PAUL B. HENRY INSTITUTE
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FOR THE STUDY OF CHRISTIANITY AND POLITICS

Inside

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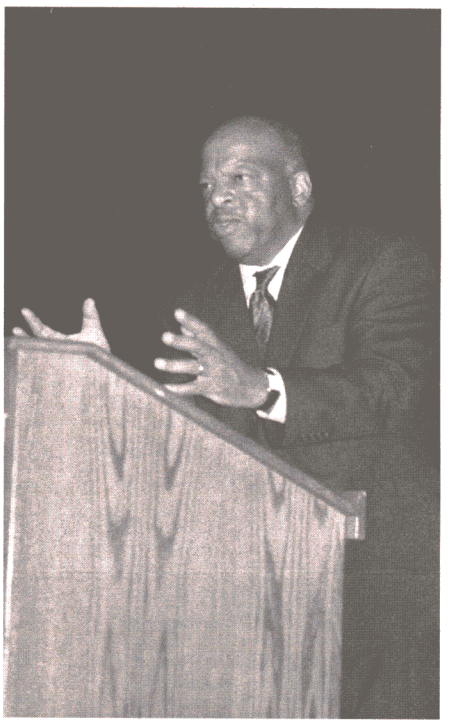
Civil Rights Leader John Lewis Delivers Annual Henry Lecture

United States Representative John Lewis was on the Calvin College campus April 17, 2000, to deliver the fourth annual Paul B. Henry Lecture. An overflow crowd in the college's Gezon Auditorium sat in rapt attention as the Georgia Democrat recounted highlights of his struggle for civil rights and his vision for a national and international "beloved community."



Each spring the Paul B. Henry Institute sponsors the annual Henry Lecture. The Lecture is intended to bring a prominent Christian political practitioner to Calvin's campus for a public lecture that addresses some aspect of the interplay between religion and politics. If he or she is able, the lecturer will spend a day on campus and in the community, meeting with students in small, informal groups or in their classes, getting to know other faculty and staff in the Calvin community, and visiting with interested citizens in the Grand Rapids area. In this way, the Institute hopes to inspire Calvin students and the community to actively seek to integrate a Christian worldview and practical politics by presenting, over time, a variety of examples how such integration and action operate.

In an effort to make these lectures as nonpartisan or bipartisan as possible, the Institute has established a rotation of sorts, with a Republican delivering the address one year and a Democratic official the next. U.S. senators who had just completed elected public service gave each of the first three lectures. Those lecturers were Mark Hatfield of Oregon in 1997, followed by Paul Simon of Illinois and Dan Coats of Indiana. Representative Lewis was the first sitting politician, first U.S. House member, and first African-American to deliver a Henry Lecture.

As a young college student and civil rights activist during the 1960s, John Lewis led a series of sit-in demonstrations at segregated lunch counters in the South, headed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and helped organize Martin Luther King's "March on Washington" in August 1963. At the Washington march he gave one of the keynote addresses, a speech that propelled him to the front of the civil rights leadership. In the long struggle of the later 1960s and 1970s, Lewis figured prominently in the movement and was regularly a target of the law enforcement establishment resisting the protestors. According to his own recollections, John Lewis was arrested at least forty-

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five times and severely beaten by police on countless occasions. Most publicized was his beating and dragging while kneeling to pray during a march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, on March 7, 1965, a day now known as Bloody Sunday.

During the lecture, Lewis recounted many of his experiences in the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The older portion of the audience would nod in recollection of the incidents that most of them had only witnessed, but that Mr. Lewis had lived. The younger portion of the audience attentively sat in quiet amazement as Lewis described personal experiences that were merely "ancient" history to them—at least until that moment.

Infusing his personal faith in his talk, Lewis told the audience that Christians must be present in the public square, and they must make a strong presence based on their faith commitments. During the heyday of the civil rights movement, the work of Christians and other people of faith warmed the hearts of those involved and quickened the pace of victories. Today, Lewis argued, Christians need to expand the meaning of "the beloved community" beyond racial considerations and be concerned with a range of other issues, especially economic justice domestically and worldwide. As Lewis stated, "we have an obligation as people of faith to bring everybody along, to see that nobody is left behind."

