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COMMENTARY

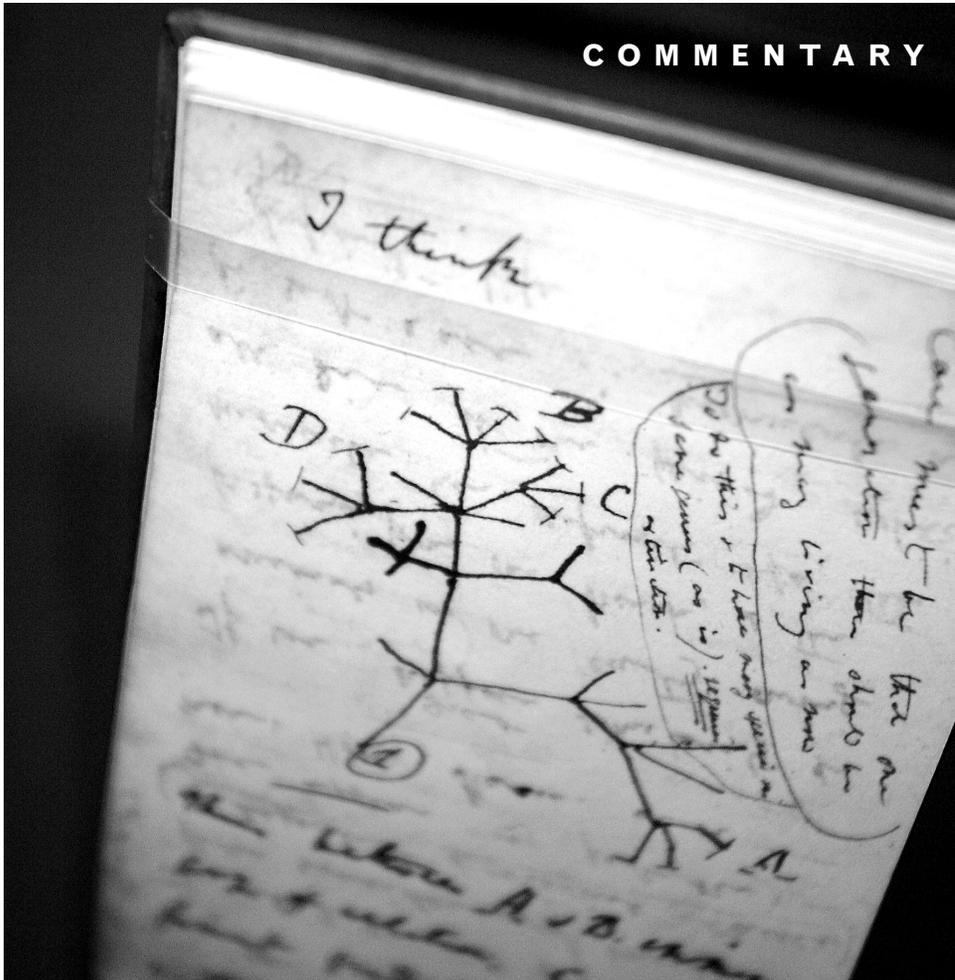


Photo by Mario Tama/Getty Images

In his notebook, Charles Darwin sketched the “tree of life” depicting evolution, now on exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

When Adversaries Become Allies

The Fight Against the Patriot Act and the Surveillance State

By Abby Scher

T. Allen (Terry) Hoover, a gun rights advocate and former deputy sheriff, once had a pink submachine gun made as a gift for his wife. He is a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association. And in Idaho, he was a member of a right/left coalition called the Boise Patriots, which won local and state resolutions demanding that Congress drop the provisions from the USA Patriot Act that are turning America into a dangerous surveillance state.

“The way to cook a frog is to put him in cold water and turn up the heat slowly,” he said after the US Senate renewed a barely-revised Patriot Act in early March. “The original Patriot Act was cold water. Now the heat is turned up, we’re cooked.”

If the Patriot Act gives rise to any positive legacy, it is the “strange bedfellows” coalitions like Hoover’s. From Dallas to Idaho and Montana, political opponents

When Adversaries Become Allies continues on page 15

Designs on the Culture

By Jeffrey P. Moran

Over is over, for now. Beginning in 2004, an elected school board attempted to change the Dover, PA, science curriculum so that it cast significant doubt on the evolutionary hypothesis.

The board tried to substitute a textbook, *Of Pandas and People*, that reflected a new element in the antievolution movement—namely, “intelligent design” (ID)—or the theory that some elements of the biological universe are simply too complicated to

have evolved through Darwinian natural selection; the alternative, ID would propose, is that these phenomena must instead be the products of a superintending intelligence.

A federal judge, appointed by a conservative president who himself believes in some form of creationism, followed ample precedent on the separation of Church and State and mocked with proper acidulousness the Dover School Board’s assertions

Designs on the Culture continues on page 9

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— LETTERS —

Framing Our Values Better

As staff members of the Rockridge Institute, the progressive think-tank where Dr. George Lakoff is a Senior Fellow, we appreciate the invitation William Gamson and Charlotte Ryan extended to discuss the nature of framing, and its importance in the progressive movement [“Thinking About Elephants: Toward a Dialog with George Lakoff,” by William A. Gamson and Charlotte Ryan, Fall 2005]. However, be warned: it may turn out to be one of those boring discussions where everyone agrees with everyone else.

Gamson and Ryan explain frames with laudable clarity and considerable accuracy—no easy task, as we’ve discovered. We agree with their description of frames as unconscious mental structures that give “coherent meaning to what is happening in the world.” Frames develop into “common sense” both through our interactions with the world around us, and through cultural reinforcement transmitted through repetition. Once established, frames govern our interpretations of events, telling us what the important parts are and, in the case of politics, determining the credibility of information provided and of the messengers providing it.

The difficulty inherent in understanding framing has resulted in many misconceptions. Some think of framing as a sort of alchemy by which a carefully-crafted slogan is effortlessly transmuted into policy victories. These shortcuts simply don’t exist. However, the deeper modes of reasoning that people use to evaluate policy *can* change, after a great deal of time, money and passion have been devoted to the effort.

In fact, we follow in the footsteps of many progressive reframers who prove that concerted efforts can alter policy by way of framing. The successes of the feminist, civil rights, and environmental justice movements have inspired our work from Day One. Those long-term reframings serve as examples of what is possible when the objectives of progressivism as a whole are understood to make common sense. We imagine a future in which feminism, environmentalism and labor rights are each seen as aspects of a broader philosophy, because the connections between issues and to core values have been highlighted by organizations and leaders working on them.

Furthermore, as Gamson and Ryan point out, framing the debate is not the same as winning the debate. For that, you need collaboration between activists, policy professionals, organizers, media mavens and, yes, intellectuals. We’re cognitive linguists, so we focus on the relationship between language, ideas, and intellectual infrastructure. This should not be seen as a slight to other components of the progressive ecosystem, but rather as an attempt to optimize division of labor. We’re contributing to the movement the best way we know how: by understanding and then better articulating our common values so that the general public realizes those values as the governing principles of our nation. That articulation will be a success contingent upon our working with and alongside others.

By the same token, we hope progressives recognize the importance of giving thematic consistency to disparate policy issues. Both progressives and conservatives have flourishing grassroots movements—but only conservatives have an established network of “umbrella” policy groups that link the general themes of their philosophy together. That’s the shortcoming we’d like to address, but we can’t do it alone. We’re glad Gamson and Ryan share our belief in the importance of collaboration and unity.

*Dan Kurtz and Anat Shenker-Osorio,
The Rockridge Institute*

CORRECTION

In “The Rise of Dominionism: Remaking America as a Christian Nation,” (Winter 2005), we referred to an article in Southern Poverty Law Center’s *Intelligence Report* in saying that Tom Parker had “longstanding ties” to the Council of Conservative Citizens and the white supremacist League of the South. In fact, Parker appeared with and was photographed posing with leaders from those two organizations while at an event, according to its authors. Nor did Parker refer to his home as “Ft. Dixie.”

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The Globalization of an Agenda

The Right Targets the UN with its Anti-Choice Politics

By Pam Chamberlain

In June 2004, US officials brought along a special guest to a regional United Nations (UN) conference on population issues, held that year in Puerto Rico. It was Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ). Smith, at one time the head of the New Jersey Right to Life Committee, promotes himself as a champion for international human rights and a strong opponent of abortion.

“Anti-life strategies which rely on deception and hyperbole...are now being deployed with a vengeance in the developing world,” he once proclaimed.¹

As a member of Congress for over twenty years, Smith took advantage of his presence at the regional UN conference—the biannual Economic Council for Latin America and the Caribbean—to directly lobby delegates against language that he felt hinted at abortion rights. While the UN’s International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo a decade earlier had substituted a call for “reproductive health” instead of “family planning”—a change that filtered through all later UN documents—Smith wanted to switch it back.

Smith was a guest at the conference, not a diplomat. But that didn’t stop him from lobbying the heads of state of Uruguay and Guatemala by faxing them from Puerto Rico on Congressional stationery. In his message, Smith urged them to make abortions illegal in their countries and to instruct their delegations to vote against “direct attacks on the

right to life, family rights, and national sovereignty” at the conference.²

Smith’s behavior, outlandish for a member of Congress, reflected what anti-choice lobbyists in Washington hoped for—a leader to take their agenda abroad.

Delivering Anti-Choice Politics Abroad

What began during the Reagan years as tentative steps into the international arena in the name of curtailing abortions has grown into a major political success under the administration of George W. Bush.³

Under George W. Bush, US intervention makes women’s health disparities worse. In 2001, he reinstated the “global gag rule” that had reigned during the Reagan and Bush I years, which requires any organization applying for US funds to agree neither to counsel nor provide women with abortions (see box).⁴ But that was only the starting point. Showing the disdain for working collaboratively with other countries that guides his foreign policy as

a whole, Bush instead enlisted the help of evangelical Protestant and conservative Catholic organizations to disrupt the diplomacy needed to craft solutions to international crises in population growth, high rates of AIDS/HIV, and the needless deaths and debility resulting from too little reproductive health care.

The slow work in dismantling *Roe v. Wade* makes the Bush Administration eager to consolidate its support among its socially conservative base. Giving them access to the international arena may distract these activists from the fact that the Administration was failing to deliver entirely on their agenda at home.

In turn, many conservative Christian-based organizations find that going global with an anti-choice message is a comfortable fit. A series of factors influenced this move. First, if its members come from faith communities that send missionaries abroad, the organization tends to be sympathetic to international work. For instance, as early as the mid-1980s, Beverly LaHaye’s Concerned Women for

America protested the persecution of a Christian poet in the Soviet Union and called attention to the needs of Nicaraguans who lived in refugee camps in Costa Rica.⁵ Choosing these projects was politically savvy, since they placed Concerned Women as a group firmly opposed to communism and supportive of religious freedom at the same time.

The second factor has been the resurgence of conservative



Austin Ruse (R), here with his baby daughter Lucy, is a major strategist for anti-choice forces at the United Nations.

Barry Williams/Getty Images

evangelical involvement in the political sphere. While staying away from politics through most of the 20th century, evangelicals are now recognized as one of the major contributors to the rise of the political Right in the last 40 years. Early leaders, like James Dobson of Focus on the Family, and Tim and Beverly LaHaye, are still in the forefront of Christian Right international work.

Third, working at the UN helps increase the organizations' political power and organizational base in the United States, as leaders mingle with political heavyweights as official UN observers. They can broadcast their work on the large-scale Christian media networks and, perhaps, sustain their legitimacy as political players even as they faced failures in their effort to overturn *Roe* at home.

Finally, an extensive network of health and feminist organizations across the globe has advocated for women's sexual and reproductive autonomy for decades, both locally and in global arenas. Yet even now, reports the Center for Reproductive Rights, "78,000 women die every year from unsafe abortion, a statistic that could be virtually eliminated by the provision of appropriate health information and services and law reform efforts."⁶ Still, the conservative challenge to these more liberal organizations must go on.

The power of the purse gives the United States considerable influence over many international programs.

Christian Thought, the UN and the Old Right

Conservative Christian thought gives power to the movement's international work. Many on the Christian Right see the abortion struggle as a cosmic battle between the forces of good and evil. Abortion is not only a sin to this faction, but women's control of their reproductive futures is seen as threatening the preservation of family and society.⁷ This worldview raises the stakes of issues like abortion to a very high level in believers' eyes, and it contributes its share to the dualistic, or "black/white" thinking that dominates the reproductive rights debate.

As it entered the global arena, the Christian Right began interweaving its analysis with that of the far Right in the United

States, which has viewed the UN since its founding as a dangerous "One World Government." The recent appointment of John Bolton as the stonewalling US Ambassador makes this anti-UN view in all practical terms official US policy.

Despite their skepticism about the institution, over the past five years the non-governmental organizations, or NGOs, of socially conservative groups have grown in number and gained power in the UN. They now engage in more aggressive and disruptive diplomacy by securing spots on official delegations. Their leaders even conduct their own wildcard diplomacy as Rep. Smith has demonstrated.

Austin Ruse, a prominent Catholic heading a conservative watchdog group at the UN, explains his strategy of stonewalling in an atmosphere of consensus:

We don't need them all; we need only a few [member states]... We establish a permanent UN pro-family bloc of twelve states. And upon these we lavish all of our attention.⁸

Showdown at the UN

Despite anti-UN sentiment among anti-choice groups, their efforts to influence UN declarations have served ironically to legitimize the institution's influence in conservative eyes. NGOs have an increasing role in the United Nations with over 2000 groups registered with consultative status on economic and social issues alone.⁹ Although the largest NGO presence is progressive, socially conservative forces, often originating in the United States, are growing in power. The ratio of pro-choice to anti-choice NGOs is now 3:2. Their agenda includes removing any mention of abortion and reproductive health in UN documents, opposing any recognition of gay rights, and disputing the value of comprehensive sex education.

