



VOICE OF REASON

The Newsletter of Americans for Religious Liberty

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Voucher Vote is Cause for Optimism

The U.S. House of Representatives voted down a private school voucher bill on November 4 by 228 to 191. This victory came in spite of strong organizational support from the Republican majority leadership, including House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who voted for the measure. (The Speaker usually abstains from voting unless he considers it a critical vote.)

The defeat was fueled by 35 Republican defectors who bucked the leadership and voted no. Only 4 Democrats voted yes. Partisan division on the voucher issue remained stark and well defined, however, as 84% of Republicans and only 2% of Democrats supported HR 2746, a so-called "private school scholarship" program to enable lower income families to send their children to fee-charging parochial and private schools.

The defectors tell the story of this unexpected victory. Most of the Republicans who opposed vouchers were from the Northeast or the Midwest. Only 9 of the 35 were from the South or border states, which increasingly dominate the Republican Party platforms and conventions. Perhaps the most significant and noteworthy finding is that 11 of the defectors — a third — are Roman Catholics. Conventional political wisdom has generally held that Catholics who are Republicans are generally Republicans because of such issues as parochialism, abortion and social or cultural conservatism. But on this issue — and often on abortion rights issues as well — a growing number of Catholic Republicans are adopting moderate to liberal policies on social issues, perhaps in response to their constituents' views or perhaps in accord with their own progressive Catholic consciences. The noted anti-abortion zealot, conservative Catholic Republican Chris Smith of New Jersey, also opposed vouchers.

Among the Protestant Republican defectors most were moderate, and included four Episcopalians, a group which usually leans to the liberal side of social issues. But there were some surprises. Both Virginia Republicans who are Christian Scientists, Robert Goodlatte and Tom Davis, opposed vouchers, though their fellow Christian Scientist Republicans in other regions were supportive. While most Utah Mormon Republicans tend to vote as a predictable bloc, Chris Connor, who represents Provo and the Brigham Young University community, voted no. Two conservative Southern Baptist Republicans broke with their pro-voucher co-religionists, Asa Hutchinson of Arkansas, a graduate of ultra-fundamentalist Bob Jones University, and Roy Blunt of the Missouri Ozarks, a former Baptist college president. Interestingly, House members from the 12 states with the highest private school enrollment voted 88 to 46 against vouchers, while House members from the South, where segregated private schools are common, voted 67 to 57 for vouchers.

Only 4 of 196 Democrats favored vouchers. Two were Catholics from Chicago's inner-city ethnic neighborhoods and Louisiana's Cajun Country, where parochial school attendance is high. (All other Catholic Democrats — 77 of them — voted

no.) The others were Ralph Hall a Methodist from Northeast Texas who votes far more often with Republicans than with his own party, and Floyd Flake of New York, a minister of the A.M.E. Church whose congregation maintains a parochial school. (Talk about self-interest!) Fortunately, Mr. Flake has announced his resignation from Congress to return full-time to the pastorate.

This strong defeat for one voucher proposal gives us hope that future schemes to divert public funds to nonpublic schools will receive the same treatment.

Vouchers Lose in Congress

Despite strong efforts to get Congress to pass some sort of school voucher plan, the national legislature adjourned for the year-end holidays without enacting any. President Clinton's veto threats helped.

The big vote came on November 4 when the House defeated 228 to 191 the "Help Empower Low-Income Parents Scholarships Amendments" (HELP), which would have created a federally funded national voucher plan. (See companion article, "House Voucher Vote is Cause for Optimism.") A limited voucher plan for the District of Columbia was blocked by a filibuster in the Senate, but will be brought up again in 1998.

Also stalled was a plan sponsored by Sen. Paul Coverdell (R-GA) and Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-GA) to amend higher education legislation to allow parents, relatives, and corporate entities to deposit up to \$2,500 into an education IRA and make tax-free withdrawals on the interest and principal to pay for elementary and secondary education. The plan would have amounted to a tuition tax deduction scheme.

In other developments, Texas Gov. George Bush (R) and New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson (R) are both planning to promote voucher bills in their state legislatures.

In Virginia the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors is studying a plan to provide tax aid to parochial and private schools through \$1,250 per student tax credits.

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Editorials

What to Expect in '98

The year just beginning will see an unprecedentedly strong wave of attacks on church-state separation and religious liberty. January 22 will mark the 25th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark Supreme Court ruling that recognized (not created) every woman's constitutional right to decide whether or not to continue a pregnancy. While the Court grounded that right in the right to privacy, a strong case can be made that restrictions on the right to choose violate the First Amendment right to freedom of religion, which includes freedom of conscience, and the First Amendment ban on laws "respecting an establishment of religion," as anti-choice legislation is tantamount to imposing the theological view that "personhood" begins at conception.

Roe v. Wade still stands, but it has been weakened somewhat by federal and state laws and all sorts of extralegal pressures. While most Americans support the *Roe* principles, we can expect attacks on the right to choose to continue.

The Religious Right-inspired Istook school prayer/voucher amendment will be pushed in Congress. While its chances of passage are slim, its backers hope for a recorded vote that can be used for congressional electioneering purposes in the fall. It would be well to keep the amendment bottled up in the House Judiciary Committee.

Vouchers will be a hot issue in Congress and several state legislatures. Majority opposition to vouchers is too often ignored by lawmakers and voucher opponents are not nearly as well organized or vocal as those bent on undermining church-state separation and public education.

Federal welfare "reforms" (?) that allow sectarian operations to receive public funding without having to hide or camouflage their religious character will create serious church-state problems. Effective opposition remains to be organized.

These challenges are only the major ones. Numerous other church-state problems are before the courts, or should be, and zealous sectarian interests continue to create new problems.

Americans for Religious Liberty is one of the key organizations working on these problems, and certainly one of the most efficient. With more resources we could do a great deal more.

Vouchers and School Overcrowding

Could, or should, parochial and private schools be given tax-paid vouchers to relieve overcrowding in hard pressed urban school districts? The Republican controlled Congress directed the U.S. Department of Education to answer that question in September of 1996 (Conference Report HR 3610, Report 104-863, p. 1060). On September 2, 1997, the Department submitted its 74-page preliminary report. Its conclusions:

Among 34 large urban school districts, 22 reported significant overcrowding ranging from 13% to 91% of their schools. Overcrowding was most serious in large Southern districts. Most nonpublic school associations reported only limited space availability.

Parochial and private school associations indicated, generally, that they would accept transfer students from public schools only if they "could maintain their current curriculum, admissions, assessment, and other policies without charge." In other words, they would accept public funding and public transfer students if they do not have to play by the same rules as public schools, if they can continue forms of selectivity and discrimination not allowed in public schools.

"Most associations of religious schools believe their members would not participate if public school students were able to obtain exemptions from religious instruction or religious activities." On this point the spokesman for the U.S. Catholic Conference indicated that exempting kids from religion classes and activities "strikes at the very nature of what a Catholic school is all about." A Lutheran school official said, "this would be difficult as the religious nature of the school is not restricted to particular time structures."