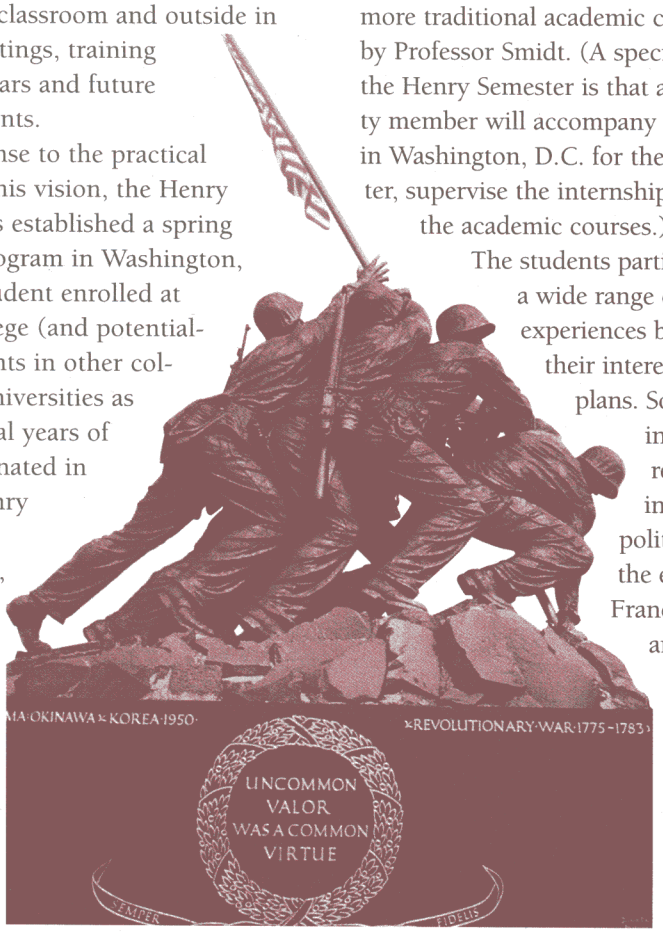
A major underlying principle of Lewis' vision for effective and faithful Christian social action is nonviolence. We must "do what the Spirit says to do," Lewis reminded the audience, even if the outcome is unclear. "As long as it's orderly, peaceful and nonviolent, there's nothing more powerful" than protest actions against injustice. Underlying it all, "there is a time when you have to put yourself in the way. Christians shouldn't be afraid to get in trouble as long as it's good trouble, necessary trouble."

Representative Lewis' very personal and honest message was rooted in the optimism that Christians in our country can and will make a difference today against the injustices we see, just as Christians were integral in the early years of the fight for civil rights.

Henry Semester in Washington, D.C Gets Off to Great Start

A major portion of the Henry Institute's vision relates to undergraduate education and how to help undergraduates, especially at Calvin College, to better integrate Christian faith and public life. This integration takes place both in the classroom and outside in practical settings, training future scholars and future public servants.

In response to the practical portion of this vision, the Henry Institute has established a spring semester program in Washington, D.C., for student enrolled at Calvin College (and potentially for students in other colleges and universities as well). Several years of effort culminated in the first Henry Semester in Washington, D.C. program in the spring of 1999.



Thirteen Calvin students joined Corwin Smidt in Washington, D.C. from late January to early May. Students worked four full days per week in various internship settings around the city, while they were also enrolled in two more traditional academic courses taught by Professor Smidt. (A special aspect of the Henry Semester is that a Calvin faculty member will accompany the students in Washington, D.C. for the entire semester, supervise the internships, and teach the academic courses.)

The students participated in a wide range of internship experiences based on their interests and career plans. Some worked in settings related to international politics (e.g., the embassies of France, Equador, and Lithuania, and at the United Nations Development Programme). Others worked in communications-related settings (e.g., C-Span and the "web-zine" Policy.com), while still others worked in partisan, lobbying, and policy related organizations (e.g., McCain 2000, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and the National Head Start Association).

At the conclusion of the semester, participating students were extremely positive about their experience. Their supervisors seemed equally delighted as many were offered paid positions in their internship placements. With such a positive experience, we anticipate that the students who return to Calvin's campus will become our major "recruiters" for subsequent years. The new program is a wonderful opportunity for Calvin students seeking to experience national politics and possible career options in government. From the results of this first year, it seems clear that the Henry Semester will become a popular choice for Calvin undergraduates.

The Spring 2001 semester will be led by Professor Koopman, program director of the Henry Institute. More information about the semester can be found at *www.calvin.edu/henry/dc/semester.htm*.