Their battles focus on the language of the UN's resolutions and policy recommendations. For instance, progressive women's groups successfully established "reproductive rights" instead of "population control" in 1994 at the International

GLOBAL GAG RULE

In reinstating the global gag rule, Bush declared, "It is my conviction that taxpayer funds should not be used to pay for abortions or advocate or actively promote abortion, either here or abroad."

In addition to losing funding, the organizations that do not comply with the gag rule also lose technical assistance and US-donated contraceptives, including condoms.

Its global impact has been profound, even with the European Union picking up some of the slack. The gag rule has disrupted not only abortion access but family planning services, prenatal care, and HIV/AIDS prevention in multiple countries worldwide, especially in the Global South.

Women, who both require family planning resources and account for almost half of the global population living with HIV/AIDS, suffer the most. The rule has resulted in the halting of progressive pro-choice lobbying in countries such as Uganda, Ethiopia, and Kenya, which have severely restrictive abortion laws. Particularly in Ethiopia, where abortion is completely illegal, most family planning agencies have refused to abide by the gag rule. As a result, the contraceptive supply has been restricted, leading to a high rate of illegal abortion, which is currently the second highest killer of women in that country.

Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, signaling a shift in emphasis from demographics to women's rights. This prompted a backlash from conservative forces who saw the language as a slippery slope towards increased access to abortion worldwide.

Conservative NGOs, like the evangelical Concerned Women for America and the Family Research Council, take their cues from their older brother at the UN, the Vatican/Holy See. The Vatican has been, at least until recently, the single most influential abortion opponent at the UN. This may be because of its special "permanent observer" status, held by no other NGO, which gives it more access and influence, and because of its lengthier history of participating in NGO activities there. In fact, the Vatican already mobilized opposition to the gains of the 1994 Cairo conference in time for the UN's women's conference in Beijing the very next year.

Well-funded, powerful groups work both alone and in "Family Rights" coalitions, sometimes forming alliances with unexpected religious groups. Shared beliefs are the threads that connect fundamentalist Muslims and Christians with similar views on traditional families and the role of women.

One of the prominent American anti-abortion organizations working in the United Nations is the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute (abbreviated as C-Fam), headed by Austin Ruse. Human Life International, an organization of Catholic priests with worldwide reach (which was denied official recognition in the UN due to its attacks on Islam and hostility towards UN goals) created C-Fam along with a think tank, Population Research International, led by Steve Mosher.

C-Fam issues UN-related faxes every Friday. These faxes are Ruse's attempt to expose the "dirty laundry" of the UN while bragging about C-Fam's ability to disrupt UN activity. C-Fam and similar organizations with ties to the Vatican/Holy See, Ruse says, consider countries such as Sudan, Libya, Iraq, Iran, and other moderate and hard-line governments as "allies" in the bat-

tle against abortion, homosexuality, and the general expansion of sexual and political rights. He rejoices at the hostility directed towards him by progressive groups, saying,

We attended all of the women's meetings and essentially took them over. Memos were going back from the conference in New York to governments in the European Union that radical fundamentalists had taken over the meeting, and that was us.¹⁰

Since the Cairo conference, groups like the Mormon-supported World Family Policy Center, Concerned Women for

Tentative steps during the Reagan years to curtail abortion in the international arena have grown into a major political success under George W. Bush.

America, and the National Right to Life Committee intensively monitor the planning schedule of international gatherings sponsored by the UN, prepare lobbying strategies for each event, and participate, sometimes with large contingents. Such anti-choice NGOs largely attend events on women's issues, but by their mere presence they also have an impact on gatherings concerning children, families, population, the environment, and human rights.

The World Family Policy Center builds influence through its annual forums for UN delegates, ambassadors, and religious leaders from around the world, outlining how it sees UN policies affecting the family.¹¹ Its series of World

Congresses on Families culminated in the Doha International Conference for the Family, held in November of 2004, whose mission was to protect the "natural" family as the fundamental unit of society. Billed as an international conference like Beijing or Cairo, Doha was independent of the UN with an explicit anti-choice focus and attended by more than one thousand participants.

The conference drew on the common values of conservative Christians, Catholics and Muslims, and was held in the capital of the wealthy Emirate of Qatar. It involved a year of planning and regional conferences in Europe, Asia, and Latin America, with much of the research on the current state of the family and marriage provided by the Policy Center itself.

After the conference, the government of Qatar put forth a conservative resolution on the family to the UN General Assembly that was adopted without a vote. A number of speakers subsequently disassociated themselves from the consensus citing as their primary explanation the omission of language, previously accepted at international levels, which recognized that the family structure could take various forms, according to the official UN press announcement on the resolution.¹²

The forward momentum of anti-choice efforts at the UN suffered a setback in November of 2005. The UN Human Rights Committee (UNHRC), an 18-member group that monitors the implementation of the UN's human rights covenants, decided in its first abortion case, *KL v. Peru*, that abortion is a human right. This decision affirmed the work of international women's health advocates and sent anti-choice NGOs into tailspins. Austin Ruse stubbornly declared in his Friday Fax that the committee's decision was not only an example of flawed reasoning but was non-binding anyway.¹³ Not so, says Luisa Cabal, Director of the International Legal Program at the Center for Reproductive Rights, one of the groups that brought the case before the Committee.

We are thrilled that the UNHRC has ruled in favor of protecting

women's most essential human rights. Every woman who lives in any of the 154 countries that are party to this treaty—including the US—now has a legal tool to use in defense of her rights. This ruling establishes that it is not enough to just grant a right on paper. Where abortion is legal it is governments' duty to ensure that women have access to it.¹⁴

The Impact on the Bush Administration

If reinstating the global gag rule was Bush's opening shot for the anti-choice cause on the international level, refusing to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was certainly a follow up. Because this international treaty opposing discrimination against women includes suggestive language like "access to health care services, including those related to family planning," US anti-choice groups feared it would lead to the right to an abortion.¹⁵ Their success in preventing the United States from signing on to CEDAW—in existence since the Reagan years—reflects the ability of these groups to maintain a long-term focus on curtail- ing women's rights.

The treaty "is like the Equal Rights Amendment on steroids," quipped Wendy Wright of Concerned Women for America in describing her opposition.¹⁶

Not all their efforts muck up the works globally. At a February 2005 conference marking the 10th anniversary of the Beijing Conference on the Status of Women, official US delegates failed in their effort to remove references to the right to abortion but still reaffirmed support for the declarations made in Beijing.¹⁷ But all was not lost for anti-choice supporters. During the January 2006 holiday recess, Bush appointed the chief of the US delegation, Ellen Sauerbrey, a former Bush campaign worker and anti-choice representative at the UN, to be the Assistant Secretary of State

for Population, Refugees, and Migration without Congressional approval. Women's health and human rights advocates worldwide expressed outrage.

The challenge to "suggestive language" has over the past few years become a major tactic of the Bush Administration at the United Nations. It repeatedly tried to weaken a unanimous resolution on the right to health by pressuring for the word "services" to be deleted from the phrase "health care services," claiming that it was a code word for abortion.¹⁸

In promoting sexual abstinence for adolescents, the Bush Administration and its allies fight language referring to repro-

organization conducts research on safe abortion techniques.

Home-Grown Groups Take the Grand Tour

In line with their missionary orientation, Christian Right groups directly support grassroots efforts that promote a "culture of life" in other countries. These groups include: the American Life League, Concerned Women for America and its LaHaye Institute, Focus on the Family, Heartbeat International, Human Life International, the Justice Foundation, National Right to Life Committee, and United Families International.

Beyond launching overseas groups, they support foreign infrastructure and help develop their electoral strategies. For instance, the National Right to Life Committee's Wanda Franz claimed that her group, with help from the American Life League, helped launch 200 local groups and elect 12 anti-choice members of parliament in Sweden in only six years.²⁰ As she put it:

Early in the 1990s a young man named Michal Oscarson sought out NRLC's support for a study project that allowed a few volunteers to come from Sweden and spend time here in America with NRLC staff and affiliates with a view to building a strong and effective pro-life movement in that country. In the six years that have followed that venture *Ja til Livet* has grown to 200 chapters throughout Sweden. Recently they helped to elect 12 new pro-life parliamentarians, including Michal Oscarson himself.²¹

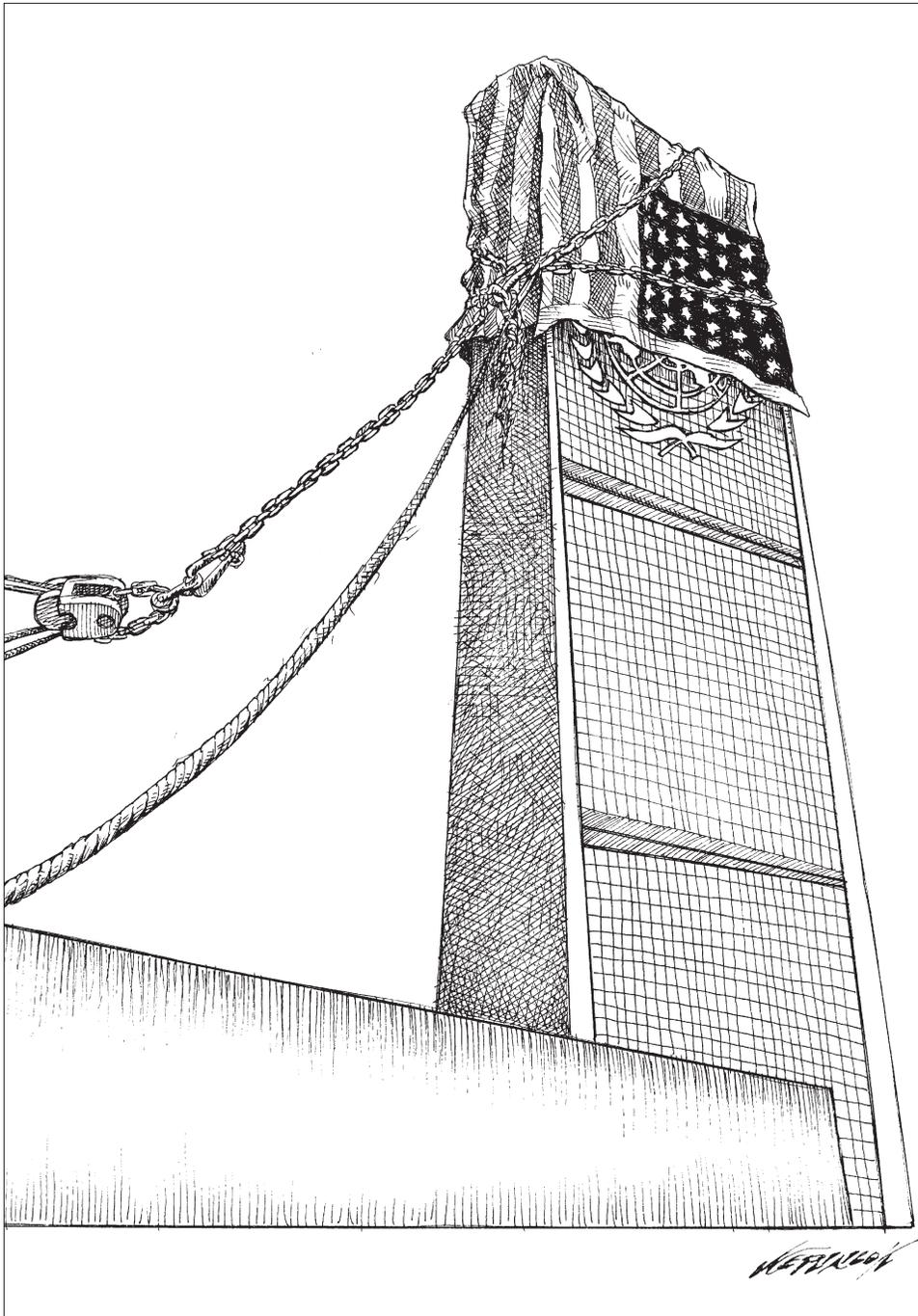
For those wanting to take special pro-life missionary trips, Human Life International offers the chance to proselytize abroad while establishing satellite offices in more than 50 countries including Kenya, South Korea, Chile and Russia. The missionaries also export anti-choice strategies already in use in the United States: form-

Many of the conservative NGOs working at the UN hold a critical, even disdainful, opinion of UN programs and of the institution itself.

ductive health care. For instance they fought this battle at the Special Session on Children in 2002 and in rescinding US support for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development agreement (the Cairo Program of Action) which mentioned condoms explicitly.¹⁹

Even without winning battles over language, the power of the purse gives the United States considerable influence over many international programs. In 2003 and again in 2005, the US House of Representatives blocked \$500 million in international family planning funds destined for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), falsely claiming that the funds would go to Chinese women aborting pregnancies to comply with China's one child-one-family population policy.

The United States also froze \$3 million in aid to the World Health Organization in 2002 because the global public health



Best of Latin America, El Economista

ing crisis pregnancy and post-abortion healing centers, fighting sex education and establishing “chastity programs” in schools, and training priests how to organize against abortion.

Recent media attention spotlighted the “Silver Ring Thing,” a Christian abstinence sexuality education program affiliated with the John Guest Evangelical Team. It encourages students to take virginity pledges and wear a silver ring as a symbol

of their commitment to abstinence until marriage.²² A recipient of more than \$1 million in US government faith-based funding since 2002, the Silver Ring Thing lost its government funding in August 2005 after an ACLU lawsuit. It still supports an international presence, particularly in South Africa where 10 events are already scheduled for 2006.²³

Another well-known group with extensive international programming is Focus on

the Family, which has produced a curriculum, “No Apologies, The Truth about Life, Love and Sex.” “No Apologies” can be found in many of the 150 countries where Focus has a presence. According to Focus’ own figures, “No Apologies” has reached 1 million teens worldwide.²⁴

Why Export a “Pro-Life” Agenda?