An Adventist school official said that exempting transfer students from religious requirements "would not be acceptable." He added, "We would also want to control our hiring process so that we would discriminate in hiring practices based on religious affiliation."

An Islamic school official said that religious instruction is mandatory. A top Christian Schools International official said, "Almost all our schools would *not* allow the exemption because

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Americans for Religious Liberty is a nonprofit public interest educational organization dedicated to preserving the American tradition of religious, intellectual, and personal freedom in a secular democratic state. Membership is open to all who share its purposes. Annual dues are \$25 for individuals, \$30 for families, \$10 for students and limited income.

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every class is permeated with a Christian religious viewpoint.”

A Greek Orthodox official said frankly that his church’s schools “would like to have a say on the quality and caliber of students.” He added that selecting students by lottery “is a risky business. You are afraid of whom you are dealing with.” His preferred option, he said, would be a sort of “co-op system”: that is, “let all the Greek Orthodox students have an option to attend a Greek-American school; all Catholic students attend a Catholic school, etc. This way you accomplish your goal and everybody is happy.”

These spokesmen for denominational schools have put forth the best case against vouchers: they want public support for private schools that are permeated with sectarian teaching, that practice forms of selectivity and discrimination not allowed in public schools, that are not controlled by the taxpayers who would be forced to support them. Talk about chutzpah!

The parochial school spokesmen also make it very clear that tax support for their schools through vouchers would fragment our society along creedal, social class, ethnic, student ability level, and other lines.

Need we say more?

Vouchers: A Lesson from Canada

Elementary and secondary education in the Canadian province of Newfoundland has for 270 years been totally under the control of churches, Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, Adventist, and ecumenical Protestant. The denominational schools were supported by public funds and true public education did not exist. Education in Newfoundland was generally considered the poorest in Canada and as long as thirty years ago royal commissions urged that the system be overhauled.

In 1995, finally, provincial premier Clyde Wells called a referendum for September 5 to consolidate the schools and sharply curtail church control. The voters approved, 54% to 46% (a margin greater than that by which Newfoundland voted to join Canada in 1949), the provincial legislature asked the Canadian parliament to amend the Terms of Union, and the national legislature did so.

The reform process was thwarted, however, in July of 1997 when the provincial supreme court issued an injunction at the behest of Catholic Church officials. In frustration, the new premier, Brian Tobin, himself a Catholic, called another referendum for September 2. This time around voters decided, 73% to 27%, to “support a single school system where all children, regardless of their religious affiliation, attend the same schools where opportunities for religious education and observances are provided.”

Newfoundlanders agreed with Tobin when he declared: “I believe it’s time to allow all of our children, of every denomination, to sit in the same classrooms, in the same schools, to ride the same bus, to play on the same sports teams, to live and learn together in the same community. I believe it’s time to hire our teachers because they’re competent, caring, and committed to our children, not because of their religion.”

The moral of the story is obvious, and one that is supremely relevant to Americans as we face rising pressures from sectarian special interests and others to fragment our school populations

through vouchers into sectarian, ideological, class, and ethnic enclaves. Newfoundland tried for well over two centuries and the results were dismal. This country would be foolish to repeat the mistakes of others. The voters of Newfoundland are to be commended.

PK’s Washington ‘Sacred Assembly’

With extensive, and largely favorable, press coverage, the Promise Keepers organization brought a large crowd, estimated at half a million, to the mall in Washington, D.C. on October 4, ostensibly for religious purposes. But the leaders, the speakers and the participants may well have an agenda that is highly political and almost certainly antithetical to separation of church and state.

The all-male organization, with its \$100 million budget and close ties to several blatantly political groups related to the Religious Right, is bent on restoring male power to the nation’s families and churches. The group’s founder, Bill McCartney, told pastors to get ready for an infusion of new male involvement in church life, which, he implied, was dominated by women. McCartney’s central message, largely ignored by the media, was “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority,” a reference to PK’s authoritarian “cell” structure.

The *Washington Post* surveyed 882 participants and found that the sample — considered representative and statistically reliable — revealed a very conservative audience. Most (80%) were white and 90% called themselves “born again, evangelical or charismatic Protestants.” Only 15% said they were Democrats, only 8% claimed to be political liberals and only 15% voted for President Clinton last year, which did not seem to deter the President from praising the group during his Saturday radio address.

The PK audience was young, educated and affluent. Nearly half were college graduates, under age 40, and made \$50,000 a year or more. This profile makes an ideal recruiting community for political conservatives to coopt and integrate religious conservatives into a movement that continues to stress sexual sins and family problems. The group’s emphasis on what it calls “racial reconciliation” may draw racial minorities, many of whom are religiously conservative, into its orbit.

A number of Republican members of Congress, including Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and South Carolina nonagenarian Strom Thurmond, attended the rally and praised its objectives.

Of all the Religious Right groups, this one needs monitoring because it has the potential of reversing the many social and cultural gains made by women in recent decades and because it threatens to politicize a latent religious community. PK leaders know what their intent is, and critics must expose them at every turn. The preservation of democracy, of civil liberties, and of religious and cultural tolerance, is at stake.

Moving?

Please send a change of address form to: Americans for Religious Liberty, P.O. Box 6656, Silver Spring, MD 20916.

The Kids Left Behind

More than 53 million American young people have just started attending classes for the 1997-98 school year and 46,353,000 of them attend public tax-supported schools that are open to all. Estimates now show that about a fourth of them are poor and disadvantaged. A third attend schools that are in need of repair. Many receive free lunches or breakfasts, often the only nutritious meal they will receive all day. Most study from outdated textbooks and have insufficient equipment to compete in today's increasingly competitive learning environment. And all of this takes place in a nation often regarded as the wealthiest and most powerful on earth, a nation which has traditionally allotted a major portion of its gross national product to education.

Educational deprivations and inequalities are largely a factor of income and race. In 1992, for example, when 20% of all children lived in poverty, the figure was 46% of blacks, 34% of Hispanics and 16% of whites.