Cautionary Thoughts on Faith-based Delivery of Social Services

by Doug Koopman, program director

Each of the two major-party presidential candidates includes in his domestic agenda plans to increase the involvement of "faith-based" institutions in combating chronic social problems. One might think that Reformed Christians should universally welcome this increased attention to and respect for the fine work that such organizations play in social service delivery. But the popular push for closer ties between government and religious social service providers needs to be more critically evaluated.

Let it be acknowledged that the church should be involved in meeting social needs to bring to life the words of Jesus and the prophets to care for the widow, the orphan, and the stranger. And let us also agree that for both practical and moral reasons the government cannot abandon its role to guarantee an adequate social safety net.

It is widely held that churches and religious organizations have moral obligations to be involved in meeting domestic social needs. Such activity fulfills the mandates of the Old and New Testaments to attend to marginalized group in society. From this perspective, a church that takes seriously the gospel message must be involved in meeting the material needs of less fortunate persons. Because at the local church level these efforts compete with other church needs, any new forms of assistance are likely to be welcomed. Social service delivery can also aid evangelization and mission efforts, another frequent goal of religious groups. Effective social service programs can be a means to show others, including volunteers, staff, clients, and interested observers, that a particular church, denomination, or even religious faith in general is relevant to real world problems.

There are also social and even economic benefits that might accrue from faith-based social service delivery. A number of social scientists are interested in "social capital," and see religious bodies as effective social capital "generators" among their own adherents and the clients which they serve. Evidence suggests that the more frequently religious organizations are involved in social service delivery the more likely beneficial social capital will be generated. Higher social capital makes society more stable, and thus easier to govern.

Some studies also suggest that religious organizations deliver social services more efficiently, with higher success rates for a given amount of financial expense. Faith-based staff and volunteers often have unusually high commitments to their work, the kind of people who "pray without ceasing" for the client and his or her success. And it may be that evangelical social service agencies are able to induce in clients the transformative power of religious conversion that make them social assets rather than liabilities.

As long as the religious community gets to define the limits of its social engagement, greater government support for faith-based delivery of social services ought to be encouraged.

So what is the concern? There are two major reasons why people in government and politics might acknowledge the place of religion in society, one foundational or philosophical, the other quite utilitarian. For the former, it is literally an article of faith that religion is a separate, powerful, and independent if not superior area of belief and behavior that government has no business invading. To the extent that the religious community provides social services as part of its response to God's demands, that activity should be respected. As long as the religious community gets to define the limits of its social engagement, greater government support for faith-based delivery of social services ought to be encouraged.

It is, however, the utilitarian argument that raises concern. Certainly, there is a utilitarian case to be made for greater faith-based social service delivery, which is often more effective and less expensive than government efforts addressed to the same problems.

So why not expand federal policy to the whole array of social services? To begin with, government involvement may fatally alter the religious aspect of programs that may be their most effective element. That is why many religious nonprofits have historically refused federal funds. Even with the far looser standards found in the "charitable choice" provision of federal welfare reform, the federal government still has a significant say over how participating faith-based agencies operate. And the constitutionality of these looser standards is far from settled legal interpretation. A second concern is that additional red tape may overwhelm faith-based groups, distracting from and limiting their mission. The audits, reports, and compliance reviews that accompany federal monies can be daunting, especially for groups that operate on shoestring budgets and rely heavily on volunteers.

More important, however, is that faith-based groups may start to limit the types of clients they work with to meet the new demands that come with federal money. The special contribution of many faith-based groups is that they do two things that a budget conscious government really doesn't care about. First, they work to transform the spirit of the individual. Second, they will more often stick with the "hard cases" or "failures" because their faith tells them that each person, however "unproductive" or "incurable," is made in the image of God. The "incurables"—the precise group of people most likely to be attended to by religious groups—will be in danger of getting written out of eligibility and written off by religious groups pressured to achieve high success rates.

A final concern is the continued independence of faith and religion from gov-

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ernment. People in government and politics are constantly tempted to "domesticate" religion, to see religion only in utilitarian terms and to respect it only when it serves government ends. With faith-based institutions dependent upon government contracts for most of their funds, their supporting churches could increasingly become apologists for the government and its politics—its defender and even its enforcement agent. But religion must remain at least a potential threat to government—a place of higher allegiance which governments cannot supersede. Anticipating this concern, Clarke Cochran, in his March 1999 Henry Institute address "Responding to the Crisis of Institutions: Christian Vision and Politics" asked:

> *Why… accept the legitimacy of a religious contribution to civil society? Is it the business of religion to prop up any political system, including the United States? What changes in religious institutions themselves might be required to make them more efficient generators of social capital? The danger is turning faith into civil religion, an idolatrous religion of the nation that marks faith as important only when useful for secular purposes. Why should religious support of civil society be viewed as salutary, rather than as betraying the essence of faith?*

In any nation's history, religion may at times be called on to challenge the government. As such, it ought always to remain at least a potentially dangerous opponent of the state. Who else will call government to account for the lack of morality in its leaders, its pursuit of immoral policies, or its quiescence amidst cultural decay? When religion becomes overly dependent upon government for its existence, the prophetic role that only religion can play is in danger of being compromised.

