



# VOICE OF REASON

The Newsletter of Americans for Religious Liberty

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## Colorado's Good News, Wisconsin's Bad News: What Next?

On November 9 the U.S. Supreme Court announced that it would not review the Wisconsin Supreme Court's June 10 ruling in favor of the Milwaukee school voucher plan. The "non-ruling" simply left the Milwaukee plan in place and really sent no meaningful signal about the constitutionality of vouchers. But it did generate an enormous amount of news coverage and speculation, and it completely crowded out the more important news, Colorado voters' rejection of a voucher-like tuition tax credit initiative.

Colorado voters on November 3 handily defeated Amendment 17 by 59.1% to 40.9%, despite a Republican near sweep of major elective offices. Amendment 17 would have drained money away from public schools to fund a cumbersome tuition tax credit/grant program to aid nonpublic schools.

Supporters of Amendment 17 reportedly spent twice as much money in the campaign as the defenders of church-state separation and public education, which included Americans for Religious Liberty. Economist Milton Friedman, one of the early backers of school vouchers, sent \$1,000 to the Colorado campaign. Further support for the voucher clone came from the Milwaukee-based American Education Reform Foundation, whose board includes Wal-Mart billionaire John Walton, a strong voucher backer, and David Brenan, an Ohio businessman who was a main backer of the Cleveland voucher plan.

The Colorado vote marked the 22nd statewide referendum defeat for school vouchers and similar parochial plans since 1966. In the 1990s voters in California, Oregon, Washington State, and Colorado (in 1992) defeated similar plans in two-to-one votes.

Media coverage of the Supreme Court's non-ruling also left out mention of two significant court rulings in recent months. On October 14 the Delaware County, Pennsylvania, Court of Common Pleas struck down a voucher plan adopted in March by the Southeast Delco School District school board. The plan would have provided \$500 to \$1,000 tuition reimbursements for nonpublic students. Judge Joseph Battle held that the school board lacked authority to enact such a plan.

Earlier, on August 11, Maine U.S. District Court judge D. Brock Hornby ruled that the state is not required to pay for religious school tuition in school districts where there are no public schools. Maine law allows school districts in such cases to pay for enrollment in other school districts or in nonsectarian private schools.

It might also be noted that voters on November 3 also turned out Republican senators Alphonse D'Amato and Lauch Faircloth, both supporters of vouchers.

But back to the Supreme Court's November 9 non-ruling, the reason the Court ducked the issue is not at all clear. It takes only four justices to accept a case for review and only Justice Stephen G. Breyer said he would have had the case, *Jackson v. Benson*, heard. Perhaps the opponents and supporters of vouchers both felt uncertain as to the possible outcome of the case, but we may never know.

Meanwhile, the non-ruling is bad news for Milwaukee and Wisconsin parents, educators, and taxpayers. As it stands the Milwaukee plan could drain \$50 million to \$70 million this school year from the city's struggling and majority minority public school system. The Milwaukee plan provides \$4,900 per student to the voucher schools, some of which are hoping to convert themselves into charter schools so that they can increase the allotment to \$6,100 per student.

It is important to note that Milwaukee has the most overcrowded public schools of any city in the country, according to a November 1998 report by the U.S. Department of Education, and

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## Editorial

### Terror and Propaganda

Dr. Barnett Slepian returned home from synagogue with his wife and children on Friday evening, October 23, in a Buffalo suburb. Within minutes a sniper, evidently staked out waiting for the obstetrician-gynecologist to return home, killed him with a single rifle shot through his kitchen window.

Dr. Slepian performed abortions at a Buffalo clinic in addition to his regular gynecology and obstetrics practice. He had been harassed for years by anti-choice protesters and militants.

Dr. Slepian's cold-blooded murder was a political assassination, the seventh since 1993. And it was far more than the murder of one respected physician and good man. Like the other murders in Pensacola, Birmingham, and Boston, and like the numerous bombings, arsons, acts of vandalism, threats, demonstrations, blockades, and "rescues," it was intended to intimidate all physicians and clinic personnel in the U.S. and Canada, to drive up the insurance and security costs of medical facilities, to decrease ac-

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that the African-American population of Milwaukee has the lowest average incomes for any city outside Mississippi. It is easy to see why voucher promoters are using Milwaukee as a wedge to promote school privatization.

ARL executive director Edd Doerr was an invited speaker on vouchers at the October 1998 annual conference of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Alliance of Black School Educators and heard at first hand how the voucher plan is disliked by most people in the city.

What can we expect in 1999 and 2000?

Congress will undoubtedly take up vouchers again and possibly Sen. Coverdell's plan for tax-subsidized school savings accounts. Congress will be divided along party lines on the issues, with Republicans tending to favor tax aid for nonpublic education and Democrats and the Clinton administration generally opposed.

More action will take place in the states. State supreme courts in Ohio, Arizona, and Vermont are weighing the issues. Plans are under way to put voucher or tuition tax credit initiatives on the ballot in 2000 in California and Michigan, though voters in both states have defeated such moves in the past.

On the legislative front vouchers will be pushed hard by newly elected Gov. Jeb Bush in Florida and re-elected Gov. Tom Ridge in Pennsylvania, where the Catholic bishops have been pushing hard for vouchers for years. A similar effort will be made in Arizona.

Meanwhile, efforts will be made in Wisconsin to lift the family income cap for voucher eligibility. Even Polly Williams, the African-American Democratic legislator who began the voucher push in Wisconsin in 1990, declared recently in the *Boston Globe*, "I knew from the beginning that white Republicans and rich, right-wing foundations that praised me and used me to validate their agenda would do it only as long as it suited their needs. I knew that once they figured they didn't need me as a black cover, they would try to take control of vouchers and use them for their own selfish interests."

Williams added, "That is why most black groups like the NAACP are against vouchers, because without the income cap,

## NEW FROM ARL

### *Who Goes to Nonpublic Schools: A Study of U.S. Census Data*

by Albert J. Menendez, 32 pp., \$10.00

Four factors emerge as central to higher than average nonpublic school enrollment, according to this first-ever analysis of U.S. census data on the subject by ARL associate director and political demographer Al Menendez: religious affiliation, high income, ethnic ancestry, and the racial profile of local public schools.

Available from:

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choice becomes just a free-market program that keeps richer families happy and Catholic and Lutheran schools solvent with state money without any commitment to improve schools. . . . Too many people in the voucher crowd exploit low-income black children, saying we are creating vouchers for them when what they really have in mind is bringing in a Trojan horse."

The coming two years, then, will see a series of massive new attacks on public education and church-state separation at the federal and state levels, in the courts, and on the playing fields of public opinion. The Religious Right and their secular allies are powerful, but they have been beaten repeatedly and can be stopped again, as often as necessary. But it will take effort.

