Ignoring the termites

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Once upon a time there was a man who had great pride in his house. He worked diligently, day and night, to keep his house looking good. He kept the outside painted, the inside spotless. Indeed, people said that he had one of the most attractive houses around.

One day a neighbor, experienced in what termites were and how they work, happened to notice that termites were at work on the foundation of the man's house.

The neighbor showed the owner of the house the evidence that termites were at work. To the owner, the neighbor's observations seemed far off. After all, the owner could not see any grave threat by termites. There were no visible indications of termite damage. They did not affect the appearance of the house. And, being unexperienced in termites, the owner ignored the warnings. He kept working to make the house look great inside and out.

But, lo and behold, the day came when the damage done to the foundation of the home by the termites was visible even to the owner. But it was too late to do anything. The damage had already been done. The foundation was ruined, and no matter how pleasing to the eye the appearance of the house was, it was simply a matter of time till it would fall.

Something like that is happening in our society today. The Church has, unintentionally I think, ignored what has been happening to the foundation while putting primary emphasis on appearances.

Two articles in this issue point this out. The articles by Dr. Harold M. Voth of the Menninger School of Psychiatry and Dr. Paul C. Vitz of New York University clearly indicate the damage being done to the foundation of our society. It is interesting to note that neither of these men is a member of the clergy, and neither article could be considered a "theological" piece. Yet they testify to the presence of termites in the foundation of our society.

It hurts for me to say it, but I think the Church has been guilty of ignoring the termites at work in our society. It would be, I think, embarrassing to know the number of local churches in which the termites have been ignored Sunday after Sunday after Sunday.

If we (the Church) continue to ignore the damage being done to our society, I dread to think what kind of building we will leave our children and our children's children.

Surely we can find just a little room, in our local churches and denominations, to deal with those problems that are eating away at the very foundation of Western civilization. I think we owe those who come after us that much.

But we must do it now, before it is too late.

Don

1972 British study found porn leads to deviant acts

Editor's note: The following article is reprinted from **Time** *magazine, October 2, 1972. It bears out the fact that other porn studies at the time disagreed with the 1970 U.S. Porn Commission assessment that pornography was unrelated to behavior.*

"I was 65 years old before, as far as I can remember, the word pornography ever crossed my lips in public." But after seeing the London production of **Oh! Calcutta!**, the seventh Earl of Longford rose in the House of Lords last year to deliver an anti-obscenity speech so stirring that it stirred the Earl himself to action. Last week an unofficial, privately financed 52-man committee chosen and headed by Longford, completed 16 months of investigation by publishing a 520-page report on pornography. Unlike the President's commission in the U.S., Lord Longford's study found that pornography creates an addiction "leading to deviant obsessions and actions." He also recommended that Britain's anti-obscenity laws be strengthened and extended.

Such conclusions would perhaps not be surprising from a group organized by a former leader of the House of Lords, a Roman Catholic convert and one of 24 knights companions of the Order of the Garter (motto: "Evil to him who evil thinks"). But Lord Longford is also a longtime socialist who helped design the British welfare state, a self-styled "fellow-traveling member of Women's Lib" and the first member of the House of Lords to speak in favor of legalizing private adult homosexual acts. Longford and the bishops, social scientists, housewives, educators, pop stars and writers who made up the committee sampled pornography of every kink and kind. They interviewed purveyors, performers and police and sorted through the 5,000 letters that poured in to them.

In concluding that pornography is harmful, the Longford Committee was much impressed by the testimony of people who claimed to have been corrupted or made criminals by sexual material. One 17-year-old boy, for example, after seeing a sex film, "rushed round his home in a frenzy and then went out and sexually assaulted a girl of five." Longford, who was dubbed "Lord Porn" by the London press, agrees with critics of his methods that "it is not always or even often possible to produce conclusive evidence that any social factor leads to a particular result." However, he and the majority of his committee believe that the weight of evidence points to the clear and present danger of pornography.

The legal definition of obscenity in Great Britain is that which tends "to deprave and corrupt." Because this effect is difficult to prove, the committee would change the wording to that which would "outrage contemporary standards of decency or humanity accepted by the public at large." It would then be up to juries to decide on contemporary standards. "Justice may be fallible," Lord Longford admits. "But opinion does express itself to the times through the jury." The report also urged that heavier fines and jail sentences be meted out and that it "be illegal to show children under educational auspices any material which may not be shown in a public place."

Civil libertarians and writers immediately charged that the proposed definition of obscenity would "virtually outlaw any expression of nonconformity" and "inhibit the serious artist." The *Times* of London found the whole report effective "as a barrage in a campaign" but not thorough, coherent or detached enough to be useful in sparking new legislation.

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NFD is a Christian organization promoting the Biblical ethic of decency in American society with primary emphasis on TV and other media.