Do the presidential candidates acknowledge these problems? There are reasons for both concern and hope. Al Gore's public pronouncements about faith-based institutions seem based on what these organizations can do for government. "Faith-based organizations have wrought miracles on a shoestring," he has said, echoing utilitarian motives. The Democratic candidate wants to extend charitable choice to "other vital services where faith-based organizations can play a role - such as drug treatment, homelessness, and youth violence prevention" to accomplish more social good with less government cost. He also tends to support direct contracts with faith-based institutions (a more entangling approach) over vouchers given to individuals who may then "shop around" to either secular or religious service providers.

Bush's public pronouncements are only slightly less utilitarian. The Republican presidential candidate is more inclined to support vouchers over contracts. While stating that "government should welcome the help of faith-based institutions," Bush also implies a greater respect for the power of a personal faith and the independence of religious institutions. But many congressional Republicans sound far more like Al Gore. As a whole, the difference between the two parties is minimal. One hopes that those who rush toward expanding the role of faith-based institutions in delivering social services will pause to consider how important it is to maintain an independent, vibrant, and at least potentially antagonistic religious community.

Student Research Assistants Help Faculty Research Efforts

The Henry Institute's focus on undergraduate education extends beyond considerations of practical politics. We also try to motivate and train emerging young scholars to engage effectively in the academic study of the interplay between Christianity and politics. As one response to this objective, the Institute has engaged in "mentoring" relationships with a number of students who have helped in our work on different Institute projects.

In the summer of 1998, **Brian Newman**, a graduate student at Duke University, worked with the Professor Smidt to create a data file set for the Henry Institute data archives. Our file holdings include surveys of the American public from the late 1940s through the late 1990s that incorporated a variety of variables tapping the religious and political characteristics of the respondents. As a result of Brian's efforts, the initial seventy-five data files on religion and politics within the archive were made ready for scholarly use.

During the 1998–1999 academic year, two Calvin students worked with Professor Koopman on his research related to Project Zero, a Michigan welfare reform program involving welfare client mentors recruited from churches and faith-based organizations. Undergraduate social work major **Patrice Hudson** worked on the project during the school year, while **Amy Leep**, a Calvin McGregor scholar, did so during the summer. The results of these mutual efforts were several jointly delivered presentations and two co-authored publications, one publication credited to each student.

During the summer of 2000, another two Calvin students have been engaged in research efforts of the Henry Institute. **Christianne Van Arragon**, a Calvin McGregor scholar, has been working with Professor Smidt on a denominational research project. The initial products of this effort are two co-authored papers that will be presented at professional conferences in the fall and winter of 2000. **Ryan Hunt**, a Calvin political science major, has been working with Professor Koopman on an edited volume of the political writings and speeches of Paul Henry. The volume, tentatively entitled *Serving the Claims of Justice,* contains original material on political theory and policy issues written by Paul Henry, as well as essays reflecting on Henry's life and work authored by some of his colleagues in public and academic life.

Volume on Religion and American Politics to be Published

Another way in which the Henry Institute has sought to motivate and train young scholars to engage in the study of the interplay between Christianity and politics has been through special publication efforts. Professor Smidt has been the guiding force behind an edited volume, *In God We Trust? Religion in American Public Life*. Scheduled for publication by Baker Books in the spring of 2001, the volume is intended to be a companion text to standard introductory college textbooks in American politics. For each standard chapter on American politics that is usually found in an introductory text, there is a corresponding chapter in the volume that focuses on the relationship between religion and that particular topic.