There are pros and cons to working as an anti-choice NGO at the UN. Certainly a history and culture of missionary work can provide some of the experience and most of the motivation necessary to mount a campaign. Working at the international level can offer a magnified feeling of power. Yet many of the conservative NGOs working at the UN hold a critical, even disdainful, opinion of UN programs and of the institution itself. Steven Mosher, President of the HLI-supported Population Research Institute, has called the UN-initiated Global Fund for AIDS “the global fund for abortion, prostitution and the homosexual agenda.”²⁵

Even while her organization works at the UN, a spokesperson for the Beverly LaHaye Institute at Concerned Women for America said:

Sincere women of faith within the mainline churches are being duped into thinking that by endorsing the UN they are helping the Great Commission of Christ to go into all the world, spreading the good news and healing the sick. Instead, their resources and influence are going to an institution that is often ineffective in providing relief to the suffering and oppressed. Even worse, scandal and unethical practices riddle the United Nations.²⁶

Susan Roylance, a founder of United Families International, recognizes the contradiction but provides a rationale for sticking it out at the UN:

I do not believe family policies should be formulated in the international arena... We must become involved to protect our families from

those who would “re-engineer” the social structures of the world.²⁷

These comments are reminiscent of Sen. Jesse Helms’ fear that the UN represents a “One World” government. Helms’ politics, the same Helms who authored the 1973 Helms Amendment which prohibits spending federal money on abortions abroad, sit squarely at the intersection of a nationalist resistance to multilateral agreements and a desperate hold on traditional views of women.

The UN’s ability to attract powerful people motivates the groups to spend considerable resources to set up offices in New York and travel extensively to gatherings hosted around the world. Because of their NGO status, organizations can work directly with State Department officials in the US delegation, particularly now that the anti-choice UN critic John Bolton is ambassador. This allows for greater political incorporation of once marginal political groups.

Plus they can make news. Pro-family NGOs in general have learned to use the Christian media to reach a much wider audience than a mere mail campaign to donors and members. Through these TV, radio, and web services, as well as print media, they access a communications network that does not exist for them in mainstream media, transmitting their “culture of life” philosophy, pro-family stories, and anti-One World Government perspective.

These pro-family forces recognize the value of supporting multiple strategies simultaneously. They see the value of cultivating personal relationships with potential allies at United Nations’ gatherings that were designed with very different goals from their own. They do not hesitate to imagine that they are capable of influencing global institutions. They have tasted victory, and they will come back for another helping. ■

Pam Chamberlain is a research analyst with Political Research Associates. Thanks to Diana Dukhanova for research assistance with this article.

End Notes

¹ “An Urgent Appeal to get Involved in Politics: Public Service a Ministry to Protect the ‘Least of our Brethren And Strengthen the Family.’”, a speech at the Vatican Conference on Globalization, Economy and Family, Vatican City, November 2000. <http://priestsforlife.org/government/chrissmithspeech.htm>.

² See <http://www.planetwire.org/details/4879> for a copy of Smith’s fax.

³ Because the mainstream media tends neither to cover the international work of conservative groups nor the international conferences themselves, the Christian media becomes an important source of information about the accomplishments of such groups as Human Life International, Concerned Women for America, and Focus on the Family abroad. Reproductive justice advocates, primarily from the international women’s health network. Catholics for a Free Choice, the Sexual Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), Planned Parenthood, and the International Women’s Health Coalition all watch this trend.

⁴ <http://www.usaid.gov/whmemo.html>.

⁵ <http://www.cwfa.org/history.asp>.

⁶ “The Bush Global Gag Rule: Endangering Women’s Health, Free Speech and Democracy,” Fact sheet from the Center for Reproductive Rights, June 2003, at http://www.crlp.org/pub_fac_ggrbush.html.

⁷ “Kitchen Table Backlash: The Antifeminist Women’s Movement,” in *Mobilizing Resentment* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999) 69-96 and Pam Chamberlain and Jean Hardisty, “Reproducing Patriarchy: Reproductive Rights Under Siege,” in *Defending Reproductive Rights* (Somerville, Mass.: PRA, 2000) 1-24.

⁸ Austin Ruse as quoted in Jennifer Butler, “For Faith and Family: Christian Right Advocacy at the United Nations,” *The Public Eye*, IX, 2/3, Summer/Fall 2000, 10.

⁹ http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/pdf/INF_List.pdf.

¹⁰ Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation speech, March 2000.

¹¹ Larsen, Kent. “BYU’s Annual World Family Policy Forum Addresses UN Policies.” July 27, 2001. Mormon News. <http://www.mormonstoday.com/010727/T3WFPForum01.shtml>.

¹² <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/ga10311.doc.htm>.

¹³ C-FAM Friday Fax, December 9, 2005, at <http://www.cfam.org/current.htm>.

¹⁴ “UN Human Rights Committee Makes Landmark Decision Establishing Women’s Right to Access legal Abortion,” Press release, November 17, 2005, Center for Reproductive Rights. http://www.crlp.org/pr_05_1117KarenPeru.html.

¹⁵ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm#article12>.

¹⁶ <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,54524,00.html>.

¹⁷ Goldenberg, Suzanne. “American Urges UN to Renounce Abortion Rights.” *Guardian*, March 1, 2005. www.globalpolicy.org/empire/un/2005/0301abortion.htm

¹⁸ “Bush’s Other War: The Assault on Women’s Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.” International Women’s Health Coalition. www.iwhc.org.

¹⁹ SIECUS Public Policy Office Fact Sheet. “Exporting Ineffective Policy: The Globalization of American Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs.” http://www.siecus.org/inter/exporting_us_foreign_policy.pdf

²⁰ <http://www.nrlc.org/news/1998/NRL10.98/olivia.html>.

²¹ <http://www.nrlc.org/news/1998/NRL10.98/olivia.html>.

²² http://www.silverringthing.com/get_ring.html.

²³ <http://www.silverringthing.com>.

²⁴ <http://www.family.org/docstudy/newsletters/a0037280.cfm>.

²⁵ Steven Mosher, “Weekly Briefing,” February 21, 2003, <http://www.pop.org/main.cfm?EID=444>.

²⁶ Katy Kiser, “The United Nations: an Untold Story,” at: <http://www.beverlylahayeinstitute.org/articledisplay.asp?id=6623&department=BLI&categoryid=reports>.

²⁷ Susan Roylance, *Pro-Family Negotiating Guide*, (Gilbert, Ariz: United Families International, 2001) v.

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DESIGNS *continued from page 1*

that theirs was not a religious crusade marching under the camouflage of flagella and microbiology.

Although no one believes that we have heard our last from the Intelligent Design bunch, it may be useful at this resting point to take a longer view of the controversy. In the 1925 Tennessee Scopes trial, invoked ritually every time another squabble erupts over whether to teach Darwin or the Bible in the public schools, the antievolutionists still had the confidence to come out hot for Genesis in its narrowest interpretation rather than take cover behind “Intelligent Design” or some other linguistic squid ink.

Led by one of the most famous men in the United States, the Democratic politician William Jennings Bryan, the Tennessee antievolutionists in 1925 also made clear that the tension between the Bible and Darwin’s theory of natural selection was not their sole concern. Although they surely felt their dignity tarnished by Darwin’s assertions of a common ancestry between humans and beasts—especially monkeys—much of their animosity toward evolutionism grew out of its larger commitment to “materialism.” Commonly used today to denote an unseemly attachment to consumer goods, “materialism” in Bryan’s day conveyed more a sense that the scientific method—seeking material explanations for natural phenomena, such as explaining why species change over time—was literally “disenchanted” the world by removing a role for God to play. Darwin and his scientific allies seemed to have barred God from playing a role in the natural world.

Like many of his own allies, from the Vatican proper to the “Protestant Vatican” of Nashville, Tennessee, Bryan feared that a reliance on materialism had left us with a degraded, godless culture—and the conceptual connection he made in the 1920s from the *Origin of Species* to flapperism, jazz, and bathtub gin has changed today primarily in its form, not its substance. A culture that relies purely on

materialist explanations is a culture that has given up on the possibility of the miracle, on the belief that God may intervene in the natural world through whichever mechanisms he chooses, including particularly the saving grace of Jesus.

Backed by a wide majority of the American people, Bryan in 1925 could be quite open about America’s need to follow the natural history lessons laid out in the first chapters of Genesis. If the majority believed it, then what right did a small minority of natural scientists have to impose their narrow vision of Darwinism on the nation’s

A grab-bag of controversies have persuaded a small number of conservative evangelicals that they are an aggrieved minority in America.

schoolchildren? More than half a century of court cases mandating a clearer separation of church and state have backed Bryan’s heirs into various evasive strategies, from claiming to teach a neutral “creation science” (rejected in 1987’s *Edwards v. Aguillard* as simply another attempt to disguise religion in a lab coat) to the more recent ID proposals for schools to “teach the controversy” between evolution and ID with a wink at supporters who are in on the game. We might hope that these calculated adaptations have in many ways weakened the original organism.

But a look at the so-called “Wedge Document,” a long-term strategic plan for ousting evolution and renewing America’s Christian character developed at Seattle’s well-funded Discovery Institute in the 1980s, also reveals the persistent vigor of the anti-materialist impulse as it funnels itself through the fight against evolution. Although no longer able to trumpet its religious goals as openly as Bryan did (and, in fact, the Discovery Institute initially denied

having anything to do with the wedge document), in the end, the similarity in substance is paramount. The Wedge writers view “scientific materialism” as the very source of almost all destructive “moral, cultural and political legacies” of the past century and a half. What are these legacies? Bathtub gin has shuffled off the stage, originally replaced by Freudianism, utopianism, and communism, but now more recently supplanted by liberal attitudes toward personal responsibility, theology, and, in a nod to the Discovery Institute’s well-heeled supporters, “products liability.”

Envisioning this behemoth of scientific materialism as a giant tree whose trunk can be split with a thin wedge at its weakest point (evolutionary theory, apparently), the wedge strategy commences with Phillip Johnson’s 1991 brief *Darwinism on Trial* and develops the various means by which “Intelligent Design” and its related arguments can be used to widen the gap so that Americans may approach the ultimate goal of redeeming American culture from scientists, doctors, lawyers, and actuaries.

Assuming that commitments to reforming psychoanalysis or tort law are not enough to charge the faithful, it is clear from interviews with the men and women at the leading edge of the wedge that they see the ID fight as part of the broader culture wars of the last thirty-five years. These include the school wars over prayer, sexuality education, displays of the Ten Commandments, and a grab-bag of other controversies that have persuaded a small number of conservative evangelicals that they are an aggrieved minority in America, suffering persecution at the hands of the courts, the schools, and Hollywood liberals.

Many of their grievances are cranked up within the echo chambers of talk radio rather than real impositions on the local concerns of any one school or congregation, but the public schools make an ideal staging ground for activism. Well-organized groups can capture small local elections or

Much of their animosity toward evolutionism grew out of its larger commitment to “materialism.”

take advantage of other political anomalies, such as the provision in Kansas that the state board of education be elected from local districts rather than appointed by, say, a governor. It is these national issues being filtered through the local level that makes for such rich headlines and, in the cases of both Dover and Kansas, international mockery.

Ridicule stings, but for the committed Christians on the leading edge of the wedge, such treatment is merely more evidence that a secular, materialist culture has decided to throw them to the lions—or, rather, continue to lump them in with the monkeys. Thus, Judge John E. Jones’ thumping decision in the Dover, PA, case stands as a greater vindication yet for their continued crusade.

Further, while the tips of wedges can be broken, the stump often remains behind. The courts may retain their reason; voters may turn the rascals out, at least temporarily. But at the end of the day, without a strong mandate to teach evolution as their professional training has prepared them to, how many public school biology teachers will open the textbook, look down into the faces of their pupils, and decide it’s just not worth the fight? ■

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The Battle for the Mainline Churches



Stan Honda/AFP/Getty Images

By Frederick Clarkson

“Make no mistake,” wrote Avery Post, the national president of the United Church of Christ in 1982, “the objectives of the Institute on Religion and Democracy are the exact opposite of what its name appears to stand for. The purpose of its leaders is to demoralize the mainline denominations and to turn them away from the pursuit of social and economic justice.

“We must not wait for this attack to be launched in the congregations of the United Church of Christ. I urge you to move quickly to tell the ministers and members of the churches in your conference about this campaign to disrupt our church life and to explain to them how and

why the National Council of Churches has been chosen to be its first victim and the opening wedge for attacks on the denominations themselves.”¹

Post’s letter to regional leaders of the 1.7 million-member church followed the Institute of Religion and Democracy’s (IRD) media attacks against the National Council of Churches (NCC) and its member denominations in *Readers Digest* and on *60 Minutes*. Both were smear jobs, alleging that money from Sunday collection plates were financing Marxist guerrillas. *60 Minutes* producer Don Hewitt told TV talk show host Larry King in 2002 that it was the one program he truly regretted in his career. Twenty years late, but at least he acknowledged the error.²

Avery Post was prophetic in his warning. Unfortunately, he was not widely heeded. Although the episode was big news at the time, it seemed to drift from people's consciousness. These days, the battle lines are drawn over such issues as same sex marriage and ordination of gay and lesbian priests and ministers. But as important as these matters are, the stakes are far larger. They go to the extent to which the mainline churches will continue to play a central role in American public life, or the extent to which they will be marginalized, perhaps forever.