The poverty of the local area affects the spending capacity of

the local public school district. A 1989-90 study found that the school districts with the highest household incomes spent 36% more per student than the poorest districts.¹

The same report showed a 27% disparity in school district expenditures between districts in which more than 25% of children live in poverty as opposed to those where fewer than 5% of students are poor. This affects learning from the earliest age. A 1993 National Household Education survey documents that emerging literacy and numeracy skills of children at the age of four are dramatically affected by family income. Only 3.8% of children whose family income was \$10,000 or less could identify all colors and letters of the alphabet, could count to 50 and could write their own name. The percentage who could perform these skills rose with family income.²

After the students are in school, the disparities in school district expenditures continue to limit educational opportunity. In a survey of computer use at home and at school, researchers discovered that only 10.7% of low income students had access to computers, compared to 25.3% of middle income students and 43.8% of high income students. Even in high school the differences continued, though they were narrowed somewhat to 24 percentage points between low income and high income students.³

By the time secondary school arrives, these variables result in differential rates from the educational process altogether. In 1993 almost one out of four (23.9%) of low income students dropped out of school, compared to about 10% of middle income students and only 2.7% of those with high family incomes.⁴ Racial differences are almost as significant as income, and probably relates to income variances, since 27.5% of Hispanics, 31.6% of blacks and 7.9% of whites withdraw from high school without a diploma.⁵ Neither gender nor geographical region affects the drop out rate as much as family income. The dropout rate affects earning potential in later years, since there is a strong correlation between educational attainment and earning capability. In 1992 the median income of American college graduates was 71% higher than for high school graduates. It was nearly 2 1/2 times higher than for those who never completed high school.⁶

These economic disparities are now beginning to limit college attendance rates for the poor and disadvantaged. A study in Minnesota, a progressive state with a highly educated citizenry, concluded, "A Native American student who entered a Minnesota public high school in the fall of 1991 has only a 11.7% chance of entering college four years later. A child from a family that earns \$25,000 or less annually is only one half as likely to enroll in college as a young person whose family has an annual income of \$56,000 or more. These data represent more than individual tragedies. They are social failures that touch all of us."⁷

There is some indication that the dropout situation is worsening, especially for Hispanic Americans. A Census Bureau *Current Population Survey*, issued in May 1995, found that 31.6% of Hispanic American students dropped out of school, as did 12.3% of African American and 7.5% of whites.⁸

Another cloud on the horizon is the nature of school financing. Prosperous school districts receive much less of their revenue from state and federal sources than do low income districts (35% versus 73%). Therefore, if the Republican Congress and Republican governors in many states reduce the federal or state contributions to local public school districts that have more poor children, the disparities in funding will accelerate. This will further the destruction of the "American Dream" of equal opportu-

ARL in Action

ARL Supports "Easter" Law Test

Americans for Religious Liberty is supporting an ACLU of Maryland challenge to a Maryland law designating Good Friday and Easter Monday as official school holidays. ARL helped initiate the suit, *Koenick v. Felton*, and on December 2 joined an *amicus curiae* brief to the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals filed by the American Jewish Congress. Also joining the brief were the American Humanist Association, the American Ethical Union, the Freedom from Religion Foundation, and the National Council on Islamic Affairs.

The suit and *amicus* brief charge that the religious holiday law violates the First Amendment clause against laws "respecting an establishment of religion," prefers Christianity over other religions, and favors the Western Christian Easter calendar over the Eastern Orthodox Easter. Plaintiffs and amici do not have a problem with local school districts closing schools on days when a substantial number of students or teachers are likely to be absent for personal religious reasons.

In other developments, ARL's book *The Case Against School Vouchers*, by Edd Doerr, Al Menendez and John Swomley, has been condensed and recorded on audio cassette by veteran talk show host T.J. Walker and is available from ARL for \$9.95 plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling.

Since our last report, ARL executive director Edd Doerr has addressed student, university, church, and other audiences in Alabama, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland and Virginia, and has been a guest on radio talk shows in Oregon, Illinois, and Indiana.

ARL has reprinted Indiana State University historian Richard V. Pierard's article, "Vouchers: The Wrong Medicine for the Ills of Public Education," from the journal *Contemporary Education*. The article, which was distributed to every member of Congress during the recent voucher debates, is available from ARL for \$1.

nity and economic advancement through education.

Emerson J. Elliott, Commissioner of Education Statistics, writes, "An advantage of state and local funding of schools is that parents and citizens have more say in deciding how much education their children get and with what emphasis. A disadvantage is that wealth varies across school districts, leading the imbalances in the resources available to schools even when citizens are equally willing to fund them."⁹

The disparity in expenditures between rich and poor districts affects every state. In some states the gap is a startling three to one ratio. Public education is being starved, especially for the poor and underprivileged.

Vermont Congressman Bernie Sanders addresses this issue with his customary clarity: "The right wants to provide every parent with a voucher. Wealthy parents can use the money to reduce their tuition costs at prep schools. Religious parents can send their children to parochial schools — under this scheme, the separation of church and state will be abandoned. Meanwhile, the public schools will get correspondingly less funding. And the public schools, of course, will be where poor and working class children will be educated. Their educational horizons will con-

tract and their alienation from the American mainstream will widen. No longer will society have a stake in seeing that every young person learns about American history, about our traditions of dissent and tolerance. Our most democratic institution — the one place in the nation where rich and poor, white and black, native-born and immigrant, come together in a mutual enterprise — will cease to exist."¹⁰

1. *The Condition of Education 1995* (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement), NCES 95-273, p. 150.

2. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 180.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 184.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 188.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 188.

6. *Divided We Fall: The Declining Chance for College Among Minnesota Youth from Low Income Families and Communities of Color*.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

8. *Digest of Education Statistics 1995* (NCES 95-029), p. 111.

9. *The Condition of Education, 1995*, p. viii.

10. Bernie Sanders with Huck Gutman, *Outsider in the House* (New York: Verso, 1997), p. 241.

New Private School Data Released

Nearly five million students, about one in ten, attend private schools, according to a massive new study, "Private Schools in the United States: A Statistical Profile, 1993-94," just issued by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), a federal agency. The NCES is the primary federal entity for collecting, analyzing and reporting data related to education and fulfills a congressional mandate.

This report, a Schools and Staffing Survey, is based on responses from a representative sample of 2,585 private schools representing seventeen major private school organizations, almost the entire spectrum of private school education.

There are 4,970,548 students in 26,053 private and secondary elementary schools, being educated by 330,839 full-time teachers. Private schools educate 10.7% of all students but account for nearly a fourth (24.4%) of all schools because so many of them are small.

Religion is clearly the primary impetus for private school existence. Catholic schools represent 51% of the student enrollment, while other religious (Protestant and Jewish) schools represent 34% and non-sectarian schools (prep schools for the well-to-do, military schools and Montessori schools) represent 15% (see table).

The 2.5 million Catholic school students can be subdivided into parochial schools (maintained by local congregations, usually at the elementary level), diocesan schools (usually high schools on a broader geographical basis), and private order schools (run by religious orders like the Sacred Heart nuns or the Jesuits). Catholic private order schools are considerably more expensive than the others and the most likely of all private schools to segregate pupils by gender. Half of Catholic private schools are not co-educational, compared to only 5% of all private schools.

Catholic schools are strongest in the Northeast and Midwest, where they represent more than 60% of total private school population. Protestant schools, especially those operated by conservative Christian groups (the term used in this study), are strongest in the South and West. Jewish schools are found almost exclusively in the Northeast, where they represent 10% of private

school students. Several varieties of Lutheran schools are strongest in the Midwest, as are the Dutch Reformed schools (Christian Schools International). Adventist schools are strongest in the West, Friends (Quaker) schools in the Northeast, and two-thirds of Episcopal schools are located in the South, primarily in Virginia. The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), representing the old-line prep schools and academies, is strongest in the South and Northeast. The Association of Christian Schools International, which includes many evangelical and Protestant schools, is strongest in the West (a surprise?), where they educate 18% of all private school students, and in the South, where they educate 13% of all private school pupils.