(See "Give Us Your Money . . ." on page 4 for more up-to-date information on the school voucher problem.)

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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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# Religious Right a Big Loser in the 1998 Elections

The Religious Right failed to increase its support in the newly elected 106th Congress, despite intense political activities and the distribution of 35 million "voter guides" by the Christian Coalition in thousands of U.S. churches. In fact, the Christian Right's endorsement may have been the kiss of death in a number of races.

Three of the five Republican incumbents who were ousted were closely identified with the Christian Right and all received a "100" rating of agreement from the Christian Coalition.

Rep. Vince Snowbarger of Kansas City's suburban 3rd District (KS) was the first Republican to lose his high-income loyal GOP district since the early 1930s. The district, which encompasses Johnson County, went for Barry Goldwater for president in 1964, which shows how loyal it has been to the GOP. Snowbarger, however, was too far right for even Goldwater voters, particularly after he endorsed the Religious Right efforts to oust popular moderate Republican Governor Bill Graves in a bitterly contested August primary. Graves emerged victorious by a 3 to 1 margin in that election and defeated his Democratic opponent by the same edge in November. Snowbarger was an outspoken supporter of the Christian Coalition and its positions.

In New Jersey's 12th District, incumbent Republican Mike Pappas, the only New Jersey member to score 100% agreement

with the Christian Coalition, went down to a Princeton physicist, Rush Holt, in a major surprise – the central New Jersey district has not elected a Democrat to Congress since the days of Woodrow Wilson. Local Republicans, including former Republican governor Thomas Kean, were increasingly unfriendly toward Pappas after the congressman's spirited and rather silly musical defense of Kenneth Starr on the floor of Congress earlier this year. The Democrats called him "off key and off base."

In New Mexico's 3rd District, a largely Hispanic and Native American community in the state's north, an ultraconservative Republican preacher, Bill Redmond, won by a fluke in a 1997 special election following the resignation of Representative Bill Richardson, who became U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. Redmond's 43% to 40% victory was caused by a 17% vote for the Green Party candidate. This time around, however, the voters must have realized what a mistake they had made in selecting a man whose 100% Christian Coalition rating made him out of touch with his district. (Rev. Mr. Redmond's vote came mostly from the white Baptists in Eastern New Mexico in the state's "Little Dixie" area.) The Democratic nominee, Tom Udall, son of former Interior Secretary Stuart Udall, rolled up an easy 54% to 43% victory, with the Greens falling to 3%. Udall, interestingly, is the only Mormon Democrat in the House.

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## What Exit Polls Show

The 1998 Congressional vote was a near draw, 51% for the GOP and 49% for the Democrats, enabling the Republicans to hold narrow House and Senate majorities. The Republicans were 2% weaker than in their 1994 triumph, the last off year election, but 1% stronger than in the presidential year of 1996, when Bill Clinton ran well ahead of Democratic Congressional candidates. The modest gains for the Democrats – 5 House seats and no change in the Senate – is historically significant, since it was in 1934 that the President's party last failed to lose seats in a midterm election.

Religious voting patterns were much the same as they have been for a decade. White Protestants voted 65% Republican while Catholics voted 53% Democratic – a difference of 18 percentage points – the widest gap between the two largest voting blocs in America in 20 years. This is, of course, reflected in the Congressional religious affiliations. White evangelical or "born again" Protestants were 3 to 1 Republican in most surveys, which is nearly as high as it has been in recent years. Catholics have moved 6% toward the Democrats since 1994 while Protestants have remained the same. Jewish voters were overwhelmingly Democratic, 79% to 21%, slightly higher in 1994. Voters of "other religions" were modestly Democratic, while voters without any religious affiliation gave the Democrats two-thirds of their ballots.

African Americans voted Democratic 89% to 11%, and their turnout was high. The large turnout among black voters and union households helped the Democrats, as did a relatively flat turnout among evangelical Protestants (down from 15% to 13% of the electorate).

There were some unexpected findings in the exit polls

this year. Male voters moved 4% toward the Democrats while women remained the same, thus narrowing the gender gap to 7%. Hispanic voters were more Republican and Asian voters more Democratic than in 1996, but both were slightly more Democratic than in 1994.

The 4% of voters who called themselves gay, lesbian or bisexual were 6% more Republican, a major surprise, though 67% still favored the Democrats. Voters with two or more college degrees (18% of all) favored the Democrats, as they have since the 1980s, but lost 3 points to the GOP since 1994. The other high-status group, voters with incomes exceeding \$75,000, however, showed a large 9% Democratic gain. Democrats also gained 4-5% among voters aged 30 to 59 but lost 4% among voters over age 60, traditionally a Democratic target group. Republicans won their greatest support among older and retired voters, who had favored the Democrats until 1994. The marriage gap continued to widen. Married voters supported the GOP by 56% to 44%, while unmarried voters favored the Democrats by 60% to 40%, a 16 point difference, the largest since exit polling began. This unusual "marriage gap" overshadows the gender gap, since married women voted Republican 54% to 46% while unmarried men voted Democratic 55% to 45%. Two-thirds of all voters are married.

Regionally, there was no real change, except for slight GOP gains in the Midwest. Political independents favored the GOP, 52% to 48%, but self-styled "moderates" chose the Democrats, 55% to 45%. White Southerners voted 65% to 35% Republican, a record high.

*Al Menendez*

## Terror and Propaganda, *continued from page 1*

cess to clinics by women choosing to exercise their freedom of conscience in dealing with problem pregnancies.

These assassinations, bombings, threats, and harassments are instances of political terrorism, the use of violence to effect social change, and should be treated as such by the criminal justice system. They are terrorist attacks on the right of every woman to be free of compulsory pregnancy and on the right of physicians to provide wanted medical services to their patients.

These acts of violence are aimed at overriding court decisions, at undercutting the First Amendment right to freedom of conscience, at sabotaging the First Amendment principle that government may not take sides in a theological dispute over when human personhood begins.

Of course the vast majority of people who oppose freedom of choice on abortion are non-violent. That is not in dispute. But sectarian leaders who fill the airwaves and other media with propaganda about abortion being "murder" or "infanticide" or "child killing" contribute to a climate that encourages fanatics and some deranged persons to resort to lethal violence.

Propaganda can kill. Nazi propaganda triggered the Holocaust in World War II. Propaganda from pulpits and preachers has led to religious wars, pogroms, persecutions, witch hunts, and heresy trials. If propaganda did not work, there would be no advertising industry or much political campaigning.

