

# BUCKINGHAM REPORT

AN IN-DEPTH CRITIQUE BY AMERICA'S FOREMOST  
CHRISTIAN ANALYZER OF THE ISSUES, PEOPLE &  
EVENTS AFFECTING TODAY'S SPIRIT-LED LEADERS

## ORAL ROBERTS CAUSES STIR AT MARANATHA CONFERENCE

Remember I recommended attendance at the New Year's Day Maranatha Conference in Dallas. I said, "I believe there will be a prophetic word spoken by the powerful assortment of speakers." Not only was Oral Roberts' word prophetic and powerful, it turned out to be so highly controversial that conference leader Bob Weiner had to follow it up with "ministry" to some of the young people who were wounded or offended by its severity. The conference leaders withheld the tape, and several who were present have contacted me, expressing grave reservations over Roberts' appearance as the closing speaker at the May 19-22 meeting of the National Leadership Conference.

Thanks to an inside friend, I was able to obtain an unedited tape of Roberts' message. My wife and I both listened to it with open minds. Roberts was forceful and graphic in his denunciation of what he called the "deviate" sexual practices which lead to infecting the body with AIDS. He minced no words, and I did not find him crude or offensive. It was obvious he was determined to make his point—and not be misunderstood by using the usual preacher jargon which hems and haws and hedges when it comes to specifics. He called the sexual organs by their correct anatomical names and pointed out that sexual intercourse by married couples is blessed by God, but deviate sexual practices bring the curse of disease. He said—on at least three occasions (and this seems to be the thing that upset the folks)—that "the male organ is designed to be inserted in the female vagina and not in a male anus or in any other body orifice."

Strong words, especially when repeated several times as Roberts often does when he hits a theme. But when you consider that today's medical experts are saying there is no known cure for AIDS; that the only hope for prevention is Biblical morality; and, even so, if the growth rate continues over the next 10 years as it has over the last three, that by 1996 one out of every four people in America will have AIDS (including Christians)—someone needs to sound a trumpet.

I asked my wife her opinion of Roberts' graphic message. She feels, as I do, that the message was both prophetic and sound. One reference to specific sexual acts probably would have sufficed. I understand how people who have never heard preaching like that could have been embarrassed. Bob Nolte, of Maranatha Ministries, expressed concern that Roberts might have incorrectly read his audience—and didn't realize he was speaking to Christians. On the other hand, maybe Roberts knows more about the sexual habits of Christians than some give him credit for.

I understand some people walked out on Roberts. Some have accused him of being a dirty old man. Rubbish! We're facing the worse disease scourge in history—



and it is the result of homosexual activity. Just last week I discovered that the wife and two infant children of a young Southern Baptist pastor in Kansas have AIDS, resulting from a blood transfusion she had while her husband was pastoring in San Francisco, the world's homosexual capital. Why do we keep watering down the truth by saying there are certain phrases that should be edited from Christian magazines and censored if spoken in church? It's time the pulpit was used for something other than platitudes.

Roberts didn't say it the way I would have said it (I probably wouldn't have used anatomical language), and he may have said it before the wrong audience, but I'm glad he spoke his heart. I hope he speaks it again—although I'm not certain I want to be in the audience, or on the platform, when he does.

### **FULL GOSPEL CHAPLAINCY GROWS**

Thanks to the hard work and perseverance of Dr. Jim Ammerman, the U.S. Armed Forces now officially recognize independent charismatic churches and have allowed chaplains to be appointed to the various branches as representatives of these churches. In the past the Pentagon only allowed chaplains to be appointed from "established" denominations. Dr. Ammerman, however, a retired Southern Baptist army chaplain, realized there were tens of thousands of men on military duty who came from independent charismatic churches. These men had no representation in the military.

When Ammerman retired from the army chaplaincy, he dedicated his time to establishing an organization which would train and endorse charismatic chaplains. That has now paid off. At last count 7,975 independent churches have signed up, saying the Chaplaincy Full Gospel Churches (CFGC) is their official representative with the U.S. military. This represents more than one million Christians, which makes them larger than many small denominations. CFGC now has seven active-duty Army chaplains, one Navy and one Air Force. Chaplains in other than active duty categories total 13, with that many more in training.

Typical of these men on active duty is James S. Park, an army artillery major who graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1972. After serving 10 years as a line officer, Major Park was baptized in the Holy Spirit. He resigned his regular army commission and entered Oral Roberts University School of Theology, where he graduated last year. He is now at the Army Chaplain Advanced Officer Course at Ft. Monmouth, New Jersey, and will be assigned to active duty following his graduation.

Ammerman was the ranking Southern Baptist army chaplain when he retired in order to found the CFGC. His counsel is made up of some of the best-known leaders in America, including Larry Lea, Loren Cunningham, Jerry Horner, Buddy Harrison, Jim Jackson, Curry Vaughan, General Ralph Haines, General Charles Duke, Colonel Speed Wilson, and Admiral William Rapp. Although the job of director is full-time, Ammerman is currently working without salary.

