



Recently, a few articles have appeared concerning the tremendous sums of money some religions spend on themselves. The most recent appeared in a favored little magazine (favored because it does have courage to occasionally oppose the medium it flourishes off of) and quoted some facts and figures that are startling to say the least. In an article entitled That Old Time Religion Goes Big Time, TV Guide (TV Guide? TV Guide!) examines the move from sawdust to TV's glaring lights.

Written by a man with the charming name of Neil Hickey, the article sports such phrases as "the super media age," "electronic preachers," and "television 'cathedrals.'" As a preface to what is to come, we should state that we have found the majority of these television religions to be appalling in the light of what is happening - and has happened - in the real world. We know that this will automatically put a heretical brand on us by some people and perhaps by some groups; however, we see as demeaning, for example, Billy Graham issuing statements like edicts, and then blithely breaking them. Such as the Rev. Dr. Graham's edict that teenagers should never be allowed to marry and then announcing his 17 year old daughter's marriage. Or recently, when he was visiting a primitive outback country and learned that the penalty for rape was castration, which he agreed was a just and fair penalty and that more rapes would be deterred if this penalty was enforced elsewhere. When he returned to this country it was saddening (as well as amusing because you **knew** it was gonna' happen) to watch his gyrations as he attempted to discredit his statement to his angry followers.

Not that I am picking especially on the Rev. Dr. Graham, all of the TV religions are at fault. Look at some of the figures quoted by TV Guide. Rex Humbard spends \$3 million a year for the purchase of air time alone and that figure does not include the additional enormous amount spent for production and operating costs. In fact, Humbard's business activities caught the eye of the Securities and Exchange Commission in 1973, and as a result, he has had to curtail his outside business interests.

Oral Roberts, once the best (and most controversial) "faith healer" known, has parlayed his activities into a \$30 million university, of which he is the president, and a television syndication that generates \$15 million a year. Garner Ted Armstrong is head of a \$50 million empire. What has all of this done to religion?

An FCC official told TV Guide that the gargantuan sums of money that are spent by the television religions are disquieting, and they advise stations that the stations have a responsibility for their programming and should use reasonable diligence to assure that the stations' facilities are not being used just to solicit contributions.

Dr. Everett Parker, director of communications of the United Church of Christ, made a comment in the article that we find most enlightening. "Most of these people are on television to make money to be on television to make money—ad infinitum. They don't do anything else. The major Protestant faiths spend about as much a year on food relief in India, Africa, and South America as one television evangelist does to buy TV time. But he doesn't spend any money to help anybody." We think that last statement is worth repeating—"He doesn't spend any money to help anybody."

In thinking over the statements made by the TV religions, that statement doesn't sound as original as it might. Oral Roberts theme is "Something good is going to happen to you." Rex Humbard proudly announces the size and scope of his television facilities. The most bizarre of the TV evangelists is Rev. Ike. If you haven't caught the Rev. Ike show, you must make an effort to see at least one. Based in New York, Rev Ike earnestly advises his followers to pray for money. "The lack of money is the root of all evil," he told TV Guide, "Why worship in some storefront church waiting to die so you can have pie in the sky? Get yours now, with ice cream on top."

Perhaps people have become too accustomed to church on Sundays, life the rest of the week and if we attend, then we're saved. But that's not the way it works. The Bible tells us that faith without works is dead (see James 2:20). We rather tend to feel the way Episcopalian priest Malcolm Boyd does. He told TV Guide "I'm simply overwhelmed and baffled at the spectacle of religious figures buying an hour of prime time and coming on with big entertainers. The preacher becomes a kind of superstar, and values get lost in this process." Right on Rev. "Instead of exploiting and manipulating people, it's preferable to try and serve people: feeding them, tutoring them, educating them, improving their housing, visiting them in jails, working with parolees, counseling them. That to me is evangelism. Confronted by these needs, I have difficulty seeing evangelism as a bright, glittering, starstudded hour on prime time television."

Now there are probably a fairly large number of people who have become Christians by hearing these people on TV, or by attending one of Dr. Graham' Crusades (at least he does get out in the field — but why does it always seem like a circus is coming to town when one of his crusades arrive?). But what happens to these people when the bright lights and big names have gone? Does the harsher light of reality cause them to backslide? Where are the figures on what these people have done?