People outside of the churches may wonder, why they should care? Methodist minister Andrew Weaver, who has researched the Institute and its satellite groups, explains that the member churches of the National Council of Churches account for about 25% of the population and half of the members of the US Congress. "NCC church members' influence is disproportionate to their numbers," he says, "and include remarkably high numbers of leaders in politics, business, and culture.... Moreover, these churches are some of the largest landowners in the U.S., with hundreds of billions of dollars collectively in assets, including real estate and pension funds. A hostile takeover of these churches would represent a massive shift in American culture, power and wealth for a relatively small investment."

What is more, the institutional moral authority, leadership, and resources of the churches have been vital to major movements for social change throughout the 20th Century—from enacting child labor laws, to advancing the African-American civil rights movement, to ending the war in Vietnam. But as it happens, individuals such as civil rights leader Rev. Andrew Young (United Church of Christ) and antiwar leader Rev. William Sloan Coffin, (Presbyterian) are often better known than their denominations.

The good news is that in recent years, new efforts to understand the IRD, its affiliates, and allies are accompanied by efforts to share that understanding and respond both inside and outside the targeted churches.

The Origins of IRD

For much of the 20th century, the mainline Protestant churches maintained a vigorous "social witness." That is what these Protestants call their views on such matters as peace, civil rights and environmental justice. While there was certainly conservative opposition to the development of these views, and to the activities that grew out of them, the direction of mainline Protestantism was clear. The churches became powerful proponents of social change in the United States. They stood at the moral and political center of society with

historic roots in the earliest days of the nation. Indeed, they epitomize the very idea and image of "church" for many Americans. In retrospect, it seems inevitable that powerful external interests would organize and finance the conservative rump factions into strategic formations intended to divide and conquer—and diminish the capacity of churches to carry forward their idea of a just society in the United States—and the world.

When the strategic funders of the Right, such as Richard Mellon Scaife, got together to create the institutional infrastructure of

The UCC Responds

In recent years several book length studies have generated broader awareness of the issue – and catalyzed counter movements, including, *A Moment to Decide: The Crisis in Mainstream Presbyterianism; Methodism @ Risk;* and *Hardball on Holy Ground: The Religious Right v the Mainline for the Church's Soul.*

In an interview with *The Public Eye*, Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, Associate Conference Minister of the Missouri Mid-South Conference of the United Church of Christ (UCC), explained his work on a UCC task force, that operates "under the authority of the Council of Conference Ministers," who are regional church executives. He says the task force was formed "two years ago as a direct response to attacks on our congregations. The center of a lot of it," he says they learned, "is IRD [the Institute on Religion and Democracy]."

The UCC's unique polity and liberal theology, he explained, makes its local churches logical takeover targets. Because the UCC "confers complete autonomy on every congregation, Right-wing groups can perform takeovers and end up with millions of dollars in property, membership contributions, and endowments," he says.

Among other things, the renewal groups, including the IRD-affiliated Biblical Witness Fellowship, sponsors a secretive "pastoral referral network," that seeks to bypass the denomination's standard procedures for finding evangelical pastors through a private web site. "Churches offer themselves as willing to receive these 'Godly pastors,' and the Referral Network sends them information about a pastor willing to serve their church." Dorhauer says that Runion-Barford in a taped radio interview explained that they seek to identify pastors who have graduated from "evangelical seminaries outside the denomination who are willing to serve in UCC churches."

The task force seeks to "detect patterns" of activities intended to undermine congregations and "to develop strategies for what congregations can do to respond to these attacks." They also developed strategies for churches not yet targeted to prepare in advance.

The task force has noticed, for example, a new group called "Faithful and Welcoming," with close links to IRD and IRD affiliates, that focuses on issues of individual congregational withdrawal.

"Our greatest task," he said, "is to help local church pastors understand that they can't fight the battle alone. That this is not just happening in their congregation."

He says that within the UCC, there is "growing recognition, but a high degree of denial. Some get it, some don't. Some eyes are being opened, but not all. Some eyes that are still shut, are willingly kept shut."

Dorhauer is writing a weekly essay at www.Talk2Action.org on the attacks on the churches, and what to do about them.

the Right in the 1970s and 80s, they underwrote the founding of the IRD in 1980 as a Washington, DC-based agency that would help network, organize, and inform internal opposition groups, while sustaining outside pressure and public relations campaigns.

IRD was started as a project of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM), an organization of conservative Democrats (many of whom later defected to the GOP), who had sought to counter the takeover of the party by liberals associated with 1972 presidential candidate George McGovern. IRD was originally run by Coalition chief, Penn Kemble—a political activist who did not attend church.³ According to a profile by the International Relations Center, IRD received about \$3.9 million between 1985 and 2002 from The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, Sarah Scaife Foundation, John M. Olin Foundation, Castle Rock Foundation, The Carthage Foundation, and JM Foundation.⁴

The Institute remains a well-funded and influential hub for a national network of conservative factions called the Association for Church Renewal. The member organizations, called “renewal” groups, variously seek to neutralize church tendencies of which they don’t approve; drive out staff they don’t like; and seek to take over the churches, but failing that—taking as many churches and assets out as possible. The network’s spokespersons are treated as credible voices of conservative dissent by mainstream media.

IRD’s program is currently focused on the NCC’s three largest denominations, together comprising 14 million members: the United Methodist Church, The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (PCUSA). They also find the time to target the NCC, and the World Council of Churches. For example, interim IRD president Alan Wisdom personally attended the recent World Council of Churches (WCC) meeting in Brazil, issued critical dispatches for the IRD web site, and sound

bites for the press.

One Association for Church Renewal (ARC) member group, *The Presbyterian Layman*, a nationally circulated publication edited by Parker Williamson, has been notable for being particularly caustic and divisive. At a press conference sponsored by ARC in connection with the 50th anniversary meeting of the WCC in Zimbabwe in 1998, Parker declared, for example, “Rhodesian blacks were in no position to run this sophisticated and highly efficient

Politically motivated and externally funded campaigns for church schism are unprecedented in American history.

infrastructure... Theirs had been a tribal life, governed by a worldview that could not easily comprehend ideological assumptions on which the Rhodesian economy was based.”⁵ Most recently, Williamson joined Alan Wisdom, (a Presbyterian renewal leader), at the WCC meeting in Brazil, from which he posted critical reports in *The Presbyterian Layman Online*.

Although much of what they do is conducted quietly, arguably covertly, renewal groups pop-up in response to matters they don’t like. For example, the leader of the IRD affiliate, Biblical Witness Fellowship, was outraged at the historic stand taken by elected delegates to last year’s biannual General Synod of the UCC. When the synod voted overwhelmingly to endorse marriage equality for same-sex couples, Rev. David Runion-Bareford declared that the UCC “has arrogantly supposed to speak for God”—and suggested that the UCC was no longer a Christian denomination.

“This resolution does not validate same sex relationships but only invalidates and

de-legitimizes the UCC as a religious body,” he said. “We are deeply saddened by this tragic day in the history of our church that once had a faithful witness for Jesus Christ.”⁶ What he didn’t say was that the resolution was really a recommendation to the individual churches, not a policy. The outspoken Runion-Bareford was widely quoted in the mainstream press before, during, and after the synod.

Mainline or Evangelical?

A few years ago, the Protestant National Council of Churches, struggling with budget problems and political gridlock, almost shut down. Coincidentally, the 50th anniversary of the NCC came during this still-troubled period. “Rather than a birthday party,” said IRD President Diane Knippers in a March 27, 2001 press release, “the NCC should be given a funeral service.” The release was headlined: “Mainline Reform Leaders Call for Dissolution of the National Council of Churches.”

The IRD’s best efforts notwithstanding, the NCC has reorganized under the leadership of Rev. Bob Edgar and appears poised to once again be an influential body in public life.

The IRD presented its people as “mainline” reformers in calling for the dissolution of the NCC. But when convenient, it will change clothes and become aligned with the National Association of Evangelicals. For example, in a recent press release, IRD announced: “At the urging of evangelical leaders, including the IRD’s interim president [Alan Wisdom], the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) has decided NOT to endorse campaigns or legislation regarding global warming.”

Similarly, leaders of IRD and its affiliated Association for Church Renewal hold critical press events at NCC and denominational events—but ARC holds its own annual meeting in tandem with the National Association of Evangelicals.

Members of the Right-wing Association for Church Renewal¹⁷

Alliance for Confessing Evangelicals
 American Anglican Council
 Anglicans United
 American Baptist Evangelicals
 American Lutheran Publicity Bureau
 Biblical Witness Fellowship
 Community of Concern
 Disciple Renewal
 Evangelical Lutheran Confessing Fellowship
 Good News
 Institute on Religion and Democracy
 National Alliance of Covenanting Congregations
 Presbyterian Layman
 Presbyterians for Faith, Family, & Ministry
 Presbyterians for Renewal
 Presbyterians Pro-Life
 RENEW Network
 The Confessing Movement
 The Renewal Fellowship
 Solid Rock Lutherans
 Transforming Congregations
 Word Alone

Supporting Ministries

Bristol House, Ltd.; Fellowship of St. James

Divide and Conquer or Denominational Unity?

IRD and its member groups also try to have it both ways when it comes to whether they seek unity or schism, which would split them formally from the main church bodies. While they usually say they favor denominational unity, in fact they have been secretly working for broad scale schism for years. Schisms are not unusual in the history of mainline Protestantism—but such targeted, politically motivated, and externally funded and organized campaigns may be unprecedented in American history.

“The IRD is affiliated with no denomination and is accountable only to its own, self-perpetuating board of directors,” write Andrew Weaver and Nicole Seibert, “[and it] focuses its principal expenditures and most of its efforts on the United Methodist Church.”

The IRD Methodist affiliate, Good News, not only has organized for schism but its leaders Rev. Scott Field and Rev. James Heidinger told *Christianity Today* “institutional separation is all but inevitable.”⁷

Weaver and Seibert note that in 2002, a foundation controlled by Richard Mellon Scaife “gave \$225,000 to the IRD for its “Reforming America’s Churches Project”—among whose stated goals is the elimination of the Methodists’ General Board of Church and Society, the church’s voice for justice and peace, as well as discrediting United Methodist Church pastors and bishops with whom they disagree by instigating as many as a dozen church trials over the next few years.

The longtime director of IRD, the late Diane Knippers was, according to *Salon.com*’s Max Blumenthal, “the chief architect” of an initiative “to ‘restructure the permanent governing structure’ of ‘theologically flawed’ mainline churches... in order to ‘discredit and diminish the Religious Left’s influence.’”⁸

IRD and its agents in all of the major denominations have indeed used the internal church judicial system to create division while seeking to enforce their versions of orthodoxy. The Presbyterian Church USA, for example, has seen many judicial battles over, among other things, ordination of gay clergy and the carrying out of same sex commitment ceremonies during this period.⁹

The public gamesmanship over schisms gets quite interesting. Knippers told the *New York Times* that liberal Methodists should leave in response to the discord generated by church trials: “Rather than be embroiled in legal battles in church courts over sexuality, let’s find a gracious way to say, ‘we’ll let you (liberals) leave this system because you believe it violates your con-

science.”¹⁰ That gambit didn’t work, however. In 2004, Good News drew up a schism resolution—which it didn’t introduce due to the overwhelming enthusiasm for a unity resolution at the Methodist General Assembly.

A similar schism campaign targeting the Episcopal Church had its origins in 2000. Members of IRD’s American Anglican Council solicited funding for the effort from Howard and Roberta Ahmanson—who had already contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years to IRD.

Bankrolled with more \$1 million from the Ahmansons in 2000 and 2001, and with Roberta Ahmanson now on the IRD board, the group eventually targeted the appointment and consecration of the Rt. Rev. Gene Robinson, the Episcopal church’s first bishop to be openly gay when elected. “With its war chest full and its strongest pretext yet for a schism, the group cranked up a smear campaign against Robinson,” Blumenthal wrote, “falsely accusing him of sexual harassment and administering a bisexual pornography Web site.” This encouraged wealthy dioceses and congregations to split with the Episcopal Church and join the Anglican Council’s renegade network.

In September of 2004, IRD quietly organized a campaign to divert funds away from the church and towards “orthodox” Anglican groups. Tom Donnelly, one of the principals of The Jefferson Group, a Washington, DC lobbying firm, personally handled funding solicitations for the “United Anglican Fund” which he and two others incorporated in response the consecration of Bishop Robinson. “Since the goal of the UAF,” wrote IRD staffer Lauren Whitnah, “is to provide a safe mechanism for giving, there are no ties between it and any entity of the Episcopal Church.” By “safe,” she means ensuring that “the funds stay out of the control of hostile dioceses...” and to fund “orthodox” projects “in North America and the world.”¹¹

Since Robinson’s consecration, a number of dioceses affiliated with the Anglican Council have threatened schism and have increasingly aligned themselves with con-

servative Anglican churches in Africa and Asia. Indeed, Rev. Dr. Stephen Noll, Vice Chancellor of Uganda Christian University, a keynote speaker at a recent conference in South Carolina (“dedicated to the memory of Diane Knippers”) declared, “Liberal Anglicanism is reaping the harvest of unbelief,” and, “The gates of hell will not prevail against His Church... The present order is passing away.”¹²

Theocratic Visions

Part of the backdrop of all of this is Howard Ahmanson’s broader involvement with the religious Right, which began when he became a disciple of the leading theocratic theologian of the 20th century, R.J. Rushdoony, founder of the Chalcedon Foundation in Vallecito, CA. Rushdoony was the seminal thinker of the Christian Reconstructionist movement that seeks to eventually create a theocracy based on “Biblical Law” in the United States, and around the world.¹³ Ahmanson reportedly contributed \$1 million during his many years of service on the Chalcedon board. In 1985, he told the *Orange County Register*, “My goal is the total integration of biblical law into our lives.”