I recommend your church should do as our church has done: Put CFGC in your missions budget. We send a monthly check as our way of supporting this powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit among our armed forces personnel.

Contact Dr. Jim Ammerman, 2721 Whitewood Drive, Dallas, TX 75233-2713.



## McKEEVER STRATEGY LETTER #1

Last year I highly recommended James McKeever's **Strategy Letter** to those of you interested in financial investments. It seems I was right. In January, The **Hulbert Financial Digest** in Washington, D.C., listed the 10 top-performing investment advisory newsletters for 1985. McKeever was number one, with an almost perfect forecast rating of 99.3 percent. The next highest was 83.3 percent, and number three was 77.1 percent correct. McKeever, a Spirit-baptized financial advisor, not only uses worldly knowledge but depends on the Holy Spirit to guide those whom he advises.

McKeever still recommends the Fidelity Freedom Fund for your IRA or Keogh Fund. I have invested in this fund and have not been disappointed. It is designed for folks like me who want to put money in a safe place where it will earn top interest—but don't have time or knowledge to work the fund as an investor. You can phone Fidelity directly at 1-800-225-6190. They will send you the necessary forms to fill out and return with your check. Remember, you have until April 15 to open or add to your IRA or Keogh Fund. Monies invested may be deducted from your 1985 or 1986 tax return as you desire.

McKeever's **Strategy Letter**, a top-level insider's report for serious investors, costs \$195 per year for 24 issues. His **End-Times News Digest** is available for a \$20 donation for 12 issues. Write: Omega Ministries, Box 1788, Medford, OR 97501.

## INNOVATIONS IN INDIA

In the early 1970s the government of India stopped granting missionary visas. The foreign missionary force plummeted from 6,300 in 1969 to less than 1,500 in 1980. To many it seemed almost hopeless. However, according to **World Christian** magazine, new and innovative missionary methods are once again building the mission force in this nation of more than 700 million people who speak more than 1,000 different languages. In an interview with Dr. Sam Kamaleson of World Vision and P. Samuel of Bethel Agricultural Fellowship in India, both feel India will most likely become a largely Christian nation in the next 25 years—despite the fact it is now 79 percent Hindu and 12 percent Muslim. Kamaleson says the Indian youth are incurably religious—searching for religious commitment. Stepping into this void are hundreds of Christian students from America and other nations who are getting scholarships and admission into Indian universities—not just to get graduate degrees but to witness for Christ.

Samuel also cites a number of "ordinary" Christians who are coming to India on three-month tourist visas as short-term missionaries. There are a number of indigenous organizations such as Bethel which will give these short-term missionaries direction to make their work count. Sounds like a great way to spend a sabbatical—or a wonderful opportunity to send a key layman or staff member. Contact Dr. Kamaleson or P. Samuel through **World Christian**, P.O. Box 40010, Pasadena, CA 91104. Subscription price for the bimonthly magazine is \$12 per year.

## REACHING FOREIGN NATIONS

Here are two ways you can reach nations such as India without traveling.

1. Recently the Tabernacle Church, Melbourne, Florida, sent a set of teaching tapes by music evangelist Jimmy Smith to a native pastor in northern



India. On the tapes, Jimmy was singing as well as teaching on healing, deliverance and salvation. Each tape concludes with many "words of knowledge" for healing. The pastor wrote back that, after hearing the first tape, more than 1,000 people gathered nightly to hear the rest. Hundreds of these were healed, many responding to the words of knowledge on the tape. India, he says, is exploding for Jesus Christ.

2. When our church discovered that nearby Florida Institute of Technology has more than 800 foreign students in full-time classes, our people were asked to "adopt" a student. A clipboard was passed around on a Sunday morning. People signed up, agreeing to bring a student into their home (or their home group) for an occasional meal, social outing or a weekend. Although the Christians will be witnessing to the students, they will do it through friendliness and care. These students will return to their nations as leaders. It makes sense to reach them now—rather than by sending expensive missionaries later.

### QUOTES THAT PENETRATE

**Greg Livingstone**, former director for Operation Mobilization and now director for Frontiers, a mission to Muslims, says, "A world Christian is an aware person. You don't go through all your life not knowing that the Kurds, the largest people in the world without a country, exist. I like to quote John Mott—from the Student Volunteer Movement—who said that every Christian ought to know everything there is to know about some place, and something about every place. Whether you are going anywhere or not, adopt a people."

Recently I spent a quiet evening with **Brother Andrew** in Holland. He reports that "10 years after the fall of Saigon, there are at least 200,000 Vietnamese Christians who belong to evangelical churches." Although, Andrew says, 99 percent of the tribal churches have been destroyed, "it is apparent that the number of evangelical Christians is growing significantly." This has caused a government counterattack. "A prohibition was issued last year on meetings of more than seven people and also on home prayer meetings. Because of these measures, many Christians now meet together in secret."

In the last issue of **Open Doors**, Brother Andrew's publication, he lists some of the suppressions on the Vietnamese church.

