



Written by on December 29, 2008

Paul Weyrich Passes Away

He helped found the Heritage Foundation in 1973 and the D.C.-based Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress a few years later. In time, he launched NET, a conservative television venture that dropped him in 1997 because of his criticism of Republican Party leaders.



At a meeting of religious leaders in 1979, the Catholic Weyrich coined the term “moral majority” that was later adopted by Rev. Jerry Falwell as the name of the influential group of fundamental Christians he led. John McManus, president of the John Birch Society, recalled meeting with Weyrich at several society gatherings during the late '70s and early '80s, pointed to his authorship of numerous articles in the society's affiliated publications, and remembered being interviewed by him for his television program.

Usually at odds with Republicans who claimed to be conservative — even his hero Ronald Reagan — Weyrich was especially critical of President George W. Bush because of the Bush administration's spendthrift ways and for leading the nation into the Iraq War. A culture warrior, he grew despondent when Bill Clinton was acquitted by the Senate after having been impeached by the House of Representatives. McManus said of Weyrich, “He was far more conservative than most in and around the nation's capital, but he and I managed to disagree on a number of substantive issues.” Weyrich was 66 years old.

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