

Dear Friend,

If the Moral Majority has its way, you'd better start praying.

The Moral Majority -- and other groups like them -- think that children should pray in school. Not just their children. Your children.

But that's just the beginning.

They want their religious doctrines enacted into law and imposed on everyone.

If they believe that birth control is a sin, then you should not be allowed to use contraceptives.

If they believe that abortion is wrong, then you should not be allowed to have one.

If they believe that the Bible condemns homosexuality, then the law should punish homosexuals.

If they believe that a man should be the breadwinner and the divinely appointed head of the family, then the law should keep women in their place.

If they are offended by the ideas in certain books, then the law should ban those books from your libraries and schools.

And like Joe McCarthy, they believe that anyone who disagrees with them should be barred from teaching in the public schools.

These new groups are on the march and growing stronger each day. Their agenda is clear and frightening: they mean to capture the power of government and use it to establish a nightmare of religious and political orthodoxy.

And they are dangerously deceptive. They appear to represent American patriotism, because they wrap themselves in the American flag and use words like "family" and "life" and "tradition."

In fact, their kind of "patriotism" violates every principle of liberty that underlies the American system of government. It is intolerant. It stands against the First Amendment guarantees of freedom of expression and separation of church and state. It threatens academic freedom. And it denies to whole groups of people the equal protection of the laws.

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**American Civil Liberties Union**  
132 West 43rd Street New York, New York 10036



Make no mistake about it: the new evangelicals are not a conservative movement. True conservatives place great value on the Bill of Rights -- a time-tested document designed to guarantee individual rights by limiting the powers of government.

In fact, the new evangelicals are a radical anti-Bill-of-Rights movement. They seek not to preserve traditional American values, but to overthrow them. Their agenda represents massive government intrusion. And conservatives as well as liberals should stand up against them.

#### THE DANGER POINT

These groups have already had alarming success. They have been pivotal in blocking passage of the ERA in fifteen states. Public school boards all over the country have banned books and imposed prayer and other religious ceremonies. State legislatures have begun placing increasingly severe restrictions on a woman's right to have an abortion. And there is mounting pressure to pass laws requiring the teaching of the Biblical account of creation as an alternative to evolution.

They have grown into a rich and powerful force in this country.

How rich? The Moral Majority raises a million dollars a week (!) with its television program.

How powerful? In the last election, key members of Congress were successfully targeted by them for defeat, because of their positions on abortion, ERA, and other civil liberties issues.

And the head of the Moral Majority promises more of the same. At a press conference a week after the election, he warned elected officials, both Republican and Democrat, to "get in step" or "be prepared to be unemployed."

Already there is talk of constitutional amendments that would impose prayer in the public schools and outlaw all abortions. And legislation has been introduced that would strip federal courts of their authority even to hear constitutional cases.

In the Senate, Strom Thurmond will now chair the Judiciary Committee, which controls most legislation affecting the courts and the Constitution. Senator Strom Thurmond favors repeal of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and has announced his support of much of the Moral Majority's program. He has actively opposed civil rights and civil liberties for thirty years. Now he may prevail.

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We are facing a major struggle over the Bill of Rights. This struggle does not involve the question of whether the Moral Majority and other groups like them have the right to speak.

They do, and we would defend that right. Even those who oppose the Bill of Rights are protected by the First Amendment. The danger lies in the content of their views, not in their right to express them.

Nor is it a question of partisan politics. There have been shifts of power from one party to another before. That is not what concerns us. The American Civil Liberties Union is non-partisan and does not endorse or oppose candidates for public office. But we will make certain that, whatever other changes may occur in the political arena, the Constitution does not become a casualty of the new order.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO

For 60 years, the American Civil Liberties Union has been the organization that protects the Bill of Rights. As former Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote:

"The ACLU has stood foursquare against the recurring tides of hysteria that from time to time threaten freedoms everywhere . . . Indeed, it is difficult to appreciate how far our freedoms might have eroded had it not been for the Union's valiant representation in the courts of the constitutional rights of people of all persuasions, no matter how unpopular or even despised by the majority they were at the time."

We've been there in the past and we'll be there in the days ahead. We will meet the anti-Bill-of-Rights forces in the Congress, in the courts, before state and local legislatures, at school board hearings. Wherever they threaten, we will be there -- with lawyers, lobbyists, staff and volunteers -- to resist their attempts to deprive you of your liberty and violate your rights.

The ACLU, like the Moral Majority, depends on individual contributions. But they raise more money in a few weeks than we raise in a year.

We can only be as strong as the number of people who support us. Ultimately, the protection of your rights depends not on legislatures, not on who gets elected President, not even on the courts. It depends on individual citizens, aware of the fragil-

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ity of liberty, alert to the forces that imperil it, and prepared to give of themselves in order to preserve it.

In the past, when the Bill of Rights was in danger, enough people recognized the threat, and came together in time to repel it. Such a time has come again.

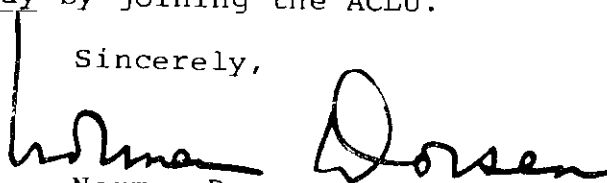
You can do this by becoming a member of the ACLU.

When you join with the thousands of others concerned with preserving our freedoms, those freedoms will be preserved for all and passed on to our children.

Please do not think that "they" will take care of it for you or that someone else will do your part.

Please commit yourself today by joining the ACLU.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Norman Dorsen". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Norman Dorsen  
President