Religious extremists cannot, of course, be simply silenced. But social pressure should push them, if they consider abortion immoral, to channel their energies into efforts to reduce the demand for abortion services. Let them get behind comprehensive family and sexuality education in schools, to finding improved contraceptives and making them more readily available, to reducing poverty and the worst social inequalities, to fighting racism.

Terrorism is barbarism. Anti-choice terrorism is no different from any other kind of terrorism.

## 'Give Us Your Money . . .'

"Give us your *money* and *some* of your kids, but not your *rules*." That rather succinctly summarizes the findings in the 145-page U.S. Department of Education final report on *Barriers, Benefits, and Costs of Using Private Schools to Alleviate Overcrowding in Public Schools*, released on November 3. The study was ordered by the Republican-controlled Congress in September 1996.

Although this carefully researched report is intended to deal primarily with the subject of its title, it bears so importantly and directly on the campaign by the Religious Right and their secular allies to get tax support for sectarian and other private schools through vouchers or other means that its findings merit wide attention.

The basic premise of the study is that nonpublic schools, "in exchange for tuition reimbursement," might be utilized to relieve overcrowding in large urban areas.

The 22 urban areas studied were Baltimore, Buffalo, Chicago, Dade County (Miami, FL), Dallas, Detroit, Duval County (Jacksonville, FL), El Paso, Houston, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Memphis, Milwaukee, Nashville, New Orleans, New York City, Oakland, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland (OR), San Antonio, and San Diego. These cities were selected from among 34

large enrollment school districts because they had the worst overcrowding problems.

Following is a summary of the report's major findings.

Some 3,000 nonpublic schools enroll 774,000 students in the 22 urban communities, about 16% of all students in those areas, compared to less than 11% nationally.

Catholic schools enroll 57% of nonpublic students in the 22 urban areas, while 30% are enrolled in a variety of other denominational schools and 13% in nonsectarian schools.

Minority students amount to 43% of nonpublic enrollment in the 22 cities, compared to 22% in nonpublic schools nationwide, but well short of the public schools' 82% in the cities.

Urban nonpublic schools reject 17% of the students who apply for admission, in stark contrast to public schools, which accept all students. Unmentioned in the report is the fact that a private school's religious orientation largely determines who applies in the first place. Christian families are unlikely to seek to enroll their children in Jewish or Muslim schools; Catholic families are unlikely to try to enroll their children in fundamentalist schools, etc.

Most denominational schools (86%), according to the report, would not admit voucher student transfers from public schools if they were required to exempt the kids from religious instruction or activities. The executive director of Christian Schools International (Christian Reformed or Calvinist schools) said his schools "would not allow the exemption because every class is permeated with a Christian religious viewpoint." Dr. Carl J. Moser of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod said Lutheran schools could not accept exemption because of their commitment to "maintaining our mission and our spiritual nature which permeates our total school program." Rev. Bill Davis of the U.S. Catholic Conference said that exemption "strikes at the very nature of what a Catholic school is all about." Ageib Bilal of the Council of Islamic Schools in North America said that in Muslim schools "religious instruction [is] mandatory" though "participation in religious activities [could be] optional."

(One small flaw in the report deserves mention. It ignores the question of denominational schools using creedal and lifestyle criteria in hiring and dismissing teachers, a fairly common practice. It also fails to note that one reason nonpublic schools appear to be cheaper to operate is that they pay teachers less and provide them with fewer benefits.)

In addition to their unwillingness to exempt public school transfers from religious instruction and activities, most nonpublic schools use admission processes not permitted by public schools. Three-fourths require written applications; 73%, student discipline records; 77%, interviews with students; 87%, interviews with parents; 58%, standardized achievement tests; 74% require "ability to perform at grade level." Clearly, with a 17% rejection rate on top of "admissions considerations," nonpublic schools practice "skimming" to get "better" students and keep out problem students, which public schools must generally admit.

Further, 68% of nonpublic schools are "definitely" (46%) or "probably" (27%) not interested in accepting "special needs" children, children with physical and/or mental problems or disabilities, who must be accepted by public schools.

The bottom line, that nonpublic schools make abundantly clear, is that about 92% of them would be willing to accept transfers of students from overcrowded urban public schools only if they are allowed to maintain their current admissions, curriculum, and religious instruction/activity policies. In other words, "Give us your money, through vouchers, and some of

your kids, the ones we attract or choose to admit, but don't give us any rules!"

The preceding adds up to a pretty solid case against school vouchers or using nonpublic schools to alleviate public school overcrowding. Obviously, playing the game with the nonpublic schools' rules would skim some of the "more desirable" students from public schools and increase the percentage of expensive to educate special needs kids and discipline problems in public schools. But there is more.

Dr. Paul Hill of the University of Washington made a study for the U.S. Department of Education in 1998 on the costs of transferring students from public to nonpublic schools. His estimate, which includes tuition, registration and other fees, transportation, categorical program services, administrative costs and evaluations, comes to \$4,575 per student per year.

The report also records a blizzard of problems facing any program of using tax paid vouchers to transfer public school students to nonpublic schools. Here are a few of them: Would vouchers apply to only low income or all students? How would students be assigned to specific nonpublic schools? Would transfer students become private school students or remain public school students? What happens to students and schools if the overcrowding of public schools ceases? Do they return to public schools? Would all students in an overcrowded district be eligible for vouchers or only those in individual crowded schools? How much government supervision, if any, would accompany the vouchers? How would a transfer program affect students already attending nonpublic schools? Could we have nonpublic classes in which a third of the students got vouchers and tax-paid transportation while their classmates did not? What criteria would nonpublic schools have to meet to qualify to participate in the transfer program? How do you deal with the fact that some cities experience overcrowding only in elementary schools while others experience it only in secondary schools?

Near its conclusion the report notes, understatedly, that there are those who view a voucher plan to relieve public school overcrowding as "a test case for a more comprehensive private school voucher program."

## ***ARL in Action***

Since our last report ARL president John M. Swomley has addressed conferences and meetings in Louisville and Kansas City. One of the founding board members of the Interfaith Alliance, Swomley was recently elected board chair of *Human Quest* magazine.

Executive director Edd Doerr spoke on school vouchers at the annual conference of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Alliance of Black School Educators. He also addressed audiences in New Hampshire and Virginia and was a guest on a radio show in Illinois. Doerr's article, "Religion and Public Education," appeared in the November issue of the *Phi Delta Kappan*. Reprints are available from ARL for \$1.00 to cover postage and handling.

Associate director Al Menendez spoke on school vouchers at a Jewish student conference in Virginia.

Professor Burton Caine of the Temple University School of Law has been named to ARL's National Advisory Board. He is an expert on civil liberties and church-state law.