Since then, he has distanced himself from some of Rushdoony’s ideas. For example, he told Max Blumenthal in an email interview that he disagreed with Rushdoony that homosexuals should be executed. But how far Rushdoony’s disciple fell from the Reconstructionist tree is hard to measure. The Ahmansons were at Rushdoony’s bedside when he died. When Blumenthal asked Roberta Ahmanson, who serves as her husband’s spokesperson, if they still seek to implement biblical law, she replied: “I’m not suggesting we have an amendment to the Constitution that says we now follow all 613 of the case laws of the Old Testament... But if by biblical law you mean the last seven of the 10 Commandments, you know, yeah.”

Whatever Howard Ahmanson’s personal differences with Rushdoony on aspects of Biblical Law, he has put his money where his mouth once was. He finances attacks on the mainline Protestant

churches that support religious pluralism and separation of church and state and are major obstacles to the theocrats’ long range vision, as well as to the short term goals of Christian Rightists in the Republican Party. The Ahmansons helped bankroll such organizations as Focus on the Family and the Traditional Values Coalition; state-level antigay and pro-school voucher ballot initiatives, and funneled millions of dollars into electoral politics in California.

Denominations Emerging from Denial

Mainline denominational leaders who seek to defend their faith and the institutions they lead need to look at the wider context of the internal struggles in which they are engaged. To fail to look beyond individual denominational dissidents is to miss the forest for the trees. The Right aims to march through the institutions it sees as controlled by liberals, disrupt them, or take them over. That means higher education, public schools, and, yes, churches.

Rev. John Thompson, the current president of the United Church of Christ, sees the forest.

“Groups like the Evangelical Association of Reformed, Christian and Congregational Churches and the Biblical Witness Fellowship,” he said last year, “are increasingly being exposed even as they are increasingly aggressive. Their relationship to the right-wing Institute for Religion and Democracy and its long-term agenda of silencing a progressive religious voice while enlisting the church in an unholy alliance with right-wing politics is no longer deniable. United Church of Christ folk like to be ‘nice,’ to be hospitable. But, to play with a verse of scripture just a bit, we doves innocently entertain these serpents in our midst at our own peril.”¹⁵ ■

Perhaps people will hear Thompson better than they did Avery Post.

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ADVERSARIES/ALLIES *continues from page 1*

in red states made common cause across party lines in the struggle to defeat its worst provisions.

“In the Boise Patriots, I had to rub shoulders with socialists, gays,” said Hoover. “It was interesting. There was a common denominator of mistrust of government with such vast power—who would be next? [And] many were well-versed in history, remembering Rev. Niemoller—first they came for you, until there was nobody left.”

The strange bedfellows won local council, county and even state resolutions decrying the Patriot Act’s abuse of civil liberties, which both pressured and gave political support to the Republican Senators and Congresspeople who at least briefly broke party ranks to pursue Patriot Act reform and broader investigations of illegal spying by the National Security Agency. And the grassroots organizing can be credited with stopping Patriot Act II, a short-lived effort in 2003 to legitimize the spying power of the government even further.

But even before the March defeat, activists of all political stripes wondered how—with the media and legislators ignoring their cause—they could stop the federal government from breaking the Constitutional and moral boundaries that traditionally kept it from limiting people’s rights. In this struggle, both progressive and conservative coalition members are rooted in the American republican tradition, which for two centuries—dating back to Tom Paine—saw government power as a threat to liberty. In keeping with this long lineage, they view those in government as subject to corruption, and claim the right and responsibility to stand firm in the struggle to control it.

Listening to their fears, you come to understand how personally the allies feel the threat to their own political activity. Without the freedoms outlined in the Bill of Rights—to free speech, free association, and freedom from unwarranted spying—full citizenship cannot act as a counterweight to overreaching government power. Liberals take it a step further and support these freedoms to pursue the common good

The Patriot Act

Some Patriot Act skeptics like George Will wondered whether the struggle to soften the Patriot Act was irrelevant since the Bush Administration refuses any Congressional oversight of its secret spying.¹² The Defense Intelligence spying program on anti-war activists, the National Security Agency’s illegal spying on phone calls from the US callers overseas, and the massive database of “suspicious” names were all exposed by the press not the Administration.

Still, in March, the US Senate validated many of the provisions of the law passed six weeks after September 11th, even as it stumbles in forcing the Administration to reveal details of its spying programs. Under the revised Act, signed by President Bush March 9,

- The government can still spy on people’s reading habits at libraries without a warrant by securing the information from internet service providers (Section 215).
- The government can still secretly search people’s homes and businesses without telling them, but now must within 30 days (Section 213).
- Agencies have fewer barriers to share information.
- The government can still bypass the usual need to connect its searches to potential “terrorists.”
- The government now allows targets of secret warrants to appeal the secret National Security letters for phone, internet, banking and business records requests under a weak appeals process.
- The gag rule on targets of searches is lifted—after one year.
- The National Security letters provision will expire in four years.

The Department of Justice used more than 30,000 of secret National Security letters in a single year, culling unknown thousands of people’s financial and other records that it then privately shared with other agencies, according to a November expose by The Washington Post. And even the Justice Department admits that 88% of the sneak and peek searches were not for terrorism investigations.

through collective and government action.

Together they challenge the Bush Administration’s symbol of the threatened homeland that requires extraordinary measures to save it. And as cross-party coalitions, they are inoculated from the insinuations of treason coming from those coached by Bush strategist Karl Rove.

While all coalitions are by their nature temporary, they nurture our ability to work with strange bedfellows, increasing the likelihood that we can learn from one another and collaborate again in the future. They recalibrate the dense moral thickets that set the boundaries of our action. But in this continuing fight, there are two major unknowns. First, can movements on the ground ever force action from Congresspeople who seem accountable only to party or plunder? The disconnect between the grassroots and Washington power centers never seemed greater than in the Patriot

Act defeat. Defense Department spying on anti-war Quakers, its new database of activists to watch, FBI scrutiny of PETA as possible terrorists: Will all flow on unchecked?

The second question is whether that disconnect—and the new coalitions—can spark a major political realignment within each of the political parties, if not between them, in a way that defends liberties. There is a deep cleavage within the Republican coalition that is starting to break open; conservative stalwarts both nationally and locally are more committed to the principles of free speech, free association, and freedom from arbitrary government spying, than the Administration’s agenda of unlimited executive power.¹ Among Democrats, all but nine Senators voted for Patriot Act renewal. Can the party rank and file call them to task in election season, pushing the Cold War-style stalwarts to the side?

The more sturdy coalitions, and the ones with the potential to disrupt party alignments, are local. Certainly the Beltway groups have joined in left/right alliances in the past without much impact on political alignments. And some progressives show little interest in forging enduring partnerships with any allies who remain actively anti-gay or anti-immigrant. But as we will see, the determination and disgust of local Rightwing activists against an inactive Congress and overreaching president are wildcards whose impact on the Republican Party will reverberate long after the coalitions end.

Coalitions on the Hill

In December, hope flared when a few “libertarian” Republicans inside Congress crafted a strange bedfellows coalition with Democrats (and Independents) to revise the worst excesses of the Patriot Act and fight against the new surveillance society (see box).² Though temporary, their explosive alliance delayed Patriot Act renewal, marking the first major effort by legislators to restore a constitutionally sanctioned balance of power between the White House and Congress on national security issues.

Joining a filibuster led by Sen. Russell Feingold (D-WI) were 42 Democrats and Senators Larry Craig (R-Idaho), Chuck Hagel (R-NE), Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) and John Sununu (R-NH).³ The legislators of two of those states – Alaska and Idaho – passed Patriot Act resolutions.

“The bridge between Right and Left is rare in this town and this era because there is so much partisan animosity,” said Lisa Graves, the legislative director of the ACLU who led weekly phone meetings updating coalition partners nationwide from the left, right and center. “That’s a significant bridge. Saying you need a connection to a suspected terrorist before getting records is just common sense.”

Even this modest alliance turned out to be weak, with the four Republicans in February bowing to White House pressure

for a compromise. And then the Democrats, perhaps fearing for their reelection chances against “patriotic” pro-war Republicans, joined them.

The advocates had faced a difficult challenge in convincing the very Congress that passed the Patriot Act that the initiatives which they supported in the weeks after September 11th were unconstitutional. And despite its outrage over the National Security Agency’s warrantless spying on Amer-

Both progressive and conservative coalition members are rooted in the American republican tradition, which sees government power as a threat to liberty.

icans’ overseas phone calls, Congress seems more interested in defending its prerogatives as overseer of the executive branch than as defender of the Constitution.⁴

The Beltway Conservative Organizations

Sturdier than the Republican Senators in defending civil liberties are the conservative organizations within the Beltway, whose number are much broader than the libertarians noticed by the press.⁵ They are a coalition of small government conservatives who first came together with progressives to oppose President Bill Clinton’s 1996 Antiterrorism and Death Penalty Control Act, a precursor to the Patriot Act. That law legalized the use of secret evidence in deportation hearings, created a black list of “terrorist” groups, and restricted the ability of some of those detained by the government to find redress in the courts. Among those opposing both laws are Republican operatives like Grover Norquist of Americans for Tax Reform, former GOP

Congressman Bob Barr, David Keene (head of the American Conservative Union), and Larry Pratt’s Gun Owners of America. Together with the ACLU, they launched Patriots to Restore Checks and Balances early in 2005, and joined the low profile Liberty Coalition after its founding by libertarian Republicans in October 2005.

Paul Weyrich, of the Free Congress Foundation, wrote mournfully of the Checks and Balances coalition: “I detest much of what the ACLU stands for [but] we know of no other way of getting the attention of the media and the Congress to improve the USA Patriot Act.”⁶

Gun Owners of America, like the ACLU, is linked with members at the grassroots that they can mobilize. In the Gun Owners of America case, the activists are often populist, anti-government defenders of the little man, small enterprise and personal liberty. Defense against a tyrannical federal government is at the root of their arguments for gun rights.

One organizer noted, “The Left will refer to COINTELPRO and McCarthyism [in opposing parts of the Patriot Act] and the Right will refer to Ruby Ridge,” the incident in Idaho when federal agents shot and killed members of the Weaver family on their 20-acre homestead without first calling for their surrender.

Larry Pratt is well within that world. He resigned as cochair of Buchanan’s 1996 bid for the presidency after charges that he was linked to militias and white supremacists. He has been on the faculty of Camp American, which teaches the “deception of evolution” and aims to “restore America to Christ.” Still, as a coalition member, he is “very principled,” said one progressive who has worked with him. He and his group continued to defend civil liberties against the 1996 Anti-Terrorism bill even after a troublesome provision for gun owners was dropped and the National Rifle Association left the coalition.

“Gun Owners of America is not convinced that the FBI doesn’t need to be watched,” Pratt said at an Oct. 26, 2005

press conference calling for Patriot Act reform.

In creating the coalition Patriots to Restore Checks and Balances, all these conservative leaders hashed out their concerns with the ACLU, the only liberal member of the group. Igniting their concern were Section 213—the secret searches clause; Section 215—allowing the government to secretly secure records of a person's gun purchases; and the overly broad section 802, which defines domestic terrorism as “any act that is dangerous to human life,” which could sweep in pro-life demonstrators.⁷ Freedom of speech, they agreed, is violated by the Patriot Act's “gag order,” preventing those forced to secretly provide information to the government from discussing it.⁸

Patriots for Checks and Balances “conceded to certain provisions that we don't agree with—the Patriot Act shouldn't have existed at all,” said Shane Corey, the chief of staff of the Libertarian Party. Nonetheless, the party signed on.

For the Libertarian Party, working in coalitions is new. “We just started a year and a half ago where we'll sign on,” said Corey.

“You have people who aren't used to talking with one another with any kind of trust,” said Kit Gage, director of the progressive National Committee Against Repressive Legislation who helped craft the coalition opposing the 1996 Anti-Terrorism Act. “You try to set ground rules, have clarity of communication. At a very core level (you) come to an agreement on where you agree...so you don't have ACLU say we want X and the NRA say we want X & Y. You don't end up with a clear message.”

David Keene and the American Conservative Union are old hands at coalitions. “We would not work in coalition with a terrorist group. But there are always areas of overlap with groups that externally disagree,” he said. “We've worked with the ACLU since the early 1970s. We fight with them more but work with them when we can.

“When I work with a liberal group, people say, what the hell are you doing? But you are more effective in Congress and else-

where.”

While Keene remembers his early alliances with ACLU director Ira Glasser dating back to the 1970s, Bob Barr, who launched Patriots for Restoring Checks and Balances with the ACLU, credits Laura Murphy, the ACLU's recently retired legislative director, for reaching out to Republicans after the 1994 election when they took over Congress. “That for me personally set the stage [for] work-

ing with the groups on Patriot Act reform.” As a Congressman, Barr worked with the ACLU against the 1996 Anti-Terrorism law, opposing the national ID card and other proposals, even while opposing the organization on reproductive rights issues, flag burning and drug prohibition.

Even after the four Republican senators caved in to White House pressure, many Beltway conservatives kept up their battle arguing that the “right to privacy” continues to be violated by the Patriot Act.⁹ As Keene had said the month before, refusing to be a lapdog of the Republican Party in fact increases his organization's influence, and contributes to a recentering of the party around his politics.

Local Actions: Dallas

“Coalitions are key to taking back this country,” says Chip Pitts, leader of the successful Bill of Rights Defense Committee (BORDC) in conservative Dallas, and chairman of the national BORDC, based in Northampton, MA. Inspired by the committee's core strategy, 405 municipalities passed resolutions call-



Terry Shepard, a member of the Boise (ID) Patriots, dresses up as Ben Franklin to bring attention to threatened liberties.

ing for reform of the Patriot Act to defend liberty. The tactic, developed months after the passage of the legislation, was a catalyst for making grassroots strange bedfellow coalitions possible. Through its small central office, BORDC offered concrete activities that people could pursue in the face of a big government that seemed out of control: lobby their local legislators to pass the resolutions opposing the Patriot Act's violations of the Constitution, educate their neighbors and make a big noise so others realize there is a problem with the Patriot Act. When the NSA spying story broke in December 2005, the BORDC promoted new tactics like sponsoring local vigils, a new round of visits to legislators, and ads in local papers in hopes of reviving Patriot Act reform coalitions that had often degenerated into virtual activism on listservs.