Your Opinion Counts

Readers respond to questions on 'Journal'

In an effort to make the *NFD Journal* more useful to readers and to local churches, Your Opinion Counts this month again focuses on the *Journal's* content.

The bulletin insert (to the right of this column) is a first-time effort to reach more people with the message of one advertiser's involvement in pornography and in offensive television programming. It will be very beneficial to NFD if readers let us know to what extent the insert is used in local churches.

Please let us know by returning the YOC form at the bottom of the page.

According to January Your Opinion Counts, *NFD Journal* readers leave little unread each month. Readers from 27 denominations in 39 states responded.

About two-thirds said they *always* read Don Wildmon's Column, Your Opinion Counts, News of Interest, Television Program Reviews, and Special Features.

At least 85% said they *always* or *usually* read those five features plus Movie Previews and Letters from Readers. Only the Classified Ads fell below that number; yet, more than 67% said they *always* or *usually* read the Classifieds.

The most read feature is News of Interest, followed closely by Special Features, Don Wildmon's Column, and Television Program Reviews. Each copy of the *Journal* is read by an average of 2.5 readers, which indicates readership to be about 800,000. Selected YOC comments follow:

Tom Baldwin, East Norwich, NY: There are so many companies involved whom we wish to influence and they manufacture such a great variety of products that we need to concentrate our effectiveness by simply limiting the number of targets....make a list of the "Ten Least Wanted" products (companies, etc.,) and print such in the *Journal.*

Mrs. Sue Webster, Pleasant Hill, IL: I thank God for such a powerful and positive Christian educational magazine. No changes needed. Since reading the *Journal,* I've been a practicing, productive Christian.

Robert K. Glenn, Butler, PA: Most people who read the *Journal* do not knowingly watch trash on TV or go to trash movies. Therefore, maybe alternative viewing could be suggested...for a more positive approach.

Mrs. John Prather, Chicago, IL: I prefer if you not quote the un-Christian conversations that occur in the particular shows. You are all doing a beautiful work.

Teri Kohlbrenner, East Syracuse, NY: You are providing me the information I need to do **my** part in fighting porn. It is great. I would not know what to do otherwise.

WANT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE MORAL ENVIRONMENT?

Are you concerned about the sex, violence, profanity and negative stereotyping of Christians on network television programs? Are you concerned about pornography? Many Christians are. Sometimes, however, we feel helpless. "I am only one person, what can I do?" we ask. Well, you can do a lot. Your one voice, combined with thousands of others, can make a difference.

The National Federation for Decency has identified Philip Morris as the leading supporter of pornographic magazines. Philip Morris provides millions of dollars to such magazines as *Playboy* and *Penthouse* through advertising. Philip Morris does not advertise their food products (those manufactured by the General Foods division of Philip Morris) in the porn magazines, but they do advertise their liquor and tobacco products. The NFD has also identified Philip Morris as the leading sponsor of network television programs negatively stereotyping Christians in monitoring done during the fall of 1986.

You can call and/or write Philip Morris to express your opinion. You can also refuse to purchase their products as long as they continue to support pornography and anti-Christian programs on television. Some of their consumer products are listed below. Carry this list with you when shopping. Share the list with a friend. Together, we can help make this a better society in which to live, work and raise our families. And we can make a witness for Christ by our actions as well as our words.

You can write Philip Morris at this address: Chrm. John A. Murphy, Philip Morris, Inc., 120 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10017. You can express your opinion by calling 1-800-446-7030, the customer service number for Philip Morris.

Partial listing of Philip Morris/General Foods products:

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Frosted Rice
Fruit 'n Fiber
Fruity Pebbles
Grape Nuts
Honey Comb
Pebbles
Post Cereals
Smurf Berry
Sugar Crisp
Super Sugar Crisp

Desserts:
Baker's Chocolate
Cool Whip Topping
Dover Farms Whipped food
Dream Whip
Jell-O desserts
Jell-O Fruit & Cream bars

Coffees:
Brim
General Foods Interntl.
Max Pax
Maxim
Maxwell House
Mellow Roast
Postum
Sanka
Yuban

Foods:
Batter 'n Bake
Bird's Eye Foods
Calumet baking powder
Good Seasons salad dressing
Great Loaf meatloaf mix
Log Cabin Syrup
Louis Rich meats
Minute Rice
Oscar Mayer meats
Shake 'n Bake
Stove Top stuffing mix
Stuffin' Burgers

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This special bulletin insert has been prepared to be reproduced by local churches. The NFD address at the bottom of the insert can be deleted if desired.

YOUR OPINION COUNTS RESPONSE FORM

( ) Yes, our church used (will use) the March bulletin insert.
Number of bulletins used _____
Denomination _____

( ) No, our church will not use the March bulletin insert.
Reason _____

( ) As an individual, I will use the March bulletin insert.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State/Zip _____

Return to Your Opinion Counts, P. O. Drawer 2440, Tupelo, MS 38803