

DATE RECEIVED: 17 October 1979

DATE OF EVENT: Sunday, 18 Nov 79

1. INFORMATION REGARDING THE INVITATION:

SUSPENSE: 23 October 1979

- a. Source: Letter from The Hon. Jim Wright
- b. Type of Event: Film presentation of work of Genesis Project
- c. Special Occasion: Launch nationwide observance of National Bible Week
- d. Hosted By: Laymen's National Bible Committee
- e. Date/Time: 2020 hours, Sunday, 18 November 1979
- f. Location: JFK Center
- g. Attire: \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Significant Info: \_\_\_\_\_

2. SCHEDULE:

		<u>16 - 25 NOV,</u>	
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3. RECOMMENDATIONS:

	Accept	Regret	Remarks
AIDE			
EA			

4. DCI DECISION: (MRS. TURNER INVITED - Yes No)

a. ACCEPT \_\_\_\_\_ REGRET  SEE ME \_\_\_\_\_

b. PASS TO: DDCI \_\_\_\_\_ D/DCI/IC \_\_\_\_\_ D/DCI/NI \_\_\_\_\_

5. AIDE FINAL ACTION:

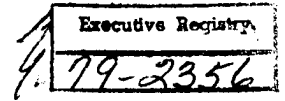
Jay: no response necessary  
Invitation card rec'd 22 Oct; regretted by RSVP card, 22 Oct 79

6. INFORMATION ROUTING:

a. COMMENTS:

Regret card returned  
22 Oct.

**JIM WRIGHT**  
TEXAS  
MAJORITY LEADER



**Congress of the United States**  
House of Representatives  
**Office of the Majority Leader**  
Washington, D.C. 20515

October 11, 1979

Dear Friend:

On November 18, 1979, more than a decade of planning and effort will culminate with the Gala Presentation of the work of the Genesis Project—the translation of the Holy Bible to the motion picture screen. This film event which will include excerpts from the New Media Bible Book of Genesis, as well as the entire film, "JESUS", will be used to launch the nationwide observance of National Bible Week. And it will be part of an epic undertaking that Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen has hailed as the most important event for the Bible since Gutenberg's invention of printing.

In a few days you will be one of a number of selected leaders from throughout the nation who will receive an invitation to attend this presentation. The showing will be in the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., at 8:20 p.m. on Sunday, November 18, 1979. Due to limited seating, I encourage you to reserve this date and time now, if your schedule will permit you to be with us.

In any event, I trust that we can count on your prayerful support of a work of momentous undertaking—as well as your leadership throughout America in encouraging your family and friends to attend this epic film when it is shown in your community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Wright". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Jim Wright  
Majority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK—1979. . . . .

The Laymen's National Bible Committee has announced the Washington presentation of the work of the Genesis Project at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on Sunday, November 18, to celebrate the beginning of the 39th annual interfaith National Bible Week. The Genesis Project - an interfaith, international endeavor to translate the Scriptures into motion pictures - will illustrate its work at the Kennedy Center event through a presentation of a portion of the *New Media Bible* from the Book of Genesis and the film *JESUS* in its entirety.

Filmed entirely on location in Israel, *JESUS* is based on the Gospel of Luke, with neither subplots, nor invented doctrinal interpretation. John Heyman, creative director of the *New Media Bible* and producer of *JESUS*, has filmed the Gospel story as a faithful reproduction of the Book of Luke, the most complete account of the life of Christ. Church leaders across the religious spectrum applaud the one-hour and fifty-five minute feature film for its authenticity, accuracy and moving portrayal of the life of Christ.

Thomas A. Murphy, Chairman of General Motors, has announced that this event will officially open this year's observance of National Bible Week, of which he is the 1979 Chairman. Sponsored by the Laymen's National Bible Committee, Inc., in cooperation with the major religious bodies and Bible societies, National Bible Week has become a highlight of the religious calendar in churches and synagogues throughout the United States. President Carter's endorsement of National Bible Week 1978 through Alec McCowen's interpretation of St. Mark's Gospel at the White House gave a new dimension to the observance. This screening of the work of the Genesis Project will provide added impetus to the growing importance of Bible Week and the resurgence of interest in the study of the Scriptures.

The November 18 event at the Kennedy Center will be preceded by release of the film *JESUS* in the West and Midwest on October 19 by Warner Brothers, in cooperation with Inspirational Film Distributors, Inc., a subsidiary of the Genesis Project, producer of the *New Media Bible*, and followed by the immediate release of the 2nd Annual Edition of the *New Media Bible*.

During an anticipated event just prior to the Kennedy Center presentation, Thomas Murphy will present to President Carter for the White House library, the volumes of the *New Media Bible* completed thus far—Genesis and Luke. This monumental undertaking of the Genesis Project to translate the Bible into the "language" of film will be underway for more than a decade. A segment of the *New Media Bible*, "Joseph and His Brothers," will be screened as a prelude to *JESUS* at the Kennedy Center.