- Clergymen may not speak in a church other than their own.
- When a clergyman dies or leaves the country, no successor may be appointed.
- Whenever the church arranges any activity for the young people, the authorities ensure that a compulsory meeting about political reforms is held at the same time.
- It is simply impossible, as a young Vietnamese Christian, to be admitted to a university.
- Most jobs are not available to Christians.



IN THIS ISSUE I AM SPOTLIGHTING...

### **LISTENING TO THE VOICE OF THE UNDERGROUND**

There's a certain fellow in our church who writes me (or whoever preached last Sunday) long letters. These are handwritten in three colors of ink: black for his comments, red for the words of Scripture, blue for what he considers prophecy. For a long time I simply considered him an oddball—some fringe looney. Then one day I somehow got past his condemnation and his peculiar ways of communicating and realized he had a lot of valid points. Since then I've actually looked forward to his rambling letters, realizing that, just as a theater critic has a valid place on Broadway, so God has placed this man in our congregation as a legitimate critic—forcing me to defend on the basis of Scripture each point I make.

"Patriotism," said Samuel Johnson, "is the last refuge of a scoundrel." On the other hand, the scoundrels may be the last hope for the church also. Several years ago David Shoenbrun wrote a book about the story of the French Resistance called **Soldiers of the Night**. In it he points out the original resisters to the Nazis came from the fringes of society. They were looked upon as looneys, oddballs, and outcasts. The people in the mainstream were too bound up in their web of family, economic ties and community status to actually see what was going on.

#### **Strange Consultants**

Church and ministry leaders are fools if they don't listen to their critics. The wise leader, in fact, has learned that when trying to make significant changes it's important to involve outsiders or people who are peripheral to the core network of the church or ministry. Those who are caught up in the organization will find it very difficult to change. They may see the need for change, may have been crying for it, but their obligations, guilt, sense of identity and economic status may prevent them from telling the truth. They are trapped in their network of patterns, perceptions, traditions and relationships. People from the outside—those considered to be "fringe folks"—often see things more clearly and act more freely because they have less at stake in the establishment.

The last several times we have considered major changes (and some not-so-major) in our church, I have gone out and talked to the oddballs to see what they think. Surprisingly, I discovered most of them are not oddballs at all. They just approach the Kingdom from a different perspective. All of them deeply appreciated being consulted and nearly all had a clear channel to God, allowing them valid insight into what was going on.

For instance, until he moved out of town, I often discussed changes (and established programs, for that matter) with a Jewish rabbi whose ministry was limited to a small segment of Jews who attended his temple. I did not expect him to have the whole answer, and I certainly did not expect him to understand our overall vision. But I valued his insight, for he reflected a certain segment of our society who were basically anti-Christian and thus saw things from an entirely different vantage point than our "in" people. I have also consulted alcoholics, people who have left the church, and strange little men who write me letters in three colors. All have spoken a portion of God's word to me.

I have a growing impression that Christians no longer reach out to the world, nor do they listen to the world. I am a prolific reader. I do not limit my reading to Christian books. I also dig through medical journals, scientific magazines and various



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news magazines—including several newspapers and foreign journals. I do this because I do not believe all truth is found in the church office—or on Christian television. I have discovered, however, that most Christian leaders are not aware of what is happening in the carnal world of reality. They don't know details of AIDS, of what is happening in Cambodia, of the shame of our involvement in Central America, or of the plans of our government in defense, outer space, or even of the insidious nature of the IRS. Instead, tragically, we have become a counterculture and we spend most of our time talking—and listening—to ourselves.

## **Lessons from the Presidents**

How is it that a man like Jimmy Carter (and President Reagan, for that matter) could make so many mistakes when it came to domestic and foreign affairs? I mean, the world's most accurate information and analysis is available. According to Jack Anderson, the problem lies with those closest to the president who filter out all the information except that which they think he wants (or ought) to see. With aides telling the president what they want him to hear, and reports written in such a way to eliminate contradictions and dissent, true analysis is often lost. According to Herb Ellingwood, now that James Baker has departed the White House staff to join the cabinet, there are no born-again Christians left on the top level of the president's staff. That cannot help but affect his decisions.

Pastors and leaders of large ministries do not have time to go through all the information themselves. They must rely on others, not only to collect but to analyze, summarize, and present recommendations for action. What can they do to insure they will hear all sides?

1. Listen to contradictory information and dissenting views. If they are not offered, ask for them.
2. Keep track of whose predictions are accurate; this is the only way to differentiate good and bad advice. Listen especially to a man's spirit. A man may be mechanically and logically right, but God's work sometimes contradicts logic. Listen to his spirit.
3. Stay away from those with "vested interests," such as a staff member who might lose his job, an elder who doesn't want to be inconvenienced, or anyone who has a friend or who might be adversely affected by the decision.

If you only listen to people who agree with you, you're in danger of missing God—who, Himself, often disagrees with you. Listen to the voices from the underground; they may be closer to God than those in the thick of things.



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