You know in your heart...

By BILL BROYES

There is, however, something revolutionary about the Goldwater candidacy, an air of radical change which fails to fit traditional political patterns. Unlike most modern revolutions, the Goldwater upheaval is a move at restoration, an attempt to recall past values and impose the simplicity of their moral imperatives upon the complexity of the present.

What is at issue is in effect present reality—the nature of the state of affairs which divides the “from where we have come” and the “to where we are going.” To the Goldwater mind, the nation is coming from a past where people were both courageous and moral, where individual initiative functioning in an atmosphere of freedom from governmental interference produced the unsullied greatness of America.

Compared with this America and with its Americans, present reality reveals what is to them the tragic sight of a nation in moral decay, a nation cowardly in foreign affairs and decadent in its morals.

To them, something valuable is missing in the present, something basic to the American way of life that has slipped through the fingers of the politicians who have had custody of America since 1932.

The restoration of this moral fiber assumes the nature of a crusade, a religious quest to redeem Jerusalem from the liberal infidel.

Unspoken Communication

As the chief apostle of this crusade, Barry Goldwater can be greeted with cheers (as he was in Winston-Salem, N. C., where these remarks were made) at such statements as “I don’t like the way the country is drifting. I find it hard to put my finger on what is wrong. Something deep in your hearts tells you something is wrong.”

The cheering crowd doesn’t have to be told what is wrong; they know.

These supporters can accept the use of vague generalities and appeals to national honor through the use of words such as freedom and liberty whose actual meaning may not be clear.

The images which these words evoke are in reality meaningful to only a part of America, and that is the increasingly prosperous middle-class.

It is from these people, the citizens of economic boom in the Southwest, that the Goldwater philosophy was born. With prosperity comprising the circle of their experience, they see little or no need for the government controls which insured this prosperity or of the government benefits to those impoverished when they feel were disinclined to take advantage of the opportunities which they themselves followed to success.

They can understand when Barry calls this prosperity false and these benefits to the poor cynical, simply because the issue to them becomes not the prosperity but the freedom, and not the poverty, but the individual initiative.

State and Nation

As a Senator from the unusual state of Arizona, Barry Goldwater could rest his case with this America and be understood. As a candidate for President, however, he must face all the people and, consequently, a number of Americans.

To the America of the poor, of the Negro, of the farmer, and of the aged, his emphasis on morality has little effect, and his attitude of national courage is construed as temerity. The moral crusade has, of necessity, broadened its base and modified its early ambitions of dismantling the government at home to regain morality and strength it abroad to bolster courage.

Government to this broad base of the electorate is an instrument, a servant to the outstanding needs of the people. The pure, unrefined Goldwater attitude strikes these voters as silly, as an attempt to re-solve the problems of the sixties while ignoring the problems of the thirties, problems which are very pressing, and very real.

These people are the workers who feel the squeeze of automation, the businessmen who understand the relation of government to the economy, the aged who face rising hospital costs with limited resources, the Negro who needs protection of his civil rights, and the citizens who see a connection between a chauvinistic foreign policy and the possibility of nuclear war.

In order to become President, Goldwater must bolster the core of his moral crusade with voters from the above-mentioned groups and from the large portion of the electorate who neither feels the direct necessity of government nor the fervor of the crusade. In order to get these votes, he must make a play to the discontents which past administrations, (preferably the present one) have gathered.

In perhaps his favorite area, what he feels to be the emasculation of American foreign policy, his appeal becomes a double-edged sword, attracting those who are frustrated with the past course of American relations to the Communist world but repelling those who believe that Goldwater’s policy would lead to nuclear war. To those who feel that they have been unnecessarily hindered by governmental controls he can offer nothing without alienating people who depend on government protection.

White Backlash

In only one area can be combine his moral crusade with pressing reality and appeal to the great mass of voters, and that is the race issue, and with it the question of rioting and order in the streets. Often called the “white Backlash,” the effects of this issue on the performance of voters is the imponderable of the campaign. Up until now, Goldwater has only alluded to the question, not willing to become a demagogue.

References linking both the rioting and the undesirable effects of the Negro revolution to the Democratic administration have been frequent, however, and in spite of a pointedly oblique approach, quite obvious as to intent and meaning. It is only through the unknown effects of such an irrational issue that Goldwater can both break the South and win enough of the industrial state to carry the election.

It is ironic that a campaign born in sincere moral fervor has been linked, however reluctantly, to the one issue that can arouse fear and hate regardless of party lines; it will be tragic if with it he wins.