While the Beltway alliances defending civil liberties long predate the latest scandals, the local ones are new, sometimes involving activists who had never been involved in politics before. In Republican-dominated areas, progressive organizers had no choice but build the widest coali-



tions possible. This led to more effective statewide organizing—while only 50 out of the 397 *local* resolutions were in red states, four of the eight *states* that passed anti-Patriot Act resolutions voted for Bush in 2004. The victories reveal a volatility in red state support for the Bush Administration's agenda.

"For Dallas, you needed a broad coalition," says Pitt, 45, and a lawyer. "Dallas is basically a conservative bastion, the main base of Bush's political and emotional support." One member "almost had a scary militia gleam in his eye," he added. "They didn't like black people. They didn't like gay people. These issues are important enough that we are going to put aside the other issues."

"We set forth rules that we are going to treat each other with respect and focus on what we can work on together," said Pitt.

Racist or hate groups were not invited to the coalition, which almost split over gay rights issues that in general were off the table.

Joining Pitt in the organization was David Rogers, a "Ron Paul" Republican. In Texas, that means he, like libertarian Congressman Ron Paul, opposes the "nanny state" and champions small government and individual liberty. Rogers, Paul and their allies in the Republican Liberty Caucus of Texas are a pesky and persistent thorn in the side of establishment Republicans, not least over the Iraq War. Days before the final House vote on the Patriot Act in March, Paul called for President Bush's impeachment, saying the country is drifting "perilously close to dictatorship."¹⁰

Rogers gave a simple reason for working with the "enemy": "I think these coalitions

are growing because right-leaning people feel betrayed by big-government Republicans posing as conservatives, and left-leaning people oppose those big-government Republicans because they are Republicans."

After a year and a half of organizing, in February 2004, the strange bedfellows managed to sway the City Council. By then, the coalition not only included the Ron Paul Republicans but the gay party organizations Log Cabin Republicans and Stonewall Democrats; ACORN; conservative and liberal Muslim groups; and a few local billionaires like Lucy Billingsley.

"The deceptive effort (of the government) to prevent people from getting the facts worked in our favor, when they said the constitution is not involved," said Pitt.

Idaho: Guns and Greens Unite

In Idaho, the Green Party made a first stab at promoting a local resolution in a largely Republican state that went for Bush in 2004. But no one would work with them, recalled Gwen Sanchirico, 38, and a recent migrant to the state from Queens, NY. “So we just dropped the Green Party thing and made it independent,” said Sanchirico. “Then people feel like they can participate even if you are saying the exact same thing.”

The novelty of the guns and greens coalition that became the Boise Patriots grabbed the press’s attention.

A libertarian and anti-government streak runs through the Republican Party in Idaho, and its Congressman, Butch Otter, was one of the few to vote against the original Patriot Act. Otto also was a leader in trying to defund the Patriot Act’s sneak and peak provisions two years ago. In Idaho, Gun Owners of America members came to the vital Boise Patriot events that the media covered, even if they weren’t active in the small coalition meetings. And carrying the water on the resolution before the Idaho County Commission in the middle of the state were members of the GOP’s tiny rival, the conspiratorial Constitution Party. This far right anti-government party has roots in the militia movement, sees counties as the supreme branch of government and views the United Nations as a threatening world government.¹¹ Their allies in the state legislature were important once the campaign went statewide (eventually winning a bill in March 2005).

“Some people in the statehouse are radical anti-United Nations people,” marveled Sanchirico. “It was really hard to remind people that we have to work together and forget this and forget that.”

Opposing racial profiling in the Boise resolution was one hard won battle that initially divided the coalition. Still, a lot of those who dropped out were liberals: “The Democrats had a hard time even being in the same room as others not like them,” said Sanchirico.

Terry Hoover, the gun rights advocate, was a central player in pulling that com-

munity into the coalition.

“In order for a people to be free they must be allowed to own firearms and any awful implement of war,” said Hoover, who makes his living as an insurance agent in Boise. “The Second Amendment and the Bill of Rights...guarantees the one right to defend self and others and nation. And when a government seeks to eliminate it, it is the way that all other rights are being lost ... The KKK regularly rode through

“The bridge between
Right and Left is rare in
this town and this era
because there is so much
partisan animosity.”

the black towns terrorizing them. And the [black] men took the few guns they had – and you know cowards run.”

“The Patriot Act has a provision in it that, in order to catch a terrorist, registers everybody who has bought a firearm in this country,” said Hoover, who had worked with the state’s senators and Congress-people for years on Second Amendment issues. “Osama bin Laden’s cousin isn’t going to walk into a gun store to buy a firearm.”

Hoover also was concerned that the Patriot Act did not restrict itself to terrorism cases; it is deployed in criminal cases against drug dealers and allows the government to secure warrants with very little or no cause.

Another visible member in Boise was Terry Shepard, who dresses up as Benjamin Franklin to promote patriotism as a counter to nationalism and champions “liberty.”

“Liberty is something everybody can identify with—President Bush called the Constitution just a goddamn piece of paper,” said Shepard, a 58-year-old secu-

rity guard for the local zoo and nearby Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial. “The Constitution is a contract with the people and the government,” he said with indignation.

With friends up in the mountains “who think the world is going to end,” he said, “I’ve always been more conservative but I’ve found Gwen and the liberal people are more willing to stand up than the John Birch Society and churches. These people wait until their ministers tell them what to think. They support the government and God.”

“Checks and balances—history teaches us what happens when we don’t have it,” he added.

In Montana, a coalition including the Eagle Forum (founded by Phyllis Schlafly), Montana Shooting Sports Association, Gun Owners of America, and a slew of progressive groups won the toughest anti-Patriot Act resolution in the country, pointed out Matt Bowles, a field organizer of the ACLU. The legislature instructed its state agencies not to enforce the Patriot Act.

Even among the coalitions, there were doubts. A few progressives wondered if they had sold out by sidestepping heartfelt divisions, especially on gay or immigrant rights issues. Conservatives seemed less worried that they might be weakening a Republican Party they feel is betraying its principles.

One national rightwing group that failed to follow the coalition-building lead of some of its affiliates was Eagle Forum, a socially conservative, “pro-family” group

State Resolutions Against Patriot Act

Alaska
California
Colorado
Hawaii
Idaho
Maine
Montana
Vermont

with roots in pro-military anti-communism. Its leader, octogenarian Phyllis Schlafly, launched her public life as an active Republican warning of the government's betrayal of national security during the Korean War. She straddled the fence on the Patriot Act, saying, "We have some concerns about it. We are not actively opposed... A lot of conservatives think we are in a war and think strenuous opposition is necessary."

Coalition Building in the Beltway versus the Grassroots

Finding commonalities and leaving aside differences, building trust: all are the elements of a strange bedfellows coalition. While they may be easiest to build in the Beltway, they are stronger and have deeper personal impact in the hinterlands where discontent bubbles.

David Keene thinks it is easiest to build alliances inside the Beltway because it is ruled by the pragmatism that passes legislation. But former Congressman Bob Barr says it is toughest in Congress because party regimentation rules all. Events seem to bear him out.

But the local organizers not surprisingly see the Beltway as part of the problem. David Rogers of the Liberty Caucus of Texas thinks "it is much harder in DC, where far more coalitions, alliances, moneyed interests and constituencies are in play for a longer time with deeper roots. The grassroots display much more flexibility in organizing and allying for specific projects and on specific issues."

Pitt of the Texas BORDC also sees inside-the-Beltway politics as part of the problem: "What they do in the Beltway has a ripple effect outside and polarizes it. Most of the nation doesn't understand how much they agree on. Even on issues like gay rights, abortion and gun control. Based on polling there's middle ground even on those issues."

A few of the grassroots organizers said they had changed as a result of working with their erstwhile opponents.

"Once you've accepted working with a type of person who in the past you avoided,

you can't go totally back. You open the door to other possibilities," said Sanchirico, who said she could easily see working with gun advocates in the future.

"There is something about genuineness and integrity and not talking politics that makes coalitions," said Bernie Huebner, 62, a member of the Maine Civil Liberties Union who worked on that state's resolution calling for Patriot Act reform with a conservative legislator. "We sat in my house. We talked. We cowrote things. Having worked with him, we have immense respect for one another. I would listen to anything he says.

"This is how politics should happen, not tied to a party or party leadership. It gives me hope when I don't have much hope."

Next Steps

The campaign against surveillance created a politics beyond party. Its leaders, challenging an out-of-touch Congress, have no doubt that it will reverberate in unexpected ways into the fall elections and beyond. While entered into for practical reasons, the coalitions may nurture a legacy from the 1960s that is lost—the ethic of non-violence where activists struggle to understand or even love their opponents as their neighbor. In that struggle, bystanders and even activists are inspired to shift positions in unexpected ways, perhaps even reducing the attraction of Bush's vision of patriots versus traitors.

Working together, those refusing to be spectators of a drama unfolding in the Beltway can also strengthen their hand in local politics and thus their faction's power within local parties to reestablish libertarian ground rules in American politics. But they will have to change their tactics and move beyond local resolutions and demonstrations; it may be time to learn from the Ron Paul Republicans and work to take over local party machines and take on a disinterested media. ■

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End Notes

¹ Civil liberties is not the only cleavage threatening the GOP. Intelligent design and Rightwing pork barrel politics are also explosive. George Will, "What next for Conservatives," Nov. 17, 2005, accessed at www.townhall.com/opinion/column/georgewill/2005/11/17/17897.html. For splits around the size of government, see Eyal Press, "Even Conservatives Are Wondering: Is Bush One of Us?" *The Nation*, May 31, 2004: 11-20. On immigration, see Dan Balz, "Political Splits on Immigration Reflect Voters' Ambivalence," *Washington Post*, Jan. 3, 2006:A7.

² For instance, see Rick Klein, "Patriot Act Extension Shelved," *Boston Globe*, Nov. 19, 2005. Accessed at http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2005/11/19/patriot_act_extension.

³ On Sunday, Nov. 13, 2005, "the Bush administration stepped in and with the acquiescence of Congressional Republicans," the conference negotiations ended. Democrats were excluded and the White House became the negotiators with Congressional Republicans." Statement of Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Senate floor, Nov. 18, 2005.

⁴ For a full analysis of the Constitutional violations, see Peter P. Swire, "Legal FAQs on Illegal Wiretaps," Center for American Progress, January 26, 2006, accessed at www.americanprogress.org/site/pp.asp?c_bijRJ80VF&cb+1389573.

⁵ Some of the first attention to left/right coalitions came from the conservative press. James Bovard, "Surveillance State," *The American Conservative* (May 19, 2003), accessed at http://www.amconmag.com/05_19_03/coverprint.html; Paul Rush, "Patriot Act Forges Unlikely Alliance," *Insight on the News* (Sept. 16, 2003), accessed at www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1571/13_2003_Sept_16/ai_107543545.

⁶ "An Unlikely Group of Patriots," March 30, 2005, accessed at www.freecongress.org/commentaries/2005/050330.asp.

⁷ "Top Five Reasons Conservatives Support a Careful Review of Key Patriot Act Provisions," Patriots to Restore Checks and Balances, accessed at <http://www.checks-balances.org/topfive.php>.

⁸ Letter to Hon. Arlen Specter (PA), Hon. Patrick Leahy (VT), Hon. Pat Roberts (KS), and Hon. John D. Rockefeller IV (WV) from Sen. Larry E. Craig (ID), Sen. John Sununu (NH), Sen. Lisa Murkowski (AK), Sen. Richard J. Durbin (IL), Sen. Russell D. Feingold (WI) and Sen. Ken Salazar (CO), Nov. 17, 2005.

⁹ For instance, see "Latest Patriot Act Compromise Falls Short," Patriots to Restore Checks and Balances, March 1, 2006.

¹⁰ Paul Joseph Watson, "Republican Congressman Predicts Bush Impeachment: Says US close to dictatorship," www.PrisonPlanet.com, March 3, 2006.

¹¹ See "Shooting for Respectability: Firearms, False Patriots, and Politics in Montana," Montana Human Rights Network, 2003.

¹² George Will is one example on the Right. "No Checks, Many Imbalances," *Washington Post*, February 16, 2006: A27.

Book Reviews

THE REPUBLICAN WAR ON SCIENCE

Chris Mooney

Basic Books [a member of the Perseus Books Group]
342 pages, \$24.95 hardcover, 2005

Reviewed by Peter Hirst

Science is under siege. At least this is the impression left after reading journalist Chris Mooney's first book. *The Republican War on Science*, published in hardback last September, takes us on a meticulously researched and eloquently narrated journey through some unsettling interactions between science and politics in contemporary America. Many readers (about half, in a politically balanced sample) may not enjoy the ride. In essence, Mooney's case is that over the last several decades, conservative and in particular Republican activists have sought to systematically undermine and attack the integrity of science, in order to advance their own economic and social agendas and interests. Moreover, he says, they are succeeding.