"Other" private schools, which are nonsectarian and enroll 907,000 students, are strongest in the South, where many are apparently "segregation academies" set up since 1965. (The only private schools not part of this study are those associated with the Mennonites and Amish.)

Table 1
Private School Students By Type, 1993-1994

| Type | Number of Students | % of Private Students |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Catholic | 2,516,028 | 50.6 |
| Other Religious | 1,686,069 | 33.9 |
| Conservative Christian | 641,828 | 12.9 |
| Lutheran | 220,141 | 4.4 |
| Jewish | 183,851 | 3.7 |
| Dutch Reformed | 98,090 | 2.0 |
| Episcopal | 95,633 | 1.9 |
| Seventh-day Adventist | 77,830 | 1.6 |
| Friends | 13,456 | 0.3 |
| Nonsectarian | 768,451 | 15.5 |
| Total | 4,970,548 | — |

The racial makeup of private and public schools differs considerably, though the gap has narrowed somewhat in the past decade. About 33% of public school students belong to government-defined minority groups (black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian) compared to 22% of private school students. Among the faculty 13.5% are minority in public schools and 8% in private schools. The highest minority percentage among private schools is found in the small Evangelical Lutheran (ELC) school system, which educates only 15,403 students, half of them minorities. ELC is the mainstream Lutheran Church in the U.S. and has not traditionally been as involved with private education as the more conservative Missouri and Wisconsin Synods. Adventist students are 35% minority, the only other group which exceeds the public school percentage. In contrast, only 2% of Jewish school students and 5% of Wisconsin Synod Lutheran school students are minorities. Incidentally, the "elite" private schools (Episcopal, Friends, NAIS and military) enroll 15% to 20% minorities, which is perhaps higher than anticipated. Some private schools, however, one in five, have no minority students at all. The only minority group which had a relatively higher private than public school enrollment are Asian Americans, who represent 4% of private school students and 3% of public school students.

While private school graduates attend college at a greater rate than their public school counterparts (87% compared to 57%), private schools themselves offer fewer programs. Only 25% of private schools offer special education programs, while 89% of public schools do so. Only one-fourth of private schools have special programs for gifted students compared to 71% of public schools. Nearly 20% of private schools do not have libraries compared to 4% of public schools. Only 53% of private schools but 81% of public schools offer remedial reading.

The faculties of private schools lag behind their public school colleagues in academic preparation and training. Nearly 7% of private school teachers have no bachelors degree compared to 1% of public school teachers. And while 30% of private school instructors have master's degrees, 42% of public school teachers do so. Nearly three out of ten (29%) private school teachers lack state certification; fewer than 3% of public school teachers are not accredited. The same pattern applies to the principals, with even sharper differences. Eight percent of private school principals have no bachelors degree (0 in public schools) and

only 14% hold earned doctorates or advanced credentials, compared to 35% of public school principals.

Teacher salaries are also considerably lower in private schools, where base salaries are \$21,898, than in public schools, where base salaries are \$34,189. For principals it is \$29,714 in private schools and \$54,858 in public schools. Only 60% of private school teachers are provided medical insurance compared to 87% of public school teachers. Two other differences are noteworthy. Private school faculties are younger, and 54% of private school principals are women, compared to 35% of public school principals.

Almost all (93%) of private schools charge tuition, averaging \$2,157 in elementary schools and \$5,513 in secondary schools. The most expensive schools are the NAIS prep schools, which exceed \$6,000 at the elementary level and \$11,000 at the secondary level. Episcopal schools are the second most expensive on the secondary level, while Jewish and Friends schools rank second and third in elementary school tuition. The bargain schools are the Catholic (except the private order ones), Adventist and most Lutheran schools. Among the broad categories, nonsectarian schools are twice as expensive as Catholic elementary schools and three times more expensive on the secondary level. Other religious schools are in the middle in tuition costs but are closer to the Catholic schools than to the nonsectarian ones, where average secondary tuition is \$10,488.

How important is religion to the educational process? When principals were asked to rank eight educational goals, "religious development" ranked first with 42% of private school principals, citing it above literacy, excellence, esteem, discipline and others. Sixty-one percent of principals listed religious development among the top three goals. There was little overall difference between Catholic, Protestant and Jewish schools, though the Wisconsin and Missouri Synod Lutherans had the highest percentage of principals who cited religious development as their primary goal. It was least significant in Episcopal schools, which stressed academic excellence. Interestingly, 28% of "other private" school principals cited religious development, even though they are nominally nonsectarian.

This full scale portrait points up significant differences between the private and public sectors of U.S. education today. And it should be stressed that the overall percentage of students in private schools is still lower today than it was in 1965.

The 1997 Elections

Oregon's voters overwhelmingly upheld that state's law permitting doctor-assisted suicide for terminally ill patients. By a 60% to 40% margin the electorate turned down a repeal effort (Initiative 51) that was largely financed by out-of-state Roman Catholic dioceses and anti-abortion groups. The campaign to repeal the state law passed originally in 1994 by a much smaller margin was well funded and outspent opponents of repeal by a 4 to 1 margin.

The role of the Catholic Church was highly controversial. Opponents of repeal criticized the church (and other religious groups) for seeking "to impose their views on the rest of us." When criticized for alleged Catholic bashing, Barbara Coombs Lee, a nurse and director of Oregon Right to Die, responded, "I find it disingenuous that they act like a political machine, then white about bigotry when they're called a machine." The *New*

York Times reported that the Roman Catholic Church spent \$2 million trying to influence the Oregon result. "The vote is a tragedy for all Americans," said Boston's Cardinal Bernard Law.

There was no ambiguity in the Oregon election. The turnout was the highest in 34 years for a referendum in an off year.

Washington State voters rejected an attempt to protect gays and lesbians from employment discrimination and turned down legalization of medicinal use of certain narcotics.

In New York State voters rejected a constitutional convention, which could have led to a weakening of that state's strong church-state separation provisions. (In 1967 parochialists dominated the constitutional revision convention and succeeded in diluting these provisions, but more than 70% of voters opposed these changes in a referendum.)

The elections in Virginia have to be considered a defeat for

religious liberty and separation of church and state. The victorious Republican candidate for governor, Attorney General James Gilmore, took positions on parochial aid and abortion that represent threats to public education and women's rights. But voters chose to ignore those stands and opt for a candidate who promised to abolish an unpopular personal property tax on automobiles. Of course, the state's powerful Religious Right supported Gilmore openly and he may be beholden to them during his term of office. (Several national Religious Right groups, including the Christian Coalition and the Rutherford Institute, are located in Virginia, which is also the home of Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell.)

Gilmore's record as attorney general leaves no doubt about his future policies. In 1995 he reversed a policy that had remained for more than thirty years, when he issued an opinion — holding the force of law — that provision of public school buses to transport private and parochial school students did not violate the Virginia Constitution. Every previous attorney general, Democrat and Republican, held that it did violate a very clear and precise ban on any state funding of sectarian institutions. He also issued guidelines authorizing prayer at assemblies in public schools. He supported a number of restrictions on a woman's access to abortion services.

