

BIG GAIN CLAIMED FOR THE FAR RIGHT

Goldwater Is Called Spur to Financial Contributions

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DALLAS, Aug. 9—The Christian Crusade is making a financial comeback after a serious slump last year, its founder and director says.

The Rev. Billy James Hargis also says other ultra-conservative groups are gaining greater support.

"The whole conservative movement has come alive this year," the 39-year-old evangelist said in an interview.

An important factor in sustaining the spurt is the Presidential candidacy of Senator Barry Goldwater, he said.

Other factors, Mr. Hargis said, are the nomination of conservatives in a number of Congressional contests and a \$500,000 libel award won recently by former Maj. Gen. Edwin A. Walker, now being appealed. Mr. Walker lost his command for seeking to indoctrinate his troops in Europe with his ultra-conservative political views and later resigned from the Army.

Mr. Hargis also cites the assassination here last November of President Kennedy "by a Communist."

Mr. Hargis and others on the far Right lost no time in pointing up the Marxist, Russian background of Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin, and using it to buttress their contention that a far-reaching Communist conspiracy was at work against the American people.

Convention Ends

The encouragement the Goldwater nomination has given Right-wing groups was mentioned time and again by Mr. Hargis and other speakers at the 6th annual convention of the crusade, which ended tonight.

There was an air of optimism among the 600 persons from 22 states who attended that Senator Goldwater would be elected in November.

If so, Mr. Hargis said, a period of consolidation of gains will follow for the Christian Crusade. Quiet organization of chapters would be emphasized. High-pitched "crusading" would slacken.

On the other hand, he said, if Mr. Goldwater loses there is sure to be an intensification of Right-wing activity.

"All Goldwater supporters would then become candidates for membership in organizations like ours," he said.

He expressed the view that frustration at the polls would spur Goldwater enthusiasts to renewed effort because they were enlisted in a "fight for our freedom."

Sees Clear-Cut Choice

The Right-wing, he said, is delighted with the opportunity for a clear-cut choice between liberal and conservative candidates, but will not drop its "cause" if Mr. Goldwater loses.

Mr. Hargis said growth of the Right-wing in 1964 was shown in the considerably enlarged budget of the John Birch Society, which he said was \$4

million this year.

He did not give a figure for the Christian Crusade budget, but said it, too, was above that of last year.

A 1963 deficit of \$300,000, he said, was cut in half in the first seven months of this year.

Last year, half of the 50-man staff of the Tulsa-based organization had to be laid off and the rest took a 10 per cent cut in salary. Staff numbers are now back to the earlier level, he said, but full salaries have not been restored.

Mr. Hargis started the Christian Crusade 17 years ago. In recent years he has shifted its emphasis from religion to "awakening America" to what he says is an internal threat of Communist subversion and domination.

The fundamentalist preacher travels, often by house trailer, to meetings throughout the

South and Southwest. But the bulk of the organization's income is from sale of his books and tracts to listeners who hear his daily radio broadcasts.

The Christian Crusade radio network has been expanded significantly this year, Mr. Hargis announced to the convention. He said he was now heard over 400 stations daily. Many are small-town outlets on which he has been able to obtain "discount" rates.

At one time last year he was heard over stations in only 55 cities.

Mr. Hargis announced that on Oct. 1 the Crusade would add 140 stations in Latin America. Fernando Penebaz, a Cuban refugee, will make the broadcasts in Spanish.

The Crusade's monthly magazine, Mr. Hargis announced,

now has a record circulation of 130,000. It is to be printed on slick paper instead of newsprint, as in the past. A four-page section in Spanish soon will be added.

Mr. Hargis said the Crusade now was mailing 250,000 of his books and pamphlets to followers each month.

Calls Press 'Extremist'

Hargis books are paperbacks printed at the Crusade's plant. He said the next one, on "the extremist American press," would be out next month so that before the election in November "voters can recognize their greatest enemy in the fight against Communism."

Mr. Hargis said he had stopped giving "membership" figures. Crusade membership has always been nebulous. Last year there was a hard core of 3,500 persons who contributed \$10 a year, and a mailing list of 75,000 persons who had made at least one donation or purchase of literature.

Mr. Hargis does not depend upon the list. Last night he gave a virtuoso performance in evangelistic fund-raising.

His audience of several hundred had just finished dinner in the ball room of the Baker Hotel. In formal education, listeners ranged from rural housewives and laborers, with little, to business executives and faculty members of fundamentalist Southern institutions such as Harding College and Bob Jones University.

The income spectrum swung all the way from the millions of H. L. Hunt to the pennies of Dallas janitors. There were retired army officers, doctors, dentists, members of the John Birch Society, women in both chic and inexpensive dress, and boys and girls of college and high school age.

Asks for Pledges

Beginning in an even, unemotional voice, Mr. Hargis said "defenders of freedom" were always hard pressed for cash and asked who would electrify this crowd" with a pledge of \$24,000 to sponsor the Crusade "message" daily over 50 new stations for a year.

"Would you rather give your money freely or have it taken from you by the Communist?" he asked. "Eleanor Roosevelt raised \$250,000 in one night alone for racial agitation."

When there was no response he cut the request in half and lifted the note of urgency in his voice to a more strident pitch.

"We need your help," he pleaded. "We need it bad. Who will accept the challenge and inspire others?"

A woman from Shreveport raised her hand and received a blessing from the crusade's leader.

As the contributions sought was progressively reduced, the arm-waving pleas became more fervent and the response more pronounced.

"Keep your seats, please," the perspiring preacher said at the \$250 stage as some crusaders sought to leave. "It's only \$5 a week I'm talking about now, folks. Raise your hands all over the room. There's another one. General Walker. God bless General Walker. If General Walker can do this after he's given up his pension, the rest of us can." Twenty-two pledged \$250 each.

"Thank God," said Mr. Hargis. "Give these people a good hand."