Personally, we find it hard to be counselled in our problems by a man who drives a luxury automobile and wears \$300 hand tailored suits. But the revival we have just experienced on campus is an example of how well Christians can work. I think it may have shocked some people. They did not expect as many students to support the revival as did. In addition, the after effects have increased the awareness of what a revival such as Happening '75 can accomplish. Not only did college students, noted for cynicism and anti-religious behavior, attend in large numbers, but they financially supported the event, a rare occurrence indeed. We salute the organizers of the revival, and will support and help those who first came to know Christ as a result of the revival. This is what it is all about.

- John H. Campbell

The basis of the capitalist system is profit. It is because the worker is paid for less than he or she produces that the owner can make a profit. Exploitation is inevitable in a capitalist society. This exploitation is not only of the workers within a capitalist nation but exploitation of worldwide markets and sources of material. This worldwide exploitation of workers and sources of material goes by the name of imperialism. Beyond this is the insight that the United States social welfare system is directly based on maintaining the profit-making markets of capitalism in America.

The patching-up one problem at a time (residual) character of welfare programs in the United States is a functional necessity for capitalism. By demeaning and punishing those who do not work, even the most menial paid labor in contrast is exalted. It will remain exalted so long as the relief system is inferior in providing resources as com-

pared to those "resources" that can be obtained from the lowest wage work imaginable.

How is this maintained? It is maintained in two paradoxical ways. The United States social welfare system is so residual, provides such a demeaning standard of living, that workers are economically afraid to become a part of the system. This says little of the fear of having oneself labelled within the welfare system. A fear which may not be empirically measurable but is promoted by idealization of American ideals that were never reality. This method has much to do with keeping people from choosing (if the choice is there) welfare rather than work. The welfare system of a capitalist nation will never be operated in a broad sense where it will compete with the lowest wage structure systems that exist.

The second way and the big tragedy is that there is a segment of the population that is kept in desolation. It is positively functional under capitalism for there to be a powerless portion of the population. This portion of the population from Marx to modern writers has gone by many names. For the purpose of this rave it shall be called the reserve army of the unemployed.

What is its positive function? With a "maintained" portion of the population unemployed **capitalists hold the upper hand** on a large scale over workers' demands. In a sense, the management is always and must always be in a sellers' market where what little wages and benefits it has to offer are on a take it or leave it basis. If one person does not for some reason want to work under the conditions the employer has set up, he has the choice to quit and look for superior work arrangements or fall into the welfare system. Either way, the employer has the reserve army of unemployed from which he can find a recruit who will at least on a temporary basis be improving his position by escaping from the welfare system.

This is not a theoretical assumption but an operational reality day in and day out in America. This says nothing of the reserve army of the unemployed that exists in America because of the United States' before mentioned imperialist policies. The bourgeoisie do business in underdeveloped countries where the wage structure is even inferior to the welfare

support structure in America. In this way, the big capitalists are able to undercut those in the reserve army of the unemployed even more and at the same time increase profits through lower wage structures. Pity to those in underdeveloped countries on "welfare." They exist on a stratum three levels below that of the already exploited American worker!

Two points here are that welfare with emphasis on prevention of poverty rather than maintenance of the poor (developmental welfare) and full employment in America are just big jokes so long as America remains a bourgeoisie-middle class proletariat country. The paradox is that the welfare system maintains the poor at such a level that it will never compete with the lowest wage structure America. This is done to keep those in the working force at the lowest levels in the working force. At the same time it is positively functional for there to be a reserve army of unemployed workers on welfare or slowly dying who will jump at any chance to become part of the work-wage system. This paradox keeps the power in the capitalist hands and the poor at their "mercy."

by Dick Newsome

BITS & BRIEFS

OPEN DORM POLL RESULTS

As called for by the Senate last Spring, Benny Sprouse, Speaker of Joint Council, was to take a student poll to gather opinions concerning the possibility of having a weekly open dorm visitation policy. Here are some results. Out of 1,100 students only 241 surveys were collected, (more would have been appreciated) that is, 21.9% of the on-campus student body. 40% students or 19% were

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