Another disturbing aspect of his record was his adamant refusal to investigate allegations that the Christian Coalition was illegally involved in state campaign activities and that religious broadcaster Pat Robertson was misusing charitable funds. Robertson, whose various enterprises gave more than \$100,000 to the Republican statewide campaign in 1997, was accused of using airplanes owned by his tax-exempt religious efforts for a diamond mine in the Congo.

In contrast, the Democratic nominee, Lieutenant Governor Don Beyer, made support for public schools the centerpiece of his campaign. Beyer also took an unequivocal pro-choice position on abortion.

The successful Republican candidate for attorney general, Mark Earley, is also closely allied with the Religious Right. During the primary he asked Southern Baptist clergy, his own denomination, to support his candidacy openly and thousands did so. He can be counted on to advance the Religious Right agenda in the Old Dominion. Earley, a state senator and former Baptist missionary to the Philippines, was considered the leading opponent of abortion rights in the state legislature. He is opposed to abortion even in cases of rape or incest. His largest campaign contribution of \$35,000 came from Pat Robertson, who lives in Earley's state senate district. Robertson's partisanship was evident from start to finish. He attended the Republican victory celebration in Richmond, where he lambasted the Democrats for alleged "religious bigotry against Christians" and said he "hopes they had learned their lesson."

It is a truism that all politics are local, and Virginia's election was essentially a local matter. But we must confess to a certain symbolic interest in what happens in the state that gave us Thomas Jefferson and James Madison and the extraordinary movement that gave to religious freedom a concrete constitutional protection. We cannot help but feel that Virginia's voters made the wrong decision in 1997.

The Virginia election points up the importance of an organization like Americans for Religious Liberty. It is part of our burden and our responsibility to keep the flames of religious tolerance and freedom of conscience burning, even if that flame begins to flick and diminish from time to time.

Religious Persecution: An International Problem?

Discrimination, repression, or even acts that constitute persecution because of religious belief or practice seem to be on the rise throughout much of the world, according to an array of religious liberty activists, jurists and human rights observers. These disparate sources have begun to pressure the U.S. government to take the lead in identifying and ameliorating these conditions.

Both the executive branch of the federal government and Congress have undertaken major initiatives on this subject since 1996. In November of that year then-Secretary of State Warren Christopher established an Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad. John Shattuck is chairman and twenty members with expertise in religion and human rights issues comprise the committee. Some are clergy and academics, and several faith traditions, including Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism, are represented. The goals are twofold: exposing problems of religious persecution and discrimination, and the role of religious groups in conflict resolution, reconciliation and the promotion of conditions conducive to religious freedom. All U.S. embassies were alerted in December 1996 to the existence of the committee and were told to give special attention to religious discrimination or persecution in their countries. A special award is now given to foreign service officers who take personal initiative in the battle for human rights and religious freedom. The dissemination of information on religious freedom issues has increased in the U.S. Information Agency, the Voice of America and Radio Free Asia.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright called religious liberty "an aspiration and an inalienable right of people everywhere" which "when practiced with tolerance can be one of the keys to a stable, productive society." She added that it is "central to the strength of free peoples and its protection and promotion are important elements of America's support for human rights around the globe."

In her foreword to the State Department report entitled "United States Policies in Support of Religious Freedom," Albright affirmed that "freedom of religion is central to American history and identity . . . and is a fundamental source of our strength in the world." She warned nations that persecute religious groups: "We are working actively to promote tolerance of legitimate religious expression for adherents of every faith. We haven't hesitated to speak out when governments persecute Christians or fail to ensure the safety of any religious group. And we use all the tools available to work for change within societies and with authorities around the world."

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The State Department's first report on religious persecution, which was requested by Congress with a mandate to focus on anti-Christian persecution, was clear and unequivocal: "The United States government upholds the principle that the freedom of religion, conscience and belief is an inalienable and fundamental human right. Religious persecution is an intolerable invasion of an individual's basic human rights, and promoting freedom of religion and combatting religious persecution are high priorities of the U.S. government. Religious tolerance and respect for those who hold different beliefs are central elements of the American experience and our nation's core values."

In Congress Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA), and Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA), have co-sponsored the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act. The legislation would create a White House office to monitor religious persecution and would ban all exports to foreign nations that actively sponsor religious persecution. It would also halt economic aid to such countries and would expe-

dite asylum requests for those fleeing persecution.

Not all religious groups support the legislation. Nor do all agree that the subject merits as sweeping and direct an involvement by the United States government as is contemplated.

The issue has already affected U.S. relations with China and Russia and may lead to additional pressures on those nation's policies toward religious minorities.

While this issue cuts across partisan and ideological lines — a strong advocate of a greater U.S. involvement is David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism — it has been increasingly co-opted by political neoconservatives and religious conservatives in the evangelical camp. The *New Republic's* Jacob Heilbrunn called it "the next big conservative issue," though it is unlikely that America's Religious Right, which has little interest in human rights issues at home, will support long-term efforts abroad.

Update

Prayer/Voucher Amendment Advances

On October 28 Rep. Ernest Istook's (R-OK) combination school prayer/tuition voucher amendment was approved 8-4 on a straight party line vote by the Constitution Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee. It still has to go before the full committee, the whole House of Representatives, and the Senate before being sent to the states for ratification. In 35 years no such amendment has emerged from Congress and the Istook amendment's chances are slim. The real purpose of the amendment is to get recorded congressional votes so that the Theopolitical Right can use the results for electioneering purposes.

The vaguely worded amendment, a masterpiece of obfuscation, is intended to authorize public school devotions and tax aid to sectarian schools. Disagreements among House Republicans kept Speaker Newt Gingrich from getting the amendment to a vote in 1996.

Bible Courses Challenged

The American Civil Liberties Union of Florida and People for the American Way filed suit in federal district court on December 9 challenging the constitutionality of Bible study courses scheduled to begin in Lee County, Florida, public high schools in January. The complaint charges that the courses, based on the program of the secretive North Carolina-based National Council on Bible Curriculum in Public Schools, are not balanced, objective, and neutral. The Lee County school board approved the courses on a 3-2 vote in October after controversy had raged over the proposed courses for a year and a half.

Alabama School Devotions

Federal judge Ira DeMent, a Methodist and Republican appointed by President Bush, has triggered a stormy backlash with a ruling against serious church-state separation violations in DeKalb County, Alabama. In an ACLU suit, *Chandler v. James*, brought by parents and an assistant principal, Judge DeMent issued guidelines prohibiting vocal prayer, Bible devotions, Scripture readings, or distribution of religious materials in schools or on school grounds, or at commencements or school

events; school-printed baccalaureate announcements or commemorations, or school efforts to encourage attendance at such services; religious messages or Scripture readings delivered over public address systems in schools and at sporting events.

Judge DeMent's order, however, noted that religious texts could be used in an academic context, that students could include religious expression in art, homework, or other appropriate assignments, that students could make brief religious references at commencements as long as this is not encouraged by the school or invites a public response.