The report ends with a consideration of constitutional issues, its weakest section. Even though it showed the pervasively sectarian nature of most nonpublic schools, it cautiously avoided taking a clear stand that school vouchers would violate the First Amendment. Curiously also, it made no reference to the state constitutions, most of which clearly forbid direct or indirect tax aid to religious schools.

Though its conclusion is somewhat ambiguous and weak, the report itself is a powerful argument against school vouchers or using nonpublic schools to alleviate public school overcrowding. The voucher remedy is worse than the disease. It would harm public education, spur social fragmentation, subsidize sectarian indoctrination, dilute public control over public spending, cost a great deal of money that could be better spent building new public schools and rehabilitating old ones, further entangle religion and politics, and create a gigantic administrative nightmare. Vouchers, under whatever rationale, are one can of worms best left unopened.

## **Schools, Vouchers, and the NCC**

The General Assembly of the National Council of Churches, meeting in Chicago in November, approved on "first reading" a proposed policy statement on "The Churches and the Public Schools at the Close of the Twentieth Century." The statement is being circulated for discussion and feedback prior to final action by the Council in November 1999.

Noting that "public consciousness [about public education] has been dominated by religious and political groups whose view of public schools is largely negative," the statement calls on the NCC's more than 230,000 constituent congregations to renew "our traditional support for the strengthening and reform of the public schools. Our concern for children and for the creation of a truly caring community impels us to this action."

The statement acknowledges that "the public schools are the primary route for most children — especially the children of poverty — into full participation in our economic, political, and community life," and declares, "We affirm once again that public money should be used only for public schools, and declare our belief that the First Amendment to the Constitution, along with the Equal Access Act, provides an adequate and sufficient guarantee of the religious liberty of students and their parents. Consequently, we oppose any efforts to alter the First Amendment's prohibition against laws respecting an establishment of religion."

"We are concerned," the statement adds, "that, should the public further weaken its support for the public schools, we would all suffer a devastating loss in the quality of public, economic, and spiritual life throughout our society. Tragically, those who would suffer most from this abandonment would, once again, be children."

Recognizing that "public education has been under attack for over two decades by persons representing religious, cultural, and economic views which offer little or no support for public schooling," the statement calls for addressing "the issues of race and class which threaten both public education and democracy in America." It calls attention to and demands action to reduce the serious inequities in public school funding.

The statement calls upon churches to champion and support public education and lists ways in which that can be done.

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## Schools, Vouchers, and the NCC, *continued*

The National Council of Churches' excellent proposed policy statement, which reaffirms the Council's long-held support for public education and church-state separation, goes far in counterbalancing the incessant propaganda for school vouchers, tuition tax credits, and similar gimmicks emanating from Pat Robertson's misnamed Christian Coalition, the Heritage Foundation, some Catholic bishops, and a host of ultraconservative columnists, pundits, talk show hosts and others.

## Vouchers, Polls, and Polls

Opinion polls about vouchers can be misleading, as we pointed out in our last issue. This year's Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll showed opinion shifting toward school vouchers, but the same poll respondents opined by better than three to one that nonpublic schools receiving vouchers should have to follow the same general rules as public schools, a condition, it is important to note, that is not acceptable to the vast majority of nonpublic school operators.

Then on November 3 Colorado voters, despite a Republican near sweep of the state, rejected a voucher-like tuition tax credit constitutional amendment by 59% to 41%, confirming the strong opposition to vouchers and their analogs in the 1990s by voters in California, Oregon, Washington State, and, six years ago, in Colorado.

Now comes a new survey by pollster Louis Harris showing that 84% of respondents indicated that improving teacher quality is more important than vouchers in improving struggling public schools. And 87% chose teacher quality over the prospect of allowing for-profit operators to run public schools.

Good polls and referenda show that most Americans are not being seduced by the school privatizers, the Religious Right, or voucher-hungry sectarian special interests.

## The Bomb is Still Ticking

A generation ago President Nixon ordered a major study of the effects of world population growth on U.S. interests. The report was submitted to President Ford, who endorsed it. Then it was mysteriously stamped "classified," buried, and kept a deep secret for nearly 20 years. The authoritative report showed clearly that excessively rapid population growth threatens grave environmental damage, exhaustion of nonrenewable resources, serious strains on renewable resources, major threats to the health and lives of a large segment of humankind, and political instability, strife, and violence. The report recommended international efforts to make information about and access to reproductive health technology universally available. The report also noted that utilization of abortion would be a necessary part of the solution to the population problem.

Since the report was ordered world population has grown by about 50%, environmental degradation has accelerated, fresh water supplies are critically short in many parts of the world, and population pressures have contributed to violence in many areas.

Four years ago the UN's Cairo Conference on Population and Development brought new attention to the problem, but, thanks largely to pressures managed principally by the Vatican,

little has been done since Cairo. Although President Clinton reversed the regressive Reagan-Bush Mexico City policy of ignoring the problem, American efforts to deal with overpopulation have been thwarted by Congressional Republicans. Most recently Republican leaders in Congress made partial payment of U.S. back dues to the UN contingent upon agreement by the White House to bar U.S. grants to overseas family planning organizations that lobby in favor of abortion rights with their own money. That contingency forced Clinton to veto the dues payment bill.

In a domestic parallel to the international scene, Religious Right operators and their congressional allies, largely led by Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ), did all they could this past fall to block Rep. Nita Lowey's (D-NY) bill to require federal employee health insurers to provide coverage of prescription contraceptives, as the plans cover the controversial male anti-impotence drug Viagra. Smith and his friends were able to kill off the contraceptive provision, previously passed by both houses of Congress, by an unusual move in a House-Senate Conference Committee.

All of this is of a piece with the Catholic bishops' 217 to 30 vote in November to go all out in an augmented campaign against abortion rights. The beefed-up campaign is a political move to mobilize parishes into a voting bloc against pro-choice political candidates. Of course the bishops speak only for themselves and a minority of Catholics. Catholics for a Free Choice spokesman Jon O'Brien said that the bishops' November 18 declaration "is a slap in the face of the democratic principles that Americans expect their leaders to uphold."

ARL president John M. Swomley charges that the anti-choice campaign in the U.S. got seriously under way in November of 1975 when the Catholic bishops issued their "Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities" and gradually influenced the newly forming fundamentalist Religious Right (Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, et al.) to take a visible leadership role in attacking reproductive choice. (Swomley's analysis of the Catholic bishops' November 1998 pastoral statement on increasing pressure on abortion rights is available from ARL for \$1 to cover mailing.)

### Safeguarding the Future

Religious liberty and church-state separation will never be completely secure. But you can help provide the means for their defense in the future in two ways.

