

# Journalist Says Fundamentalists Pray For Nuclear War

Grace Halsell, noted journalist-author, claims that some well-known fundamentalist Christian evangelists are telling their followers to pray for nuclear war as a prelude to the second coming of Christ.

"Tens of millions of Americans tune in to hear television evangelists preach the gospel of the born-again Christian Right. Drawing from the Bible, these evangelists warn of nuclear war as Armageddon—and then exhort their listeners to pray for that day as the sacred, inevitable day of the second coming of Christ," said Halsell.

Halsell, who was in town to promote her new book, "Prophecy and Politics: Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War," said during an interview that the Christian Right, led by T.V. evangelists Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, Jimmy Swaggart and others preach the inevitability of nuclear war as a necessity for the second coming of Christ.

She said, to fundamentalists of the far right, Armageddon means nuclear war. Halsell said she has studied the TV evangelists over the past few years and has observed them quoting from the Old Testament Book of Revelations, and saying we must fight a nuclear war with Russia. "The thing that is disturbing is that this is the fastest growing segment of Christianity, the ones who accept the Armageddon theology." There are 40 million evangelical fundamentalists in America.

Halsell said not only are far right evangelist leaders telling their followers to pray for nuclear war, she states that they have major influence on both the Democratic and Republican political leaders, including the President. "Many of the Christian elements with which President Reagan associates believe in the Armageddon theology. He told them (fundamentalists), you don't have to endorse me, I endorse you," said Halsell. Halsell said this type of thinking is dangerous and disturbing. To call these evangelists fanatics is to ignore their fast-growing impact on American life and on the future of the planet.

Halsell, 53, was formerly a speech writer for President Lyndon Johnson. She is the author of 12 books, including "Soul Sister".

"Soul Sister" is an account of Halsell's six months as a white Texan turned black. This was accomplished by taking drugs under a doctor's care for three months. Once her skin was darkened, she lived as a black woman in Harlem and Mississippi.


Halsell was asked what was most memorable about this experience. She replied, "Living in Harlem; it was hard to believe a ten minute subway ride ended in downtown Manhattan. It seemed a million miles away. The black people lived so close, yet so far from opulence."

She said in Mississippi it was pretty bad. "I knew I would be alienated and lonely, but I had no idea it would be so bad." Halsell said as a black domestic, the master of the house wanted to assault her body. "As a black, I was desirable, not in spite of my body, but because I was black. To the white man, I was a sex object, but even that

wasn't as bad as being an Indian. To have one's mind assaulted is worse." Halsell was referring to her portrayal of a Navajo Indian.



Grace Halsell speaking at Portland State. Photo by Richard J. Brown



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"Healthful Holiday Cooking" will be discussed by registered dietitian Martha Hirsch at the December hypertension screening clinic at Meridian Park Hospital, Tualatin.

The presentation is scheduled Thursday, December 18, 1:15 p.m., preceding the free monthly screening clinic which runs from 2-4 p.m., in the cafeteria conference room. There is no charge.