Gov. Fob James went ballistic over this ruling and another case in which a judge was ordered to remove a Ten Commandments plaque from his courtroom. James has urged the courts to rule that the Bill of Rights does not apply to religious issues in Alabama.

Judge DeMent has responded to Gov. James that "the governor's invitation to ignore the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment . . . poses a serious threat to our system of democratic self-government."

In a similar case in Pike County, Alabama, *Herring v. Key*, four Jewish children are challenging devotions over the school P.A. system, school principal-led prayers at assemblies, preachers in the schools, religious coercion, and actual religious persecution.

Creationism/Evolution

The National Association of Biology Teachers board voted in October to delete the words "unsupervised" and "impersonal" from its 1995 statement in support of teaching evolution. The relevant part of the statement had read: "The diversity of life on earth is the outcome of evolution: an unsupervised, impersonal, unpredictable and natural process of temporal descent with genetic modification that is affected by natural selection, chance, historical contingencies and changing environments." NABT member and anthropologist Dr. Eugenie Scott, executive director of the National Center for Science Education, which was established to defend the teaching of evolution in public schools, said that the change, which she helped bring about, was needed to keep the statement religiously neutral. "It's no more proper to

present naturalistic philosophy as valid science than it is to present religiously based arguments.”

Reproductive Rights

President Clinton vetoed legislation on October 10 that would have made illegal a late term abortion procedure (dilation and extraction to physicians, “partial birth” abortions to opponents) that would have allowed no exceptions for health reasons. Clinton vetoed a similar bill in 1996 and Congress failed to override. Another override attempt will be made in 1998, probably with an eye toward influencing upcoming congressional elections.

In other developments, the U.S. Supreme Court declined (8-1) on October 20 to review an appellate ruling that found that provisions of Louisiana’s parental consent law imposed an unconstitutional “undue burden” on young women seeking abortions.

Faced with a presidential veto threat, the Republican-dominated Congress agreed in conference committee to delete from the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill Rep. Chris Smith’s (R-NJ) amendment that would have barred foreign organizations that perform abortions from receiving U.S. family planning funds. The amendment would also have made U.S. funding for the UN Population Fund contingent on its withdrawal from China or China’s elimination of coercive abortion. The compromise bill continues the same provisions as the previous year’s, a ban on use of U.S. funds for performing abortions or promoting liberalization of abortion laws. In retaliation for Clinton’s veto threat, Congress refused to fund the U.S.’s \$926 million in back dues to the UN.

On September 9 the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals became the sixth federal appellate court to uphold the constitutionality of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act. Pat Robertson’s American Center for Law and Justice had represented the plaintiffs seeking to overturn the federal law.

On September 25 the U.S. Eighth Circuit upheld a lower court ruling that blocked the state of Iowa from impeding the opening of a new Planned Parenthood clinic.

The North Carolina Supreme Court on October 3 upheld a lower court ruling in favor of the state’s denying abortion services to poor women through its Medicaid program.

Vouchers: Vox Populi

While some politicians, pundits, and pressure groups are spreading the notion that vouchers for nonpublic schools have strong popular support, the facts say otherwise. In 22 statewide referenda between 1967 and 1996 from coast to coast voters have rejected vouchers and similar schemes by a cumulative average of two to one. Polls in 1997 continue to show opposition.

A Texas poll last spring by Lake Sosin Snell & Associates and Deardourff/The Media Company registered opposition at 68% to 26%. In the fall a *Washington Post* poll showed Virginians opposing vouchers 58% to 36% while a similar *Columbus Dispatch* poll found voters in central Ohio opposed by the same margin.

Vatican Envoy Confirmed

Former Representative Lindy Boggs (D-LA) was confirmed by the Senate on October 9 as the new U.S. ambassador to the Holy See. ARL and other groups have opposed formal diplomatic relations with the headquarters of the Catholic Church, begun by President Reagan, as a violation of the First Amend-

ment and as preference for one religion over all others. The federal courts, however, have declined to rule on the matter. Concern has also been expressed that every ambassador to the Holy See has been a Catholic, suggesting that there is a religious test being applied to fill the post.

Workplace Religious Guidelines Issued

In an apparent effort to forestall congressional approval of an ill-considered proposal called the “Religious Freedom Amendment” proposed by Rep. Ernest Istook (R-OK), President Bill Clinton issued guidelines on August 14 clarifying religious activities in the federal workplace. Clinton’s executive order applies only to federal civilian workers, but it could impact the private sector.

In general the guidelines say that “executive departments and agencies shall permit personal religious expression to the greatest extent possible” as long as “workplace efficiency” is preserved. Agencies cannot require participation in religious activities by employees nor can they discriminate in favor of or against any religious group in the hiring, promotion or firing of personnel. Government must accommodate employees’ exercise of religion whenever possible. Most of these provisions are based on existing law and legal precedent. Numerous cases have come before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in recent years, most of them testing the limits of religious expression in the workplace.

Employees are “permitted to engage in private religious expression in public work areas” to the same extent as nonreligious private expression “subject to reasonable content and viewpoint-neutral standards and restrictions.” Employees may keep such items as Bibles or Korans on desks and read religious materials during private time and may engage in religious discussions with fellow employees.

Restrictions are stricter on supervisors. They may not “encourage employee participation in religious activities, explicitly or implicitly, as a condition of continued employment, promotion, salary increases, choice job assignments or any other incidents of employment.” Supervisors are, however, “free to engage in some kinds of speech about religion.” Even when they do so, “Employees may reasonably perceive their supervisors’ religious expression as coercive, even if it was not intended as such.” Religious proselyzing is not allowed.

The guidelines were originally drafted by a coalition of religious groups, from the Christian Legal Society to the American Jewish Congress, and the Justice Department reviewed them. They are not law. As the *Washington Post* commented, they “can be useful in reducing further misunderstandings that might otherwise lead to oppression and litigation.” Indeed, a Workplace Religious Freedom Act, proposed by Senator Dan Coats (R-IN) and John Kerry (D-MA), has been introduced to cover all workers in all industries.

The guidelines have their critics on the right and left. The Family Research Council’s Cathy Cleaver said “the guidelines leave much room for discrimination based on the employer’s judgment.” Barry Lynn of Americans United claimed that they are “so far beyond what the Constitution really requires for religious expression and really urge . . . all government employees to set up a kind of religious shrine at their own workplace.”

Most commentary has been favorable. Oliver Thomas, religious liberty specialist at the National Council of Churches, called them “an encouraging sign that people of goodwill can work together for the common good.” *Washington Post* reporter E.J.

Dionne, Jr. observed, "By brokering peace in our domestic religious wars, President Clinton has shown that keeping the government's hands off religion and off religious people is the best way to guarantee its expression."