Include a bequest to Americans for Religious Liberty in your Will, add ARL to your Will, or, include ARL as a beneficiary in a life insurance policy. Bequests and insurance proceeds to ARL are tax deductible.

Please contact us if you would like further information.

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# Religious Affiliations in the 106th Congress

The 1998 congressional elections were essentially what most forecasters predicted — a status quo election with only a relatively small number of seats shifting from one party to the other. The major surprise, of course, was the 5-seat gain in the House for the Democrats, the first time since 1934 that the president's party failed to lose a substantial number of House seats. There were no changes in the composition of the Senate, and both houses remain in Republican hands. Since the president's party failed to lose any net seats in either the House or the Senate, this election represents the best showing for an incumbent president since FDR's first term. (JFK in 1962 and Richard Nixon in 1970 managed a draw, with gains for their party in one house and losses in the other.)

The overwhelming majority of incumbents were reelected, and 96 House seats — nearly a fourth — had no major party opposition to the incumbent.

It is therefore unsurprising that religious affiliations changed so little.

Roman Catholics, Baptists and Methodists will remain the three strongest religious groups in the 106th Congress. This is the same ranking as in the last several elections. Catholics will have 151 members in the new Congress, Baptists 69 and Methodists 59. These three groups constitute a majority (52%) of all members.

The rest of the "top ten" religious groups remains the same since the 1996 election. Presbyterians are the fourth largest religious community with 47 members and Episcopalians remain in fifth place with 42. They are followed by 34 Jews, 34 non-denominational Protestants, 22 Lutherans, 16 Mormons and 10

## Religious Categories by Party

	<i>Republican</i>	<i>Democrat</i>
Roman Catholic	61	90
Jewish	2	31
Eastern Orthodox	4	2
Mormon	14	2
Nonaffiliated	2	6
All Protestant	195	125
Baptist	35	34
Methodist	38	21
Presbyterian	31	16
Episcopalian	30	12
"Protestant"	26	8
Lutheran	10	12
UCC	5	5
Disciples of Christ	0	4
Unitarian-Universalist	1	2
Christian Science	5	0
Assembly of God	3	0
A.M.E.	0	3
Seventh-day Adventist	2	1

members of the United Church of Christ. There are nine members who call themselves "Christian," six Eastern Orthodox and five Christian Scientists. Three Unitarians and four members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) were elected, as were three Seventh-day Adventists, three members of the Assembly of God and three members of the A.M.E. Church. Several smaller denominations have one or two members. There are eight members with no religious affiliation.

The only religious group to have a member in the new Congress, after an absence of two decades, is the Society of Friends, or Quakers. Rush Holt, a Democrat, ousted a Religious Right-supporter, Rep. Mike Pappas, in New Jersey's 12th Congressional District (the Princeton area). Most of the previous Quakers in Congress had been Republicans from Indiana or Virginia.

In terms of gains and losses since 1996, there are a number of changes that may have some significance. Presbyterians lost eight seats, for no apparent reason, since the other "mainline" churches (Methodists, Episcopalians, United Church of Christ) remained the same. The Presbyterian losses are quite inexplicable. The total membership for the mainline churches, which are moderate theologically and generally more inclined to support church-state separation, declined once again from 169 to 161, which represents a loss of nearly one hundred members since the 1970s.

One group which increased by six members is the generic "Protestant" category, a designation much favored in the western regions of the U.S. One small religious group experienced a comeback of sorts. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) increased from two to four members, all Democrats from largely rural districts in Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri and Tennessee. The Disciples used to have 15 or 20 members, but have nearly vanished from Congress, reflecting perhaps national membership decline.

*continued on page 9*

## Religious Affiliations - 106th Congress

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Change</i>
Roman Catholic	151	0
Baptist	69	+2
Methodist	59	0
Presbyterian	47	-8
Episcopalian	42	0
Jewish	34	-1
"Protestant"	34	+6
Lutheran	22	0
Mormon	16	+2
United Church of Christ	10	0
"Christian"	9	-1
Eastern Orthodox	6	0
Christian Science	5	0
Disciples of Christ	4	+2
Assembly of God	3	-1
A.M.E.	3	-1
Unitarian-Universalist	3	0
Seventh-day Adventist	3	0
Christian Reformed	2	0
Society of Friends	1	+1
United Brethren in Christ	1	0
Evangelical Methodist	1	0
Reorganized Mormon	1	0
Evangelical	1	0
No affiliation	8	+1



# Who was Abraham Kuyper and Why Does the Religious Right Love Him So?

A little-known Dutch politician, who doubled as a preacher-educator and lived a century ago, has become a hero and mentor to segments of the American Religious Right today. His name was Abraham Kuyper. Evangelical author and activist Chuck Colson frequently invokes Kuyper's memory and recommends him as an ideal Christian statesman. For the past few years, an annual Kuyper lecture has been held at different evangelical colleges around the country. Explanations of his thought are common among evangelical scholars, especially those from the same Dutch Calvinist backgrounds, and some of his books remain in print. Who, then, was this obscure figure and what does his popularity among religious conservatives signify?

Kuyper was born in 1837 in the declining seaport town of Maassluis. He studied theology at the University of Leiden and eventually became a pastor of the established Dutch Reformed Church. After a few years he rejected liberal and rationalist theology, underwent a "born again" religious experience, and broke with the established church. His absolutist and purist orientation made him a constant critic of the establishment and a seceder. He helped to establish a conservative splinter church of pure Calvinists called the Gereformeerde Gemeente in 1886. Six years before, he had set up the Free University of Amsterdam to propagate his religious views. He became a lecturer and held a chair there for decades.

Meanwhile, Kuyper dabbled in politics. He wanted "true Calvinists" to have their own political party to serve as a pressure group and therefore formed the Anti-Revolutionary Party in 1879. This reactionary and anti-liberal party soon won enough seats in parliament to be a political force that the older parties were forced to acknowledge. Its main goal was obtaining subsidies for religious schools on the elementary and secondary level. Kuyper's party hated public education, seeing state schools as insufficiently committed to religious truth. Within ten years private religious schools, Protestant and Catholic, received one-third of their funds from the government. By 1917 they were fully funded and, as a consequence, public education declined dramatically. Even today the Netherlands, largely secular and liberal, spends about 70% of its education funds on religious private schools.

In their 1981 book, *Society, State, and Schools*, Calvinist authors Rockne McCarthy, Donald Oppewal, Walfred Peterson, and Gordon Spykman argue for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to authorize tax support of denominational schools and base their view largely on Kuyper.

Kuyper's party gained so much clout that he became prime minister from 1901 to 1905. But his term of office is regarded as unsuccessful and he was turned out of office in the 1905 election. He had alienated many working people when he sent troops to ruthlessly suppress a railroad workers strike in 1903.

