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Dean Jones: Fortune  
And Fame Not Enough

By Pamela Hardwick

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Give a man fortune and fame and expect him to be on top of the world. But it brought a "crisis of abundance"--and loneliness and despair--to actor Dean Jones, until a life-changing experience one night in a hotel room.

Jones, star of the recently-released movie, "Born Again," discussed that experience and the life-changing effects the movie had on co-star Jay Robison, during an interview with "MasterControl," a nationwide radio program produced by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

"In 1973, I was on tour with the play '1776,'" Jones said. "I should have been riding high. My career was in fantastic shape, I had achieved the recognition as an actor that I had always wanted...I had all the money I needed. But, I was very, very lonely."

Jones calls it a crisis of abundance. "I began to see that materialism and money would not satisfy. It scared me that it would never satisfy and I would go on forever like this."

One night after a performance, Jones returned to his hotel room very depressed. "Somehow I knew," he recalls, "what I wanted...what I needed. He knelt and "accepted Jesus Christ as Savior"--an experience he credits with renewing his zest for life and salvaging his marriage.

Unlike many prominent Christians who have received criticism about their faith, Jones feels his complete transformation impresses people. "More and more people are looking for something to believe in and when they see my change from depression to supreme happiness they begin to think there's something to it."

Jones hasn't had any problems adapting his Christian lifestyle to the Hollywood environment. "I've been through all the trials of the Industry (Hollywood)--the alcohol, the young actresses. I know the spiritual bankruptcy it causes. It's a dead end."

Looking a full decade younger than his 48 years, Jones has a warmth that leaves one feeling they've known him for years.

That warmth comes through when he discusses "Born Again," based on the conversion of former Nixon hatchetman, Charles Colson. With the role, Jones enters a new dramatic phase of his career. He hopes it will lead to serious parts, but his feeling about it also has a deeply personal dimension.

"I can really relate to Charles Colson. Before his conversion he was in an anti-God state of mind--just as I was in my career. He was sold out to power. I was sold out to ego and success.

"The film is not directly evangelical," he said. "It has a soft sell approach to Christianity which should not turn anyone off. It's entertaining, informative, transforming. Through it we outline God's willingness to penetrate politics and bring man into a relationship with him.

"I think many people will turn to Christ because of it," said Jones, a member of the Church On The Way, Van Nuys, Calif. "If it's a success at the box office it will send a message to filmmakers that people want this kind of movie instead of the trash they've been getting."

Even if "Born Again" fails to break any box office records, Jones believes it will still be a success for the effect it has had on the life of his co-star, Jay Robison, known for his role as Emperor Caligula in "The Robe." He plays David Shapiro, Colson's lawyer and friend, in "Born Again."

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After "The Robe" in 1953, Robison was in demand as an actor and signed a contract with 20th Century Fox. But his success was short-lived. More offers stopped coming and he was released from the contract. Bored and despairing, he tried to find consolation in drugs and was subsequently arrested on a narcotics charge.

It took several years for his trial to come to court, but, in 1968, he was convicted and served 17 months in a California prison. After his release he began to re-establish his career which had been destroyed by headlines and rumors.

Robison, also interviewed on "MasterControl," related the effects Dean Jones and the film have had on his life.

"When I first met Dean I was immediately impressed. His greeting was so warm and friendly. He and the other Christians on the set had a tremendous impact on me."

During the production of "Born Again," Jones shared his faith with Robison. "I felt such loving concern that day. He asked me if I would like to become a Christian. I was really taken back and said, 'Oh, not now. I'm not ready yet. That's something I need to do alone.' He didn't try to push me. It was like he was just taking my hand and leading me along."

But the seed was planted and on January 16, 1978, Jay Robison invited Jesus into his life. "It's so great being a Christian," said Robison. "It's amazing, but everywhere I go there are brothers and sisters in Christ who accept me. It's like a great big family that's always been waiting for me. I feel I've come home."

On the last day of filming, the final scene had to be shot in the parking lot of Chino Penitentiary, the prison where Robison had served his sentence 10 years ago.

"I really didn't want to go," he recalls. "But Dean told me, 'The Lord is with you now. You're returning in victory, you're returning in triumph.' When we arrived at the prison there was a big sign hanging on the parking lot wall that read--'Welcome Back Jay Robison... Star!'"

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Pamela Hardwick is news director for the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. (BP) Photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Radio and Television Commission.

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#### Court Will Not Review Its 'Community Standards' Rule

WASHINGTON (BP)--Over the objections of three justices, the U. S. Supreme Court declined to disturb the convictions of four men in three states found guilty of violating obscenity laws.

But the court agreed to decide if state laws giving blanket preference to veterans in hiring plans violate constitutional rights of women passed over for civil service jobs.

It also agreed to decide if a Georgia law which allows the mother but not the father of an illegitimate child to sue for damages in the event of the child's "wrongful" death amounts to illegal sex discrimination.

