuit and the Contragate Project.
- 2 Write a letter to your senators and representative urging them to push for further investigations into the Iran/*contra* scandal. Ask for a complete inquiry. Write the chairmen of the Congressional subcommittees investigating *contra* drug trafficking. Urge them to uncover the whole truth in their hearings, scheduled for March. The chairmen are: Senator John Kerry, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 439 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, phone (202) 224-4651, and Representative William Hughes, House Judiciary Committee, 2137 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515, phone (202) 225-3951.
- 3 Host a screening of our Contragate videotape and lead a discussion on the current status of the lawsuit. Call our hotline at (202) 667-2634 for the most up-to-date information on the litigation process, and our public education and outreach efforts.
- 4 Contact local members of our Communications Alliance (see back page) and members of your community who share your outrage at the Iran-*contra* scandal. Call a meeting to discuss possibilities for educating and organizing in your community around the lawsuit and related issues. Work to bring a Christic speaker to your community.
- 5 Get involved in the 1988 Presidential and Congressional elections by using our new "Ask the Candidates" brochure. Order copies today through our public education department and distribute them in your state.
- 6 Discuss the case with members of the social concerns committee at your church, synagogue or meetinghouse. Work with them to plan an educational event and discussion about the constitutional crisis and how people of faith can respond.
- 7 Subscribe to *Peacenet*, a nationwide computer service for peace organizations, to get the latest information on the case and the Contragate Project. Call (415) 923-0900 for more information.
- 8 Read one of the following books: *In Contempt of Congress: The Reagan Record on Central America* edited by Joy Hackel and Daniel Siegel (available from the Christic Institute); *Out of Control* by Leslie Cockburn; *The Iran/Contra Connection* by Jane Hunter, Jonathan Marshall and Peter Dale Scott, or *Crimes of Patriots* by Jonathan Kwitny. Write a review for your local paper.
- 9 Select one of our 29 defendants to use as a focus for local organizing, fundraising, public education and media work. Call the public education department for biographies on each defendant.
- 10 Talk with the youth workers, religious counselors and neighborhood activists most concerned about drug use in your community. Explain the *contra*-drug connection and arrange a special contragate video showing for them.
- 11 Write a letter to the editor expressing your concern about the *contra*-drug connection and the issues raised in the aftermath of the Iran-*contra* scandal. Follow up your letter with a visit to the editorial board of the paper. Update them on the case by providing them with a copy of our revised affidavit and our report on the *contra*-drug connection.
- 12 Call our organizing and outreach department at (202) 797-8106 to see what you can do to support the work of the Christic Institute.

The Contragate Project advisory board

Robert Alpern, Director of the Washington Office, Unitarian Universalist Association of Churches and Fellowships in North America

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Lila Garrett, television producer, political activist

Rev. Joseph Hacala, S.J., Director, National Office of Jesuit Social Ministries

Russell Hemenway, Director, National Committee for an Effective Congress

Rev. John Humbert, General Minister and President, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Randall Kehler, chair of the executive committee, Exploratory Project on the Conditions of Peace

Dr. Joseph Lowery, President, Southern Christian Leadership Conference

Rabbi David Saperstein, Co-director and Counsel, Religious Action Center of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations

Eleanor Smeal, former President, National Organization for Women

Rev. Robert Tiller, Director, Washington Office, American Baptist Churches U.S.A.

Bishop Dale White, Resident Bishop, New York Annual Conference, United Methodist Church

Doris Anne Younger, General Director, Church Women United

ROBERTSON

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their homes and churches, but also in Congress and the White House. As a premillennialist, Robertson and his followers believe that the present world system is controlled by Satan. But as a politician moving closer and closer to the "dominion" philosophy of postmillennialism, Robertson no longer accepts that the victory of satanic forces is a necessary precondition for the Second Coming of Christ. Christians may seize and hold political power before the end of the age, and in fact God commands them to do so.

Pre-messianic complex

Most politicians ambitious enough to run for President believe they are destined to lead. Robertson is no exception. But few politicians in our age believe they are destined to establish, if only provisionally, the Kingdom of God on earth. It is certainly no exaggeration to describe Robertson's self-image as a messianic complex, or more accurately, a pre-messianic complex.

Robertson's discovery that he was a latter-day John the Baptist struck the future Presidential candidate with considerable force in 1968. During the dedication ceremonies for CBN's expanded broadcasting facilities in Virginia, Robertson's close friend and business associate, Harald Bredesen, "came forward, placed his hand on my head, and began to speak a word of prophecy so powerful, I will never forget it as long as I live," as Robertson later recalled the scene. "For I knew God Himself was speaking to us at that very moment: 'The days of your beginnings seem small in your eyes in light of where I have taken you . . . but these days shall seem small in light of where I am going to take you . . . for I have chosen you to usher in the coming of My Son.'"

Robertson continued, "... God had assigned to CBN in these last days, a ministry of John the Baptist—to prepare the way for Jesus Second Coming!"

Many of the candidate's followers accept this claim of pre-messianic leadership. In 1986 Harald Bredesen again acclaimed Robertson as God's appointee at a critical hour in the nation's history. Introducing his friend at a mass meeting in Washington's Constitution Hall, Bredesen declared that "[o]nly a man whom God has appointed, who hears God, and at whatever cost, obeys God; only that man can lead us in this hour. We are here tonight because we believe you, Pat, are that man!" In 1987, when Robertson proved George Bush's equal in the struggle for the Michigan Republican Party, contributors to his Freedom Council were informed in a direct mail letter that "[t]he Christians have won! . . . What a thrust for freedom! What a breakthrough for the Kingdom!"

As a Republican candidate running a serious political campaign, Robertson no longer talks about himself as latter-day John the Baptist or describes his political enemies as demonic agents doomed to perish in the Great Tribulation. He has moved, as every radical in our system eventually must, toward the center. In Robertson's case, however, the center is so distant from his present position that he will certainly not reach it in time for the primaries. He is clearly too extreme for the Republican Party.

But Robertson's authoritarian ideology of apocalypse and dominion may have moved into the GOP to stay. In spite of many points of contact with traditional conservatism—with anti-Communism, for example—some conservative Republicans are dismayed that Robertson's true believers have chosen the Republican Party as their political instrument. Whether the split between Robertson and the regular Republicans will divide the party, or whether the party will ultimately be strengthened by the infusion of this new and dynamic force, is one of the most important issues to be settled in 1988. □

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