Thereafter he wrote books, preached sermons, taught classes at "his" university and edited a conservative newspaper. He

was active until his death in 1920 at 83.

It is Kuyper's church-state and cultural views that are worrisome. If they should be revived, women and non-white, non-Protestant racial and religious groups would have much about which to be concerned.

Kuyper opposed female suffrage and thought women should take no part in public affairs. He was a Prohibitionist and a great admirer of American politician William Jennings Bryan, whose religious views were similar to Kuyper's. As prime minister he used political means to achieve some of his moralistic goals.

Kuyper held to a rigid Calvinist worldview, regarding "every square inch as belonging to the sovereignty of God," as he put it in an 1880 address. He coined the phrase "sphere sovereignty" to express his belief that churches should control all aspects of education, charity, and family matters, while the state should restrict itself to policing and defending the nation's honor.

He held other religions, including other Christians, suspect, because their religion was largely false, but he suggested there was a "common grace" that God bestowed on everyone, even those who had not been enlightened by Calvinistic Protestantism.

He thought 17th century Holland was an ideal society, a kind of promised land, and his political movement was bathed in the politics of nostalgia. Dutch Catholics did not look back in fondness toward that era, however, since they were second-class citizens and did not achieve equal rights until late in the 19th century. Discrimination against Catholics was one reason Belgium seceded from the Netherlands in 1830. Kuyper, however, asserted the belief that "the Lord created our nation and rescued our Fatherland" in an 1873 speech.

On two major issues Kuyper adopted retrogressive views. During the Boer War between the British and Dutch settlers over control of South Africa, Kuyper adamantly supported the Boers because of religious similarities. In *The South African Crisis* he thundered, "The natural character of the English differs fundamentally from that of the Dutch." Of the Dutch-descended Boers, he wrote, "Their religion, thoroughly Calvinistic, is the very soul of their chivalrous existence and completely harmonizes with it. The Old Testament has impressed them with the paramount virtue of fervent piety in the consolidation of natural strength. This explains why they open their councils of war with prayer and march to battle singing the Psalms of David. Their morality is above suspicion. Liaisons with Negro women are among the Boers completely unknown. Their married life is most pure and alcoholism has never seduced them." There is plenty of evidence to suggest that this is a naive, if not wholly false, view.

Kuyper also referred to the native peoples of the region as "savages" and warned, "Conquest over the white man does and always will remain their chimerical ideal. Do not believe that Christianizing these blacks has obliterated their racial passion."

On the homefront, Kuyper fought against belief in evolution. He denounced evolution in a speech on October 20, 1899, saying, "Evolution is a newly formed dogma and a newly emergent faith. Embracing and dominating all of life, it is diametrically opposed to the Christian faith and can erect its temple only upon the ruins of our Christian Confessions. I warned against Higher Criticism of Scripture which threatened to rob us of the

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revelation of our God. Today I feel myself called to speak out against the even deadlier danger of evolution.”

Kuyper’s leading interpreter and admirer today is James D. Bratt, professor of history at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In a centennial anthology of Kuyper’s writings that he edited, Bratt writes, “Abraham Kuyper is a significant figure in the history of the Netherlands, an intriguing study in nineteenth century cultural dynamics and one of the most remarkable figures in the annals of Calvinism. He celebrated the Reformed founders, subscribed heart and soul to their teachings and worked ceaselessly to restore their authority in an age that had either forgotten them or contradicted their word.”

However, Kuyper cannot be seen as an exponent of intellectual or religious freedom or an advocate of advancing human rights and human dignity. His whole approach was separatist, religiously exclusivist, militaristic, racist and reactionary. Perhaps he is a fitting hero to the Religious Right after all, but he seems a strange choice even to religious conservatives when there are preeminent figures in the American experience from which to choose role models. Once again, the Religious Right seems mired in an irrelevant and unworthy past.

*Al Menendez*

### 1998 Elections, *continued from page 3*

Redmond had been a strong advocate of vouchers and school prayer, issues with little support in district towns like Santa Fe and Taos.

These three defeated zealots had all been prominent supporters of vouchers to aid parochial and private schools. Their defeat is welcome news to supporters of religious liberty and public education. So, too, were results in Oregon’s 1st District, where voucher advocate Molly Bordonaro lost a close race to Democrat David Wu, and in Indiana’s 10th District, which includes the state’s largest city, and capital, Indianapolis. In that race incumbent Democrat Julia Carson won a nearly 60% to 40% sweep over voucher supporter Gary Hofmeister. Local newspapers cited the voucher issue as perhaps the dominant one. The defeat of Republican Dan Lungren in the California governor’s race, coupled with the referendum defeat of a voucher proposal in Colorado, was more good news for church-state separation.

Two Deep South GOP governors who were poster boys for the Religious Right went down to resounding defeats. In Alabama Fob James, who once threatened to send state troops to preserve mandatory prayers and the posting of the Ten Commandments on a courtroom wall, finally wore out his welcome, losing heavily to Lt. Gov. Don Siegelman, a Democrat and a Catholic. (He is the state’s first Catholic governor.) In South Carolina David Beasley, who paraded his Southern Baptist identity on every possible occasion, failed to fight off charges of marital infidelity and overall incompetence and wishywashiness. He was upset by Democrat Jim Hodges in a race that wasn’t even close at the end. In the same state veteran Democratic Senator Fritz Hollings, who led the Senate fight against tax credits two decades ago, was reelected with comparative ease over a spirited Republican challenger in what is arguably the South’s most Republican state.

These defeats for the Religious Right have cheered church-state separationists, but the fact remains that the GOP still controls Congress for at least two more years and the party’s leadership still seems intent on pushing the Christian Right agenda.

*Al Menendez*

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### Religious Affiliations, *continued from page 7*

The religious affiliations tend to reinforce and to reflect the very different appeals made by America’s two political parties. Fully 70% of Republicans in Congress are Protestants, while only 49% of Democrats are Protestants, making the Democratic Party much more religiously diverse. Among white Protestants the party differences are even more pronounced. Nearly 70% of all Republican members of Congress are white Protestants, but only 33% of Democrats are.

In a nation which is daily becoming more culturally diverse, the narrowing Republican appeal to a now declining white Protestant base cannot bode well for the future, unless the GOP can somehow reshape its image and recast its appeal. But the party’s domination by an almost entirely white Protestant Religious Right will make that goal much more difficult.