International

Istanbul: With strong support from the nation's military, Turkey's Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz won a vote in parliament to restrict Islamic religious schools. These fast-growing centers of Islamic militancy were supported by the previous government, and observers both inside the country and elsewhere noted a growing fear of destabilization in the political and cultural life of a nation that prides itself on secular government. Violent demonstrations rocked the country during August as parliament approved the measure by a vote of 277 to 242. Under the new legislation schoolchildren will have to spend eight years in public schools instead of five years before being allowed to enroll in religious academies. Many religious school graduates, imbued with the principles of Islamic fundamentalism, are filling the ranks of the civil service, the police and universities. Prime Minister Yilmaz said he was "opposing those who want to use religion for political purposes," accusing the clergy-run schools of "training warriors" for right-wing theocratic parties. The issue, however, is far from over as supporters of religious schools vow to fight the changes.

Warsaw: Poland's increasingly reactionary Catholic hierarchy provided another controversy when Archbishop Wladyslaw Ziolek of Lodz refused a Catholic burial to a prominent physician who was active in the abortion rights campaign. Dr. Wroclaw Dec, a professor at the medical academy in Lodz, died May 12 in an car accident. The pastor of St. Andrew's Church in Warsaw said public advocates of abortion may be treated as apostates and denied a funeral mass in order to prevent "public scandal to the faithful."

Cairo: A mid-level Egyptian administrative court has overturned a ban on female genital mutilation, a ruling that pleased Islamic fundamentalists. In July, however, Health Minister Ismail Awadallah Salaam declared that health authorities will continue to enforce the ban, which is supported by President Mubarak. The government is appealing the ruling overturning the ban. Fundamentalists defend the practice, though many Islamic scholars say it is not rooted in Islam.

Brasilia: President Fernando Henrique Cardoso is expected to approve a law to remove compulsory Catholic education from Brazilian public schools. In December 1996, the government made Catholic instruction classes "non-mandatory," i.e., taught on a voluntary basis for those who request it but with no grades or credit given. Historically, Catholic instruction was mandatory unless parents requested exemption for their children. Each Brazilian state may now opt for "ecumenical education," which is essentially comparative religion and may be integrated into the curriculum. Cardinal Lucas Moreira Neves blasted the proposal, claiming that most parents wanted "specifically Catholic education" and that removing it from the curriculum "breaks the unity and continuity at the heart of Brazilian identity."

Santiago: Chile's president Eduardo Frei criticized the Catholic Church for its expanding control of the media and education after public television stations refused to transmit the Health Ministry's educational publicity against AIDS. One of the stations is owned by the Catholic University, the other by an exceptionally devout businessman, Ricardo Claro, according to a report in *The Economist*. *The Economist* further reported that the largest national newspaper, *El Mercurio*, is "to all intents and purposes a theological supplement." Divorce is still banned by law in Chile, Opus Dei is growing, and the Catholic Church educates just over half of Chile's three million schoolchildren in conservative Catholic schools run by Opus Dei. The Legionaries of Christ refuse to take children from poor families and reject children whose parents are legally separated (the only alternative in a divorce-free society).

Jerusalem: Bitter disputes continue to plague Israel over the question of determining the legality of conversions to Judaism performed by non-Orthodox rabbis. The ultra-Orthodox political parties insist that Conservative or Reform Jews are not legitimate Jews and should not be recognized as such officially. Relations between the groups suffered when a group of American Jews of Conservative and Reform congregations were physically attacked while praying at Jerusalem's Wailing Wall by Yeshiva students and extremists who objected to the participation of women among the worshippers. Meanwhile, a proposed new law restricting Christian missionary activity in Israel is nearing passage in the Knesset. It would impose criminal penalties, including one year's imprisonment, for missionary activity or for "inducement for religious conversion." Surprisingly, its sponsor, Nissim Zvilli, belongs to the Labor Party, which has generally not been associated with this kind of legislation.

Toronto: The Ontario Court of Appeals has ruled against Sikh, Hindu, Muslim, Mennonite, and Christian Reformed parents seeking alternative religious instruction in public schools. The case will be appealed to the Canadian Supreme Court. In November 1996 the Supreme Court ruled that Ontario may but is not required to fund religious instruction during school hours in a case brought by Protestant and Jewish families. Only Roman Catholics in Ontario have a "constitutional right" to publicly funded church schools.

Dublin and Belfast: Ireland has had a number of firsts in recent months. The first Jewish member of the Supreme Court was appointed in Dublin, while the first Catholic to serve as Lord Mayor of Belfast was elected. Several Jews have held cabinet positions in recent Irish governments, and several have been elected to Ireland's parliament. Ireland's Jewish community numbers about 1,500 in a nation that is 92% Catholic. In 1992 a Hindu was elected to the Dail from a western constituency on the Labor Party ticket. Ireland's Catholic bishops, smarting over a series of political and public relations defeats and scandals in recent years, are trying to win back some lost prestige by publicly calling for a referendum on abortion. Abortion is mostly illegal in Ireland, though a Supreme Court decision allows the procedure to save a mother's life. (Despite British permissiveness, Northern Ireland still restricts abortion under almost all circumstances, refusing to implement Britain's 1967 legalization, unlike England, Wales and Scotland.)

Books

Toward Benevolent Neutrality: Church, State and the Supreme Court, Robert T. Miller and Ronald B. Flowers, Markham Press Fund of Baylor University Press, 1997, 885 pp., \$95.00.

There is no better book available for serious students of church-state relations than this handsomely produced, comprehensive tome. Now in its fifth edition, this two volume production includes the texts of every major U.S. Supreme Court decision affecting church and state from 1856 to 1995. This monumental achievement has been edited by Ronald B. Flowers, chair of the Department of Religion at Texas Christian University and the late Robert T. Miller of Baylor University. These two scholars contributed the historical essays placing the cases in perspective and prepared an exhaustive bibliography of nearly a thousand books and articles that will guide specialists to additional resources. The book's utility is enhanced by numerous tables, subject divisions, and a glossary of legal terms and phrases. Every library should own a copy of this indispensable reference work.

— Al Menendez

Beyond the Threshold: A Life in Opus Dei, by Maria del Carmen Tapia, Continuum, 364 pp., 1997, \$29.95. *Opus Dei: The Pope's Right Arm in Europe*, by Brian Urquhart, Catholics for a Free Choice, 1436 U St. NW, No. 301, Washington, DC 20009, 16 pp., 1997, \$5.

Opus Dei, Latin for "God's Work," is a semi-secret ultraconservative organization founded in Spain in 1925. Though not as influential as it was in Franco's Spain, it is well-heelled, has a disciplined, well-educated membership, and has been actively involved in, among other things, trying to block progress on reproductive and women's rights. Though Opus Dei is active in the U.S., British writer Urquhart's informative and useful little book deals only with its operations in Europe.

Maria del Carmen Tapia is a Spanish woman who joined Opus Dei in 1948, occupied a number of important posts in the organization, and finally left it after 18 years. Her account is that of an insider who personally knew and worked with Opus's founder, Msgr. Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer, for several years. She writes only about what she personally experienced, observed, and suffered through. Her book is crammed with almost mind-numbing detail which confirms its authenticity and adds to its value.