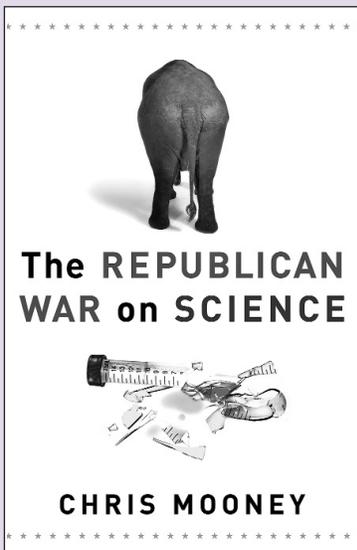
Mooney traces the story's roots back to Kennedy era "right-wing anti-intellectualism" and the 1964 Goldwater presidential candidacy, though tensions between science and conservatism are at least as old as the Enlightenment. The environmental and consumer movements were ascendant in the 1960s and 1970s, and the ensuing government regulation stirred the sleeping giant of industry into defensive action. Its money sparked an explosive growth in the lobbying business and spawned a think-tank culture which became a breeding ground for reactionary conservative ideology and policy development for decades to come. The watershed moment, according to Mooney, was the Reagan presidency that, albeit less invidious in its treatment of science than later Republican administrations, laid much of the groundwork on which subsequent attacks on science were built. Reagan exemplified the twin political ideals of religious conservatism and pro-business deregulation that were the prime motivators of the hostilities towards science and its despised supposed bedfellows, secular intellectual elitism and liberalism.

Mooney identifies an array of tools and techniques deployed to assault and undermine science, including legislation, regulation, PR and managerial practices. He shows how these weapons have been absorbed into the armory of the Republican War on Science just as the religious and pro-business deregulation movements themselves have coalesced into the GOP mainstream.

His veritable "Battle Damage Assessment" runs the gamut from minor skirmishes to pitched battles. With eerie parallels to a certain other War, the body count is high and climbing. An early—and vital—victim was Congress' own Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), which Mooney describes rather generously as having been "dismantled" by the Gingrich-led Republican caucus. The reality was rather more brutal: the 104th Congress simply chose not to fund OTA's work after September 30, 1995. During its 23-year history, OTA provided Congressional members and committees with objective and

authoritative analyses of hundreds of complex scientific and technical issues. The demise of OTA thus dealt a double-headed blow. It deprived Congress of an important source of objective advice on science and technology policies and their implications; and it closed down a public space where policy could meet science in a transparent and accountable debate of the issues. OTA's detractors, of course, might argue just the opposite—that OTA itself had become an instrument of left-wing anti-business and anti-military interests. Perhaps so, but the reality is that it was, to say the least, inconvenient for an office of Congress itself to be producing findings, as it occasionally did, that were inconsistent with prevailing conservative doctrines and policies, such as the 1998 OTA report that was highly skeptical about the viability of Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, popularly known as "Star Wars." (In the interests of full disclosure: From 1995 to 1998 I served as a fellow of the UK version of OTA.)

Drawing on extensive research, Mooney documents the creeping consolidation of an anti-science nexus in the political Right. He shows how time and again the same strategies have been used: the paradoxically named Data Quality Act and the doublespeak of Sound Science; deliberately playing-up and misrepresenting the nature and extent of scientific uncertainty and debate around lightning rod issues like global warming; the coercion of scientific officials and appointees—as seen recently at NASA—and the outright distortion and rejection of their findings and advice. He explains how these have been applied in issues ranging from tobacco, fishery conservation and dietary sugar to the teaching of evolution, creationism and intelligent design; and from contraception, abortion and AIDS to stem cell research. Not all of these battles were won (or lost, depending on one's perspective), nor were they all even decisive. Most still rumble on. The War on Science, Mooney appears to rather



despondently conclude, is one War that its hawkish Republican supporters might actually be winning.

Mooney rightly observes that conservatives have not been the only ones to try to bend science to their own agenda. Greenpeace, to cite but one, has also been guilty of misrepresenting science in its fights against genetically modified foods and in several environmental campaigns. The alliance of the conservative religious and pro-business deregulation movements under the Republican umbrella, however, is what makes the War on Science a quintessentially Republican phenomenon.

What can be done by those dismayed by such developments? Mooney offers a few proposals in an Epilogue, which is a rather too brief call to arms, lacking somewhat the depth and rigor evident in the preceding chapters. Notwithstanding its brevity, though, he advances some key proposals. First and foremost, Mooney supports the need to revive or replace OTA's capabilities. This really goes to the crux of the issue and will be no easy feat. Attempts to resurrect an OTA-like function through legislative amendments and appropriations over several years have consistently failed to gain traction in Congress.

Mooney also urges the scientific community to redouble its own self-defensive efforts, praising organizations such as the National Academies and the American Association for the Advancement of Science for their moves to engage with these issues. He suggests that those who would like to arrest and reverse the politicization of science should use every available legal and educational recourse in defense of its integrity. He calls on journalists to think more critically about and do a better job of explaining science to their readership, especially in the context of controversial policy issues. And he hopes that moderating influences in the GOP will gain strength and pull back from the worst excesses of recent years.

Here, some international comparisons might have been informative. At the most basic level, I am left wondering whether this is a fundamentally American problem, or whether perhaps there are parallels in other countries. The Thatcher years in the UK, maybe, or the conservative resurgence in Germany? Does America stand alone—and in increasing isolation—over these issues? And what are the consequences? Moreover, are there any approaches being tried elsewhere to protect science against politicization and enable open public discourse of difficult policy issues in science and technology that might also be effective in the United States? Several European countries, for instance, have developed their own highly respected versions of OTA in recent years - in most cases smaller and more agile entities than the US organization that inspired them, which would counter

at least one of the objections to OTA as a bureaucratic behemoth.

Since this book was published, events have hardly been static. Lawsuits about the teaching of evolution and intelligent design struggle through the courts, stem cell research remains in the news, and extreme weather events fuel concerns over global warming, to name but a few examples. And despite the President speaking in his State of the Union Address on the need to invest in science and technology as the engine of US economic competitiveness—hardly the words of a science-hater—the very same speech, alas, called for legislation to “prohibit the most egregious abuses of medical research: human cloning in all its forms” This single sentence captured the essence of the Republican War on Science in all its gory glory - misrepresenting, oversimplifying, confusing and politicizing all at once.

In the subject targeted by Bush (stem cell research), science may not have done itself many favors lately. The escalating scandal arising from the admitted fraud by eminent (and now infamous) Korean researcher Woo Suk Hwang also implicates researchers in several US universities and even *Science* magazine, the flagship science journal published by the AAAS. The Right readily co-opted this as evidence to impugn the integrity of science and question the scientific process itself. After all, with such internal strife in the scientific community, how can we trust its findings and recommendations?

But such thinking misses the point about the scientific process. Science has an intrinsic immune system that challenges new ideas and discoveries and rejects those that cannot stand up to objective testing and repetition. This can be a messy, organic process when viewed up close, but over the long run it has established an enormous body of knowledge on which we rely as a society for our well-being, quality of life and indeed our very survival. The question is can science's autoimmune system withstand a retro-viral-like onslaught on the integrity of the practitioners and institutions on which its functioning critically depends? If not, the consequence could be dire.

Into this environment, Chris Mooney has contributed an insightful reckoning of a complex and important subject. If I have one reservation about this book, it is that the author's passion for the subject and sometimes palpable sense of exasperation lends a needlessly partisan quality to the text, which could cause some readers to discount his basic thesis. This would be unfortunate: readers on both sides of the aisle should take note of this book.

Dr. Peter Hirst, Ph.D., is a freelance science and technology policy analyst and strategy consultant based in Boston, MA.

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It was inconvenient for an office of Congress to be producing findings that were inconsistent with prevailing conservative doctrines and policies.

Book Reviews CONTINUED

THE DEATH OF FEMINISM

What's Next in the Struggle for Women's Freedom

Phyllis Chesler

Palgrave, 2005, \$24.95, 256 pages.

Reviewed by Eleanor J. Bader

Eleanor J. Bader is a Brooklyn, NY-based teacher, writer and activist. She is coauthor of Targets of Hatred: Anti-Abortion Terrorism (St. Martin's Press, 2001).

It's not exactly headline news that men and women have yet to achieve equality. On average, women still earn less than men, the lion's share of child and elder care falls on female shoulders, and men remain largely absent from the domestic tableau. Couple this with shrinking access to abortion, birth control, and sexuality education, and it is easy to dismiss 20th century feminism as a colossal failure.

Of course, such reductive reasoning misses the mark, sidestepping a slew of issues and obstacles. Nonetheless it has become increasingly trendy to blame feminism for everything from teenaged angst to romantic blunders.

Phyllis Chesler, whose groundbreaking book, *Women and Madness*, galvanized thousands of "Second Wave" feminists when it was released in 1972, has joined the backlash at full tilt. Her arguments run from the facile to the silly and deride feminists as craven beings whose allegiance to the left has caused them to abandon those who need liberation most. As she sees it, "the disease of politically correct passivity" has kept the women's movement from decrying the major threat to contemporary U.S. values, Islamic fundamentalism.

Chesler, a frequent contributor to David Horowitz's *FrontPage Magazine* and an unabashed fan of George W. Bush, sees domestic feminists as wildly anti-American. She also sees university-level women's studies classes as purveyors of radicalism, brainwashing innocent adolescents to undervalue Judeo-Christian traditions.

Yes, rhetoric is high in Chesler's *The Death of Feminism*, as are gross generalizations. "A Democrat today means that one is a liberal," she writes. "And liberals are no longer what they once were or who they should be. Today liberals are more left than ever before. Many engage in totalitarian groupthink... One can-

not be pro-choice and anti-gay marriage, nor [sic] can one oppose both rape and affirmative action. One has to sign on to the entire politically correct agenda or risk being attacked and ostracized."

Lord knows which Democrats Chesler is referring to as most pundits have noted the Party's rightward swing on issues including abortion, civil liberties and pre-emptive war. Similarly, it is impossible to discern which academic institutions are breeding

the array of youthful revolutionaries Chesler references. (Needless to say, if the Dems and the universities were as bold as Chesler charges, we might not be in Iraq, the Patriot Act might not have won Congressional passage, and the U.S. Constitution might include an amendment giving women equal rights. But I digress.)

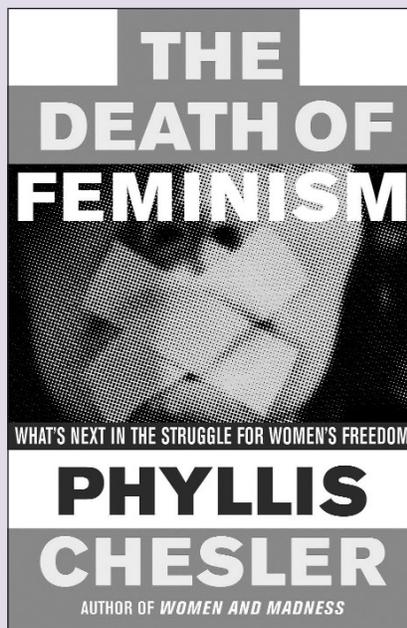
Chesler grounds her theories in highly selective personal observations and anecdotes. Throughout, she lambastes left-feminists for making Shar'ia Law seem like just another religious option and for failing to denounce the oppressive garments mandated by Muslim modesty. Had they done so, she suggests, feminists could have liberated these sisters; instead, they parade through European and U.S streets "veiled, like ghosts."

A chapter entitled "My Afghan Captivity" seeks to further pull readers' heartstrings. In it, Chesler recounts her 1961 elopement, at age 20, with her Afghani Muslim sweetheart, Ali. After getting married, the couple travel to Ali's birthplace in Kabul; the tale of his family's treatment of her is horrific, rife with insults, bad food, and mobility restrictions. Yet the story seems to be missing some important details. A self-described Orthodox Jew, Chesler never discusses her family's reaction to the betrothal.

Were Muslims the only people to denounce this improbable match, or did her family sit Shiva, mourning her marriage as if she had died? More generally, how did the insular Borough Park, Brooklyn, community in which Chesler was reared deal with her worldly aspirations? Later, following her eventual divorce, was all forgiven?

While Chesler never mentions these topics, she does offer a veritable Megillah of horrors suffered by Muslim females. Her analysis of the ways women police one another to enforce

Chesler sees domestic feminists as wildly anti-American.



misogynist customs is insightful, although her refusal to acknowledge that they are not the only ones to oppress their own is troubling.

And therein lies the central failing of *The Death of Feminism*. Chesler believes that stopping Muslim fundamentalism should be a top priority the world over. She further believes that there is a universal code of conduct that can, and should, be followed. Despite historical evidence to the contrary, she implies that outsiders can impose new social mores on Muslim countries without engendering either backlash or resentment. It is as if she envisions a Koran-reading cadre eager for consumerist bounty. What's more, as Chesler conjures this illusion, she ignores Christian and Jewish fundamentalism, thereby demonizing Muslims and setting up a dichotomy in which some fundamentalists—notably brown-skinned Arabs and Africans in non-Western attire—are presented as more dangerous than men like Jerry Falwell, Tim LaHaye, Pat Robertson or the Lubavitcher rebbes.

“Muslims in the West should not have the right to face-veil their girls and women; practice female genital mutilation; arrange forced marriages; or commit crimes such as polygamy, wife-beating, child abuse and shame-based honor murders,” she writes. I agree. But are Muslims here clamoring for such imperatives? Secondly, aren't there already laws against these practices that cover everyone?



Phyllis Chesler

Chesler's biases are blatant. She rails against progressives and gratuitously criticizes feminists including *The Nation's* Katha Pollitt. She dismisses critics of U.S. foreign policy as cultural relativists and presents political disagreements as a breakdown in civility, as if it is the height of diplomatic discourse when Dick Cheney calls opponents of the Iraq War shameful, reprehensible cowards.

Still, the essence of the matter—something Chesler misses—is that all forms of religious fundamentalism threaten justice-loving people. Esther Kaplan, in *With God on Their Side*, wrote that the current war on terror can be seen as a “religious crusade by Christian fundamentalists at home and Islamic fundamentalists abroad.” While Chesler is rooting for the Christians, those who disagree with her face a thornier dilemma: how to make secular humanism a desirable alternative. In addition, she offers no guidance on how—or if—to limit cultural autonomy and promote assimilation amongst groups as diverse as the Amish, Hasidic Jews, Native Americans or socially conservative Muslim immigrants.

