NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (https://www.ncronline.org)

Blast From the Past: Jerry Falwell

Michael Sean Winters | Jul. 15, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

In the debate about the Tea Party and the need for the grown-ups in the Republican Party to rein them in, or at least to denounce some of the more radical claims made by the group, I came across this interview with Jerry Falwell in Our Sunday Visitor. The interview was published on December 13, 1981. In some circles, Falwell?s name was synonymous with rightwing propaganda, but he was an enormously complicated figure and he was not afraid to call out those who generally agreed with him when they strayed out of bounds.

t"Visitor: You are often labeled as part of the radical right. Yet, in their book Prime Time Preachers, Jeffrey Hadden and Charles Swann said that you and other TV preachers could play an important role in ?defining the limits of lunacy on the right.? Is that a role you see for yourself?"
t"Falwell: I think we?ve been playing that role. Our most ardent enemies are not on the left. They are on the far right. We?re looked on as compromisers. One person actually accused me of being the Anti-Christ and that with Moral Majority I was forming the one world Church right now merging Protestants, Catholics and Jews into a conglomerate to take over the world. I?m sure the Pope would be upset knowing that?s where I was headed. The far left does little more than scream and yell and call you names. The far right works more aggressively at hurting your base of support. They often will sow seeds of poison in the ranks of the people who believe the Gospel and who follow our ministry. What I do in Moral Majority, I do as a citizen of the United States. I don?t do it as a minister or as a Baptist or as a Christian. We have to say that over and over again because there are folks out there who attack us on that basis. They think that to sit down with a Mormon, a Jew or a Catholic as a citizen and work for shared moral values is gross heresy."

Source URL (retrieved on *07/30/2016 - 21:28*): https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/distinctly-catholic/blast-past-jerry-falwell