Two of the obscenity cases denied by the high court came on appeal from Georgia, with the other two coming from Massachusetts and New Jersey.

In denying the appeals, the court seemed to signal its unwillingness for now to take on a multitude of court challenges to its 1973 "Community Standards" rule which has controlled obscenity cases for the past five years. The 1973 ruling declared that local communities must determine for themselves what constitutes obscenity for their own citizens.

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Since then the high court has refused repeatedly to accept cases challenging that ruling and asking the justices to establish a more uniform national standard.

The three dissenting justices--William J. Brennan Jr., Potter Stewart and Thurgood Marshall--announced that in all four cases they would have reversed the convictions. The three have consistently criticized the court majority's obscenity stance.

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Congress Defeats  
Tuition Tax Credit

By Stan Haste

Baptist Press  
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WASHINGTON (BP)--In an action hailed by opponents of tuition tax credits, Congress killed two last-minute efforts to enact such legislation before adjourning for the year.

Final defeat for the controversial proposal came on the last day of the 95th Congress as two conference committees, hoping to avoid President Carter's veto, refused to vote out tuition tax credits in the final versions of two separate bills.

James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, praised the actions, noting that they came "in spite of mounting pressures for tax cuts, especially for 'middle class' Americans."

Rather than achieve significant tax relief for those who need it, tuition tax credits "would have provided multi-billion dollar subsidies for private and parochial elementary, secondary, and post secondary schools without restriction," said Wood, a leader of a broadly-based coalition opposing tax credits.

Earlier this year, both houses of Congress passed different versions of the tuition tax credit measure. On June 1, the House of Representatives approved a bill providing for tax credits both for college tuition and tuition paid to nonpublic elementary and secondary schools. The Senate adopted a measure August 15 approving college credits but rejecting the benefit for parents of elementary and secondary pupils attending parochial schools.

The actions marked a reversal in Congress' past performance with similar proposals. Six times previously the Senate had approved tuition tax credits for all levels, while the House, in each instance, rejected the proposals across the board.

This year's defeat of tuition tax credit proposals actually came in two installments as proponents of the measure pulled out all legislative stops in the waning moments of the 95th Congress.

The main vehicle for the bill, H. R. 12050, sent to a conference committee after the Senate's August 15 approval, never made it back to the floor of either house before Congress adjourned October 15, following a marathon 34-hour session.

Meanwhile, the Senate had approved a move by Sen. Bob Packwood, R.-Ore., attaching the college tuition tax credit to the much larger tax cut bill. Once again, that portion of the tax cut bill never came back to the floor out of another Senate-House conference committee.

Sen. Russell Long, D.-La., according to a reliable congressional source, was the key figure in killing tuition tax credit. Long reportedly warned conferees that President Carter would stand by his threat to veto both the tuition tax credit measure and the tax cut bill itself if Congress insisted on including the credit in the larger bill.

Both Carter and Health, Education, and Welfare Secretary Joseph A. Califano had warned repeatedly that the president would veto tuition tax credits for both constitutional and fiscal reasons.

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Wood praised Congress for defeating both measures. "Not to have done so would have seriously threatened American public policy as it applies to use of public funds for church schools," he said.

Wood warned, however, that "renewed efforts will be made again to enact tuition tax credit legislation." Proponents of such efforts have, in fact, pledged to renew the struggle when Congress reconvenes in January. "All such legislation should be resisted as financially inequitable, bad public policy, and incompatible with the guarantees for a free and democratic society," Wood said.

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Kentucky Judge Rules State  
Can't Regulate Private Schools

Baptist Press  
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FRANKFORT, Ky. (BP)--A Kentucky judge's ruling that private Christian schools can operate without state regulation has heartened a group fighting a similar battle in North Carolina.

In Kentucky, Franklin Circuit Court Judge Henry Meigs ruled that state regulation of private Christian schools, except for adherence to minimum fire, health, safety and attendance requirements, violates the Kentucky and U. S. constitutional provisions guaranteeing freedom of religion.

William Ball of Harrisburg, Pa., attorney for 63 Christian schools which refuse to accept regulation by the North Carolina Board of Education, says the two cases are "absolutely parallel."

"I'm most encouraged," Ball said about the Kentucky decision. "It is the third state where a court of statewide jurisdiction has upheld the rights of Christian parents against undue regulation by the state." Courts in Ohio and Vermont have similarly ruled.

The Kentucky judge's decision will be appealed and James B. Graham, superintendent of public instruction, predicted the issue "could go all the way to the U. S. Supreme Court."

In North Carolina, Judge Donnie L. Smith ruled the state has a legitimate duty to require reports from church-related and other private schools to ensure that all students, wherever they go to school, receive a competent education. Ball's group is appealing.

The ruling judge in Kentucky said the state's imposition of textbook and teacher certification requirements on the private Christian schools denied free exercise of religion. He added the educational product of the Christian schools was equal or better without state regulation.

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