*Al Menendez*

### Ethnicity, Religion and Party - 106th Congress

	<i>Republican</i>	<i>Democrat</i>	<i>Total</i>
White Protestant	193	85	278
White Catholic	59	73	132
Black Protestant	1	33	34
Jewish	2	31	34 *
Mormon	14	2	16
Hispanic Catholic	2	14	16
White nonaffiliated	1	6	7
Eastern Orthodox	4	2	6
Asian Protestant	0	6	6
Black Catholic	0	3	3
Hispanic Protestant	1	1	2
Native American nonaffiliated	1	0	1

\* Includes 1 Independent

# Update

## Arizona Bible Week Nixed

Arizona Governor Jane Hull's proclamation of a state "Bible Week" was voided by a preliminary injunction on November 20 by federal district judge Roslyn O. Silver. The proclamation had been challenged by the ACLU on behalf of several citizens. Judge Silver held that the declaration violated the church-state separation provisions of both the U.S. and state constitutions.

On the same day, Tucson Mayor George Miller rescinded his similar proclamation after the state ACLU affiliate threatened a suit.

Phoenix TV station KAET-TV conducted a statewide poll on the issue and found that respondents by 44% to 28% held that Gov. Hull's Bible Week proclamation did not violate "the church-state provision of the Constitution." The poll showed that more than 53% of those under 30 viewed the proclamation as unconstitutional, while fewer than 30% of those over 60 did so. In the Tucson area respondents split 31% to 31% on the issue with 37% on the fence.

Tucson Unitarian Universalist minister Stanley Stefancic agreed with Judge Silver and said, "I'd rather have a Bill of Rights Week so we could understand the separation of church and state and the free exercise clause. . . . Whenever government and religion are combined in any way it leads either to fascism or intolerance."

## Wisconsin Aid Plan Challenged

A Wisconsin plan that provides state subsidized computer data lines and video links to sectarian private schools was challenged in federal district court on November 4 by the Madison-based Freedom from Religion Foundation. The suit charges that the state program, added to a budget bill in 1997 without a committee hearing, violates both the U.S. First Amendment and the state constitution.

The suit says that there are no statutory restrictions on use of the data lines or video links for providing religious instruction, training, and programming.

Data from the state show that 13 of 15 private elementary schools and 13 private high schools benefiting from the program are sectarian, either Catholic or Lutheran.

The U.S. Supreme Court has allowed states to provide some secular textbooks and materials to denominational schools but not equipment that could be used for religious purposes.

## Clinton Veto Backed

President Clinton has twice vetoed congressional efforts to ban so-called "partial-birth abortions" (PBAs) because the bills failed to allow the seldom-used D&X (dilation and extraction) procedure to protect a woman's health and not just her life. The Religious Right has used the PBA issue as a way of seriously eroding all abortion rights. A recent poll by Peter B. Hart Research Associates for the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy found that by 65% to 23% respondents say that PBA bans should contain an exception when "the woman's doctor determines that the procedure is necessary to prevent serious harm

to the woman's health."

Meanwhile, PBA laws have been severely limited or enjoined in 19 out of the 20 states in which legal challenges have been mounted. In November alone federal courts threw out state PBA bans in Wisconsin, Kentucky, Florida, and Arkansas.

In other action, the New Mexico Supreme Court ruled in November that the state's Equal Rights Amendment requires the state to use Medicaid funds to pay for medically necessary abortions for poor women. Lawsuits have also been filed seeking Medicaid funding for abortions in Alaska, Florida, Tennessee, and Texas, and the ACLU is planning suits in two other states.

According to the National Abortion Rights Action League nearly all states now provide some form of public funding for abortions, ranging from cases of life endangerment only in South Dakota, Alabama, and Mississippi, to life endangerment, rape and incest in 25 states, to certain health circumstances in six states, and still more liberal funding in the remaining states.

(Reprints of ARL president John M. Swomley's article on "The 'Partial-Birth' Debate in 1998" are available from ARL for \$1.00 to cover postage and handling.)

## Science Teachers Honored

High school science teachers Susan Epperson of Arkansas and Don Aguillard of Louisiana were honored by the National Association of Biology Teachers in November for their roles in the successful 1968 and 1987 Supreme Court tests of state laws designed to ban or compromise the teaching of evolution. Epperson and Aguillard both warned that battles over evolution in science classes are continuing.

Aguillard reported that a recent survey of Louisiana biology teachers found that 24% believed in creationism while 29% believed creationism could appropriately be taught in science classes.

The National Committee for Science Education reports that in ten states evolution is avoided in science classes while in 25 there have been controversies in public schools. In Alabama biology textbooks must carry a disclaimer casting doubt on evolution.

## A Person or Not?

According to Catholic Church current teaching, fetuses are persons from "conception." However, a New Jersey court ruled in favor of Catholic St. Peter's University Hospital in November when it was sued for performing autopsies on dead twin fetuses. The hospital had argued that the fetuses were not persons under state law, which requires completion of death certificates for fetal deaths only after 20 weeks of gestation, and, separately, requires family consent only for autopsies of "persons." So the church is somewhat flexible in its definition of "person."

## International

**Jerusalem:** Israel's Religious Affairs Ministry faces a year-end deadline by the Supreme Court to place Reform and Conservative Jews on the 160 all-Orthodox taxpayer-financed religious councils that exercise enormous power throughout the

country. Ultra-Orthodox politicians have threatened to bring down the government over it. The councils provide services affecting both religious and nonreligious people and control marriages, as only Orthodox ceremonies are legal for Jews. Only a minority of Israelis are Orthodox Jews. Professor Benjamin Ravid wrote in *the New York Times* on December 5 that "The Government of Israel has the responsibility either to recognize and to treat all forms of Judaism identically or to dissociate itself from the religious sphere."

**Berlin:** A November court ruling will allow 35,000 Muslim children to receive Islamic instruction in public schools. At present Catholic and Protestant churches provide two hours of religious education weekly. Religious instruction of some sort is mandatory in all German states except Berlin, Bremen, and Brandenburg. The court order is controversial for Berlin Muslims, about 70% of whom are Turkish, because the Islamic Federation is viewed by many as fundamentalist.

**Madrid:** On September 22 Spain's center-right dominated parliament voted 173-172 to defeat a Socialist Workers Party bill to permit total freedom of conscience on abortion during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. At present, Spanish law permits abortions only in cases of rape, incest, threat to the life of the woman, or severe fetal deformity.

**New Delhi:** The Indian government, led by the Hindu nationalist BJP party, has backed away from a wildly controver-

Chance that a House member voted last June for Representative Istook's school prayer amendment: 1 in 2.

Chance that a member attended Congress's opening daily prayer on any of the three days preceding the vote: 1 in 29.

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sial proposal to make study of sacred Hindu texts mandatory for all children. India's constitutionally-mandated religious neutrality keeps an uneasy peace among the country's majority Hindus and Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, and other religious minorities.