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Opus Dei, she clearly shows, is nothing less than a bizarre "cult" operating within the Catholic Church, one that would turn off the vast majority of Catholics but which enjoys the special favor of Pope John Paul II. *Beyond the Threshold* is a scary but important expose.

— Edd Doerr

The Smoke of Satan: Conservative and Traditionalist Dissent in Contemporary American Catholicism, by Michael W. Cuneo, Oxford University Press, 214 pp., \$27.50.

Fordham University professor Michael Cuneo aims his skilled observer's gaze at the multi-faceted phenomenon of the Catholic Right, which he sees as "vehicles of protest" against the changes within Catholicism since 1965.

Dividing these malcontents into three distinct groups, he says Catholic conservatives are "moral puritans" who believe "the mainstream American church has lost its passion and its zeal, its self-confidence and sense of direction, and, most important of all, its privileged claim to ultimate authority."

Another group, the Catholic separatists, are "moral perfectionists." "With their perfectionist aspirations, their cultural exclusivity, and their spiritual elitism, separatists are participants in an American tradition of religious utopianism that extends at least as far back as Plymouth Rock," he argues. They are also adept at building their own schools and seminaries.

The third group, the Catholic Marianists, given to apparitions and mystical visions, are the "moral catastrophists," a "peculiarly Catholic counterpart to Protestant Millenarianism and dispensationalism."

The Catholic conservatives have had more impact on politics and the general culture. They have used the abortion issue to regain power. "Fighting abortion, in the conservative view, is far more than simply a political undertaking. It is the final frontier for them, the last opportunity for Catholics in the United States to recapture the zeal and spiritual prowess of their religious ancestors."

He also sees the alliance between the Catholic Right and the Protestant Right as "a strategic alliance" that is "rather more fragile than is generally recognized."

— Al Menendez

Separatism and Subculture: Boston Catholicism, 1900-1920, Paula M. Kane, University of North Carolina Press, 415 pp., \$29.95.

Historian Paula Kane argues that Boston's Catholic hierarchy sought to create a parallel Catholic subculture during the first two decades of this century. Simultaneously pursuing goals of integration of Catholics into the larger culture and separation from that culture in education, the Church leadership succeeded in becoming "more bureaucratic, juridical and self-seeking." Kane says the Church "sought to position itself as an autonomous mediator between the state and the people" and "expressed a hostility toward modernity, namely secular democratic government." The Church's "triumphalism and techniques for forestalling dialogue would overwhelm any internal democratizing tendencies for the next decades as well as any ecumenical overtures." This policy had a major impact on the state's politics and church-state relations in the legal arena.

— Al Menendez

Reinventing American Protestantism: Christianity in the New Millennium, by Donald E. Miller, University of California Press, 253 pp., \$27.50.

University of Southern California Professor of Religion Donald Miller argues forcefully that America may be in the midst of a far-ranging religious change. "A revolution is transforming American Protestantism . . . a new style of Christianity is being born in the United States, one that responds to fundamental cultural changes that began in the mid-1960s." The new movers and shakers are the independent megachurches the author calls "paradigm" churches. While emphasizing biblical literalism, emotionalism, and conservative moral values, these churches are individualistic, populist and informal in structure and bureaucracy.

On the basis of five years of research and opinion surveys of the Vineyard, Chapel and Hope movements, Miller concludes that this "Third Great Awakening" will have political and cultural ramifications. The survey of these new groups indicates that 28% were originally Catholic, 13% had no religious upbringing, and 11% were liberal Protestants. They are Republican by a 4 to 1 margin over Democrats and conservative by a 10 to 1 margin over liberals. (Only 6% call themselves political liberals and only 8% voted for Clinton.)

Other surprises emerge from the data. About 38% are college graduates and 29% earn more than \$60,000 per year. Fully 75% are white and 53% are ages 26 to 40. Almost 30% have been divorced, and the same percentage came from divorced families. More than half said they used illegal drugs, abused alcohol and engaged in premarital sex before their conversion, while a third were sexually abused as children and nearly half have received professional therapy. After joining these new paradigm churches, fully half claimed to have received a personal "vision from the Lord" and 44% say they were "miraculously healed" of some affliction.

One can only wonder what kind of impact such movements will have on American life in the next century.

— Al Menendez

No Mercy: How Conservative Think Tanks and Foundations Changed America's Social Agenda, Jean Stefanic and Richard Delgado, Temple University Press, 227 pp., \$27.95.

The authors of this eye-opening expose, both associated with the University of Colorado, detail the processes by which the right wing has repositioned America's political agenda. Well funded conservative foundations have seized center stage and systematically oiled a conservative revolution that threatens the basic American values of fairness, justice, racial tolerance, and multiculturalism. They challenge liberals to fight these trends, warning, "The right are far more adroit than the left in their use of the media." They argue, "American society functions best if the left and the right have roughly equal power and influence. Currently, however, the right is in full cry, the left demoralized." Liberals should learn from these trends and establish their own coherent think-tanks, special interest litigation and defense funds, they urge. "Conservatives have no monopoly on brains and money. With effort, progressive people can get the country back on course from the sharp veer it has taken to the right."

— Al Menendez

The New Censors: Movies and the Culture Wars, Charles Lyons, Temple University Press, 322 pp., \$59.95 cloth, \$19.95 paperback.

Lyons is a knowledgeable observer of the film industry and

the challenges it faces from would-be censors, both left and right. One chapter of his history focuses on religious-based censorship since the 1920s. "Religious groups and leaders have played more prominent roles in shaping film content than has any single secular group. Before 1909, the reformers who were the driving force behind a federal censorship movement often represented religious groups and interests." While Catholics were the dominant censors of yesteryear, fundamentalist Protestants have led the forces since 1980, demanding stricter controls over more content. Lyons' book is an excellent contribution to the culture wars debate.

— Al Menendez

The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara, by David I. Kertzer, Alfred A. Knopf, 350 pp., \$26.00.

When Vatican authorities in the old Papal States (a civil state run by prelates) seized a 6-year-old Jewish boy from his family in 1858, an international uproar ensued. Acting on orders from the Inquisition (yes, it still existed!), which reported that the child, reportedly near death, had been baptized by a Catholic servant, the police action brought down a storm of criticism on Pope Pius IX. Despite repeated appeals from Catholic leaders like France's Emperor Napoleon III, and from Protestants and Jews, the Pope remained immobile and refused to return Edgardo Mortara to his family.

This riveting story is masterfully retold by an American historian who argues that this outrage was the event that precipitated the demise of the temporal power of the Papacy and hastened the reunification of Italy. "The Mortara case draws attention to the fact that the Church's transition from a medieval fundamentalism to modernity took place only in the present century" when such violations of religious liberty would be unthinkable. "The Mortara affair marked a turning point in helping to catalyze the creation of national and international Jewish self-defense organizations in both Europe and the United States."

Ironically, young Mortara fell in love with Catholicism, became a priest at age 21, a prominent orator and scholar and died in an abbey in Belgium in 1940 at age 88, one month before the Nazi invasion.

— Al Menendez

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