As recent violence in France made clear, ignoring these issues has dire consequences. Sadly, Chesler's rant about the “Islamization of the West” does nothing to address this or to advance women's rights. Yet she is right about one thing: Feminism is incompatible with fundamentalism. Indeed, if feminism is to survive as a political movement, it must work to vanquish this enemy both at home and abroad.

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.....Reports in Review.....

REPORT OF THE MONTH

Downsizing Cities

Target San Diego: The Right Wing Assault on Urban Democracy and Smart Government

by Lee Cokorinos, Center for Policy Initiatives, November 2005

This report shows how national organizations like the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC, founded in 1973 by Paul Weyrich) connect conservative state legislators with each other and with corporations and industry associations, creating “a pipeline of ideas and proposals that directly impact how urban policy is framed across a wide range of issues.” ALEC generates the ideas and circulates policies while the State Policy Network supports the growth and capacity of state-level think tanks like the San Francisco-based Pacific Research Institute.

The national initiatives then allow “the conservative movement to drive its infrastructure down into America’s major metropolitan areas,” as the report shows through its case study of San Diego, a key battleground city.

The Pacific Research Institute’s Web “activity log,” which Cokorinos analyzes, shows a busy schedule of staff meetings with other conservative think tanks, *Wall Street Journal* editorial page writers, federal officials, Assemblymen and city supervisors, and corporate attorneys and public affairs directors. Cokorinos also profiles the libertarian Reason Foundation, which “focuses intensely on producing nuts-and-bolts strategies and ‘how to’ guides

for downsizing state and local government in California.” These are distributed to the media, corporations and lawmakers through an extensive communications apparatus. Lurking behind their privatization proposals, says Cokorinos, “is the potential for major contractors and developments to make a killing”—a fact that explains the fundraising success of Reason and similar think tanks.

When Cokorinos finally reaches San Diego and its local think tank, the Performance Institute (on p. 39 of the 55-page report), the reader has a good sense of the context that allows the Performance Institute to survive and thrive. The Performance Institute relies on national think tanks and organizations like ALEC to provide privatization and downsizing campaign models, then applies the same formula on an issue-by-issue basis: “first issuing slick research reports setting out the nature of the problem, followed by well funded communications campaigns to move specific proposals, then involvement in setting policy priorities for the new administration during the transition phase, and finally involvement in restructuring policies within government agencies themselves.”

In the report’s conclusion, Cokorinos declares “this long-term confrontation” to be “winnable.” He calls for defending progressive institutional power against right-wing assaults while overcoming the narrowness of single-issue politics and the disconnection of the base from a national progressive superstructure.

—Jeremy Smith

Other Reports in Review

Denying Women Emergency Contraception

Complying with the Law?: How Catholic Hospitals Respond to State Laws Mandating the Provision of Emergency Contraception to Sexual Assault Patients

Catholics for Free Choice and Ibis Reproductive Health; Washington, DC, January 2006.
http://www.catholicsforchoice.org/topics/health_care/documents/2006complyingwiththelaw.pdf

Although the Hyde Amendment created a furor when it prohibited federal funding of most abortions in 1977, many barriers to reproductive services are less obvious. Women who have been sexually assaulted, for instance, deserve immediate medical attention, including medication to prevent an unwanted preg-

nancy. But many Catholic hospitals, which handle 15% of all emergency room visits in the United States, deny women emergency contraception, or EC. “EC in the ER” laws exist in a few states to counteract this situation, but it is not always clear how well they protect women’s access to emergency contraception.

Catholics for a Free Choice enlisted Ibis Reproductive Health to research the compliance Catholic hospitals with these laws. The resulting study is a welcome, if somber, illustration of covert barriers to reproductive justice.

The good news is that in states with “EC in the ER” laws, most Catholic hospitals provide sexual assault victims with emergency contraception-related services. But about one-third of Catholic hospitals in these states

do not. Even worse, most of their referrals for emergency contraception are inaccurate or nonexistent. One way Catholic hospitals circumvent the law is by refusing to treat sexual assault patients in the first place.

Residents of California, New Mexico, New York, Washington and South Carolina—all with EC in the ER laws—will find specific information about their states. Recommended tactics for advocates include lobbying for EC in the ER laws in more states, encouraging hospitals to improve how they implement their EC provisions and pharmacy referrals, and working with policymakers to help them understand the value of this public policy protection.

—Pam Chamberlain

Why Open and Affirming Churches Need Secular Support

David v. Goliath: A Report on Faith Groups Working for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equality (and what they're up against)

Richard A. Lindsay and Jessica Stern, *National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Washington, DC, 2005.*

Here is some interesting data for those wondering how to counteract the enormous opposition to LGBT equality from religious conservatives, building on some of the “most underused resources in the progressive movement.”

These are the American faith communities that work to support LGBT issues, compiled in this report for the first time. You will find LGBT-identified denominations such as the Metropolitan Community Church or Unity Fellowship Church; denominational support groups inside mainline denominations such as the United Church of Christ Coalition for LGBT Concerns or Lutherans Concerned of North America; and “bridge builders,” the organizations working on bridging faith, LGBT, and race or gender issues, such as Queer Asian Spirit or Centro Cristiano.

What makes this report so useful is its method of organization. Coupled with examples of each category of these progressive faith groups are descriptions of organizations within the same traditions that oppose LGBT equality, such as the American Anglican Council (anti-gay Episcopalian) or Good News Forum for Scriptural Christianity (anti-gay Methodist) as well as the reach of the denomination-spanning Institute on Religion and Democracy. [see related article on p. 10] These anti-gay faith groups outspend their LGBT-supportive counterparts by a ration of 8:1, according to the report.

“David v. Goliath” describes anti-gay groups in an even-handed, nondemonizing tone. The recommendations are clearly aimed at secular progressive groups that have much to gain and a lot to learn from new collaborations with LGBT-supportive faith groups. As a whole, the information provides a gentle nudge to groups more comfortable working only with their own kind about the potential for change. —Pam Chamberlain

Faith-Based Funding Framed

Getting a Piece of the Pie: Federal Grants to Faith-Based Social Service Organizations

By Lisa M. Monteil and David J. Wright, *Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare, Rockefeller Institute on Government, State University of New York, Albany, NY, February 2006.*

Conservatives can't seem to agree on whether this new report by the Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy is good news or bad news. While the researchers found that the number of grants awarded to faith-based organizations is up, they also found that the amount of money being awarded is down. In other words, less money is being spread among more FBO's. The White House disputes the findings, saying federal funding is up for religious groups. On the other hand, Stanley Carlson-Thies, director of social policy studies at the Center for Public Justice, seemed to accept the report, saying it “gives the lie to the alarmists” and shows that Bush isn't trying to turn the government into a “religious apparatus.”

The Roundtable looked at all ten government agencies which established centers for faith-based and community initiatives after the Bush Administration issued its executive order setting them up in 2001. They warned, however, that this research does not tackle the difficult-to-track flows channeled through the states.

Of over 28,000 federal grants awarded under the order, 3,526 went to 1,146 organizations identified as faith-based (see below for a description). In 2002 11.6% of the grants went to these groups, while 17.8% of the money did; in 2003 12.2% of the grants and 17.1% of the money; and in 2004, 12.8% of the grants and 17.8% of the money. Percentages don't tell all, since while the percentage of money distributed to faith based groups might be the same from 2002 to 2004, the total money distributed dropped in that period.

Lacking a standard definition of a “faith-based organization,” the researchers looked at whether: 1. the organization uses religious words or symbols in its name, logo, etc., and refers to itself as a faith-based, religious, or faith-affiliated organization; 2. the organization's mission or value statement specifically refers to God, Christ, etc.; 3. there were spiritual or religious elements in the organization's

history; 4. the group had an explicit religious affiliation (Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, etc.); and 5. the organization integrated religious activities in the content of its services (Bible study, prayer, etc.). Over half of the organizations identified by the researchers met four or five of these variables.

It found that the Agency for International Development funds a higher percentage of faith-based organizations than most other agencies in the study —over one-quarter of the awards; the Department of Labor's “Combating Exploitative Child Labor Through Education” gave the highest percentage of individual grants; and HUD's “Assisted Living Conversion Program for Eligible Multifamily Housing Projects” showed the largest net increases in FBO funding. California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas made the top ten for most amount of funding in all three years of the study.

—Cindy King

Wal-Mart's Busted Dream

Wal-Mart: Rolling Back Wages, Workers' Rights, and the American Dream

By Erin Johannson, *American Rights at Work, November 2005*

<http://www.americanrightsatwork.org/docUploads/WalmartReport%5Flowres%2Epdf>

The most cutting part of this report is a table at the end, borrowed from a 2004 *BusinessWeek* article, that compares union-friendly Costco with the evil Wal-Mart's Sam's Club. Despite its union-busting, discrimination, exploitation of undocumented immigrants, and assorted other crimes and misdemeanors exposed in class action lawsuits and the courts, Wal-Mart cannot make Sam's Club as profitable per worker as Costco.

The Teamsters represent only 16% of Costco's workers, but the corporation extends its wage agreement to all workers, who receive an average of \$15.97/hour. That is in contrast to the Sam's Club average of \$12.52. Eighty-seven percent are covered by a health plan, compared to 47% at Sam's Club. Turnover is lower — only 9% a year compared to 21% at Sam's Club. Even with these benefits, Costco's labor costs as a percentage of sales are lower than Sam's Club. —Abby Scher

Eyes RIGHT

TARGET: GAY ED

An affiliate of Focus on the Family is warning its members that any class can promote homosexuality to young students.

The Massachusetts Family Institute wrote: "With the recent court developments in our state, history, science, and even math classes can promote homosexual ideals—including the normalization of same-sex marriage. . . . Encourage your child to tell you if a teacher or classmate talks about same-sex marriage."

Parents can "opt out" of sex education classes for their children, under Massachusetts law. But the Family Institute is sponsoring a bill requiring parents to "opt in" to these classes for their child. A pamphlet issued by the group suggests that any discussion of same-sex marriage is sexuality education. Their not-so-hidden agenda? A section of the MFI webpage is www.voteonmarriage.org, the statewide organizing effort to repeal the legality of same-sex marriage.

Source: "Back to School: A Parents' [sic] Guide," Massachusetts Family Institute, <http://www.mafamily.org>

HAVING FUN WITH HOME SEIZURES

Since last June, people on the right and left were riled by a Supreme Court ruling that New London, CT could take over property using eminent domain for a private shopping center that contributed to the "public good." But it took Logan Darrow Clements, a devotee of Ayn Rand, to mount a campaign based on his objections to the decision. His target: David Souter, one of the justices voting in the majority. His campaign: to persuade Weare, NH, to seize Souter's home and build a Lost Liberty Hotel and Just Desserts Café on the site. Why did the Los Angeles resident choose Souter as his focus? "Because his address was the easiest to find on the Internet," Clements explained.

Source: The Weekly Standard, February 13, 2006, p. 22.

EYES WIDE SHUT ABOUT BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN

R. Cort Kirkwood laid down the law in the cover story for the February 20, 2006 issue of *The New American* on the film "Brokeback Mountain."

He reminds us that the old Westerns, depicting pioneers who "were mostly good Christians and sturdy, daring Americans," provided role models for "father and son alike" to "learn something about how a man is supposed to behave."

The new movie, on the other hand, is "a perversion of masculinity," "a propaganda piece," with "homos on the range" that "give the term 'rough riders' a new, blue meaning."

How does he know? Especially since he hasn't seen the movie? "You needn't lift the lid on a garbage can, after all, to know what's inside."

Source: The New American, vol. 22, no. 4, February 20, 2006, pp.12-19.

GETTING TOUGH ON...CHURCHES?

Congressman Tom Tancredo, the man known for getting tough on border crossers, is now taking his immigration struggle to the churches.

In a recent press release, he targets the Catholic and Episcopal Churches, United Methodists, Presbyterian Church USA and Evangelical Lutheran Church as "left-leaning religious activists" using "smear tactics" against the December House bill that he helped shepherd through. He must be upset at the unified opposition shown by the mainline churches to a bill that, if supported by the Senate, would criminalize undocumented immigrants and those who work with them, remove the right of court review of immigration decisions, build a border wall, and require local and federal cooperation in enforcing immigration law.

He lists some of the statements that raised his ire:

Quoting the Presbyterian Church: "[the bill is] a frontal assault on the due process rights of non-citizens."

Quoting the Catholics: "Cardinal McCarrick...commented: 'people who are trying to help immigrants will be finding themselves turned into criminals. That's going to include people at churches.'"

He concludes: "The faith community must step forward and tell left-leaning activists that undermining border security is not a religious imperative."

Source: "DC Church Activists Out of Touch on Border Issues," Press Release, February 21, 2006. <http://tancredo.house.gov/press/PRArticle.aspx?NewsID=1141>

IF YOU BUILD IT, KEEP THEM OUT

Tony Perkins at the Family Research Council warns the readers of his *Washington Report* of a health risk to the residents of Chicago and beyond. "The tragedy is that there are Americans who may well be infected with a deadly disease as a direct result of this most unwise decision."

That decision? The Department of State granting special status to allow foreign athletes with HIV to travel to the United States this summer for the Gay Games. Gay Games VII will bring over 8000 guests to Chicago, including international Olympic medalists who serve as Games Ambassadors. Perkins encourages those concerned to call the White House hotline.

Source: <http://www.frc.org/get.cfm?i=WU06B20> February 28, 2006.

Eye LASHES

What religion was hijacked in this quote from President Bush during his recent visit to Afghanistan?:

"So we've got a common alliance, all aimed at routing out people who are evildoers, people who have hijacked a great religion and kill innocent people in the name of that religion."

- A. Islam
- B. Christianity
- C. Judaism
- D. Hinduism
- E. All of the above

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