### THE GENESIS PROJECT AND THE NEW MEDIA BIBLE. . . . .

The Genesis Project is an international fellowship of Biblical scholars, historians, archaeologists, educators and creative artists who have joined together in a vast undertaking to translate the Bible into the "language" of film. This visual version of the Scriptures, known as the *New Media Bible*, reproduces faithfully the actual text and, as nearly as possible, the context of each passage portrayed. Poetic license and theological interpretation are scrupulously avoided to insure that the Bible itself, rather than any interpretation of it, is projected to the viewer. The *New Media Bible* is widely acclaimed by religious leaders as a unique educational resource for transmitting the ethics and faith of the Scriptures in an age dominated by the visual media.

Conceived by a group of men who first met about a decade ago, and energized by John Heyman, world-renowned motion picture producer, the National Media Bible seems destined to set the standard for non-print media Bibles for a century. Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen has written: "The National Media Bible puts the Scriptures in color, motion and speech and is the greatest event in that domain since Gutenberg printed the Bible." Twenty volumes, consisting of the first 36 chapters of Genesis and the first eleven chapters of Luke, are now completed. Each volume contains:

- a. A 15-20 minute sound and color film in choice of King James, Revised Standard, New American, Hebrew and Spanish Populare texts;
- b. Two sound and color film strips providing commentary, illustration and Historical background;
- c. Leaders' guides and projectionists' scripts to insure maximum utilization of the NMB for educational purposes; and
- d. "Bible Times," a news magazine format publication for students of the Bible.

The *New Media Bible* began to become a reality when two groups—one American, one British-based—learned that they were pursuing parallel courses on adjacent tracks. John Heyman and Chaim Topol were inspired by David Ben-Gurion to produce an audio-visual encyclopedia of the Bible to help underwrite the fulfillment of his vision for an International Institute of Biblical Research in Jerusalem. Michael Manuel and Dean Gitter in New York were convinced that the time was right for the translation of the Scriptures from print to film and had a pilot project at hand. These met and merged in 1974 and the Genesis Project was born.

The inherent difficulties of introducing even this most remarkable resource for religious instruction to congregations and institutions unaccustomed to budgets which provide for the best in biblical educational materials have challenged the imaginations of those who have invested some eleven million dollars in the venture. Timeless in its value, the *New Media Bible* will be a source of education, inspiration and shaping of moral values throughout the world for years to come.

Approved For Release 2009/06/26 : CIA-RDP05T00644R000401130068-2

*The Honorable James C. Wright, Jr.  
Chairman, Invitation Committee  
and Thomas A. Murphy  
1979 Chairman, National Bible Week  
Cordially Invite You to Join with Them  
and Distinguished Guests  
in the Laymen's National Bible Committee's  
Opening Event of National Bible Week  
a Presentation of  
The Genesis Project's New Media Bible  
and the New Motion Picture  
"JESUS"*

*Concert Hall  
John F. Kennedy Center  
for the Performing Arts  
Washington, D.C.*

*Sunday, November 18, 1979  
8:20 p.m.  
RSVP by October 26  
Complimentary*

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*Regretted by RSVP card  
20 Oct 79*

INVITATION COMMITTEE

One of the ironies of modern history is that while we have the electronic technology to transmit pictures to earth through millions of miles of deep space, we have been slow to use this capacity to communicate God's Word to a world greatly in need of moral and spiritual guidance.

While millions of youngsters grow up with little knowledge of the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount and the priceless wisdom of the Bible, and while these children, our most important resource, are constantly exposed to secular images and sounds, we have made little effort to use the means of modern communication to teach them those eternal truths that are the hope of mankind.

For this reason, the Genesis Project has undertaken the momentous project of translating the entire Bible to film in the major languages of the world. Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen has said that this project can influence the thoughts and actions of more people than "...any event...since Gutenberg printed the Bible."

This New Media Bible, the product of an interreligious effort by scholars of every faith and denomination, now comes to the people of our time with an authenticity never before achieved on film. You are invited to be part of a great moment in history as the creativity of man attempts to capture the essence of Biblical thought and action.

The Honorable James C. Wright, Jr., Chairman  
The Honorable Berkley W. Bedell  
Dr. Landrum R. Bolling  
The Honorable Don L. Bonker  
The Honorable Jack T. Brinkley  
The Honorable Clarence J. Brown  
The Honorable John H. Buchanan, Jr.  
Dr. Arthur F. Burns  
The Honorable Lawton Chiles  
The Honorable Shirley Chisholm  
The Honorable Dennis DeConcini  
The Honorable Edwin J. (Jake) Garn  
The Honorable Mark O. Hatfield  
Miss Helen Hayes  
The Rev. Dr. Theodore M. Hesburgh  
The Honorable Marjorie S. Holt  
The Honorable Harold E. Hughes  
Mr. Bruce K. MacLaury  
Mr. J. Willard Marriott, Jr.  
Dr. Benjamin E. Mays  
Mr. Thomas A. Murphy  
Dr. Nathan Pusey  
The Honorable Richard T. Schulze  
Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen  
Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum  
The Honorable Lester L. Wolff