Each chapter in the volume is written by a Christian political scientist who has largely specialized and published in the area related to the topic that the chapter addresses. The chapters and authors are as follows:

Ch. 1 *Differing Perspectives on Politics across Religious Traditions in American History*, by J. Christopher Soper, Pepperdine University

Ch. 2 *Religion and the Constitution*, by John West, Jr., Seattle Pacific University

Ch. 3 *Religion and American Political Culture*, by Stacey Hunter Hecht, Bethel College

Ch. 4 *Religion and the Bill of Rights*, by Michelle Dondaldson Deardorff, Millikin University

Ch. 5 *Religion and American Public Opinion*, by Corwin Smidt, Calvin College

Ch. 6 *Religion and Interest Groups in American Politics*, by Dan Hofrenning, St. Olaf College

Ch. 7 *Religion and American Political Parties*, by Doug Koopman, Calvin College

Ch. 8 *Religion and Campaigns and Elections*, by Peter Wielhouwer, Regent University

Ch. 9 *Religion and the American Presidency*, by Jeff Walz, Concordia University Wisconsin

Ch. 10 *Religion in Congress*, by James Guth, Furman University, and Lyman Kellstedt, Wheaton College

Ch. 11 *Religion and the Courts*, by Frank Guliuzza III, Weber State University

Ch. 12 *Religious Commitment and the Political Life*, by Stephen Monsma, Pepperdine University

The volume will be part of a new imprint series (Renewed Minds) launched by the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities. It should be available in sufficient time for class adoption for Fall 2001.

Pollsters and Parishioners: Seminar on Survey Research and American Religion

July 21-27, 2001
Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI
The Paul Henry Institute,
Phone (616) 957-6233
Email: Henry@calvin.edu

With the support of the Paul B. Henry Institute for the Study of Christianity and Politics, a week-long seminar on survey research and American religion will be held at Calvin College Saturday, July 21 through Friday, July 27. The seminar will be directed by Corwin Smidt (Calvin College), with the assistance of John Green (University of Akron), James Guth (Furman University) and Lyman Kellstedt (Wheaton College).

Participants: Graduate students in Political Science, Sociology, and related disciplines who are interested in the use of survey research in studying American religion are invited to apply. Selection is competitive with an anticipated enrollment of twelve. Travel costs to Calvin College and room/board on campus will be provided.

Schedule: Participants will arrive on Saturday, July 21, and will depart the morning of Saturday, July 28.

Activities: The seminar will combine instruction on the conceptualization and measurement of religion in survey research with major segments of time devoted to data analysis using major data sets on religion and politics. The instructors will work closely with small groups of participants.

Qualifications: Interest in the study of American religion in the mass public and familiarity with personal computers and S.P.S.S.

Application: Prospective participants should send a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, one letter of recommendation, and one sample of scholarly writing to Corwin Smidt, Executive Director, The Paul Henry Institute, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI 49546.

Deadline: Materials must be received before February 15, 2001, with selections made by March 15, 2001.

For further information, contact Corwin Smidt at the above address or by phone or e-mail (see above). Please encourage students who might be interested to apply.

Fall Events

September 20
Douglas Koopman, Henry Institute program director, lectures on: "Christians in Public Office: Opportunity or Obligation?" 3:30 p.m. Meeter Center Lecture Hall.

September 21
Corwin Smidt, Henry Chair, speaks at the Calvin "Noontime Lecture Series" on the 2000 presidential election. Noon in the Gezon Auditorium.

September 28
The Henry Institute is cosponsoring the Kuyper Lecture with the Center for Public Justice, held this year in Washington, D.C. **James Skillen** talks about "American Statecraft: A New Art for the 21st Century." 8 p.m. in the Crystal Forum Ballroom of the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel, 1999 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, Virginia.

October 12
Issues in Aging Conference, 9:30 to 3:45 p.m. in the Fine Arts Center auditorium. Cosponsored with the Calvin-GRCC Consortium on Successful Aging and the Calvin College CALL program. $25 registration fee.

October 16
Gloria Stronks, Calvin College, and **Julia Stronks**, Whitworth College present "Christian Teachers in Public Schools," 3:30 p.m. Chapel Undercroft. Cosponsored with the Calvin College Education Department.

October 25
Lyman Kellstedt, Professor of Political Science at Wheaton College, speaks on "Religion and the Election of 2000," at 3:30 p.m. in the Meeter Center Lecture Hall.

November 2
Sister Helen Prejean speaks on "Dead Man Walking: The Journey," at 3:30 p.m. location TBA. Cosponsored with several academic departments at Calvin College.

November 9
Jim Wallis of the Sojourners community in Washington, DC will speak on the Call to Renewal movement. 3:30 p.m. Commons Lecture Hall.

Henry Website

For more information on the Henry Institute and timely updates on our activities, be sure to see our website at **www.calvin.edu/henry**

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CALVIN College