**Berlin:** Germany's highest court, the Constitutional Court, voted 5-3 in October to declare unconstitutional a 1996 Bavarian law banning abortion clinics and forcing women to travel outside the country's largest state for the procedure. The court held that states do not have jurisdiction to regulate abortion since passage of a 1995 federal law.

## Books

*Media, Culture and the Religious Right*, Linda Kirtz and Julia Lesage, eds., University of Minnesota Press, 380 pp., \$19.95.

Two academic colleagues at the University of Oregon have edited an anthology of essays about how the Religious Right has penetrated the media and in turn used the media to influence the general culture.

Co-editor Linda Kirtz argues that "the new visibility of conservative Christians has been aided by an extraordinarily sophisticated network of electronic resources," while co-editor Julia Lesage reminds us that "the Right's goal is currently to effect moral legislation by electoral means."

Nancy Ammerman places the Protestant Fundamentalist movement in historical context, focusing on its distinguishing theological characteristics. Chip Berlet distinguishes three types of right wing movements, which he calls the "theocratic right," the "secular conservative right" and "the hard right," the latter of which embraces white racists, anti-Semites and the Christian identity movement. He notes, "Many groups in all three sectors have at least some philosophical roots in orthodox versions of Calvinistic Protestant Christianity, especially support for heterosexual patriarchy, individualism, and a free-market economy." All three wings have "access to the corporate media," says Berlet, but the hard right "devotes greater resources to alternative media and has a significant presence in cyberspace."

Several chapters are case studies of religious right groups, such as National Empowerment Television, the Christian Coalition's Leadership Training Schools, and Colorado for Family Values, an anti-gay rights pressure group.

All in all, this is a stimulating collection.

-- Al Menendez

*Tipping the Scales: The Christian Right's Legal Crusade Against Choice*, ed. by Janet Benshoof and Andrea Miller, Center for Reproductive Law and Policy (120 Wall Street, New York, NY 10005), 181 pp., \$18.95.

If you think that reproductive rights for women in the U.S. are reasonably secure, this important new book will set you straight. This well-documented (over 1,000 endnotes) investigative report shows that, while there is little likelihood of passage of an anti-abortion constitutional amendment, nonetheless a number of well-heeled Religious Right groups have developed strategies for chipping away at abortion rights and making reproductive health services increasingly inaccessible. *Tipping the Scales* summarizes the tactics of the Religious Right's legal arms, which boast the services of more than 1,600 volunteer attorneys, and details the operations of the 12 most active groups using the law to attack and undermine reproductive choice.

Among the report's findings: Christian Right legal groups encourage malpractice suits against providers as part of a campaign to impose so many personal, professional, and financial drawbacks on performing abortions that few doctors will provide the service. Use of conservative religious broadcasting gives Christian Right legal groups the means to reach millions for ideological and financial support.

This indispensable report makes it abundantly clear that the Religious Right's goal is the shrinking of freedom of conscience rights of all women and imposition by government on all women of a particular theology of embryonic or fetal personhood, both of which goals would seriously erode the First Amendment.

-- Edd Doerr

*Not by Politics Alone: The Enduring Influence of the Christian Right*, Sara Diamond, The Guilford Press, 280 pp., \$23.95.

Sara Diamond, author of several first rate studies of the political and religious Right (*Roads to Dominion, Spiritual Warfare, Facing the Wrath*), explores in her new book the reasons why the Christian Right will not be going away any time soon.

The movement has endured for two decades by emphasizing a host of emotionally appealing (to some) issues, attaching itself to the Republican Party, manipulating the evangelical subculture and developing a parallel world of media and publishing enterprises. Says Diamond, "For more than two decades, the Christian Right has made continuing inroads within the Republican Party alongside continuing demands on elected officials to do the movement's bidding. We ought to expect more of the same in the near future." She adds, "Together, leaders and followers are on a godly mission, a mission that they will not give up lightly. A taste of power is enticing, but one taste is never enough. For the morally righteous, especially, victory appears always to lie just around the corner."

The Christian Right is tenacious. Diamond explains, "The Christian Right has recovered from its many losses because the movement works on numerous issues with multiple strategies and multiple types of organizations . . . With equal doses of religious zeal and political know-how, the Christian Right has fastened itself to the wheels of power and policymaking."

Diamond also suggests that this movement will continue to claim that it is the victim of religious discrimination and persecution as a way of rallying the faithful. She writes, "Thanks to its sense of collective martyrdom, the Christian Right will surely continue to engage in conflict with the secular political culture."

Diamond pays considerable attention to "cultural underpinnings" of a movement that combines piety with partisan politics. This may be the underlying reason why the Religious Right will never really die. "It is the Christian Right's dual nature as subculture and political faction that has made it such a potent force, one likely to adapt and endure in the years to come."

Diamond also reminds readers that the movement is fundamentally hostile to systematic change in a progressive direction, despite its pretenses of friendliness toward racial minorities and struggling families. She is blunt but persuasive. "When it comes to electoral politics, the Christian Right is a system-supportive movement, intent on legislating its moral policy

agenda but without challenging the essence of unequal power and wealth in the United States."

This excellent book deserves wide readership.

-- Al Menendez

*Shopping for Faith: American Religion in the New Millennium*, Richard Cimino and Don Lattin, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 237 pp., \$25.00.

Two religion journalists who monitor trends and research in religious studies set down their predictions for the future impact of religion on different aspects of American life. They argue that our "religious future will be based largely on local congregations, consumerism and fragmented spiritualities that cater to individual needs." "Without a doubt," they say, "the future will be more religious."

Pluralism and diversity will flourish. "Rather than spark interfaith conflict, American religious pluralism can defuse tension. With so many faith groups interacting in the public square, tolerance - if not always interfaith understanding - makes more sense than religious warfare."

Religion will continue to influence politics. They predict, "Despite its longstanding dispute with secular Republicans, the religious right will remain an influential force in American politics, especially in local campaigns." They add that "James Dobson is the rising star" of the right, eclipsing Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell. "Like a conservative chameleon, the religious right continues to reinvent itself." Additionally, "American evangelicals have undergone a process of politicization under the religious right's influence that will provide a devoted pool of activists for future campaigns."

What has happened to the religious left? Cimino and Lattin observe, "The religious left will be a minority because it represents a smaller constituency and is less organized than the religious right. The religious left needs a positive agenda that can rally the rank and file of mainline religion."

They also predict that "increased religious involvement in welfare, health care, community development and education will spark new conflicts between church and state." Finally, "Spirituality and religious belief are not private matters. They inevitably flow into the social and political arena. . . . In the coming century, the dizzying diversity of American religion will make public expressions of faith even more complex."

-- Al Menendez

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