



VOICE OF REASON

The Newsletter of Americans for Religious Liberty

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Louisiana Initiates Voucher Program

The state of Louisiana has set up a \$3 million school voucher program that will send 600 four-year-old children from poor families to Catholic preschools in New Orleans. The money comes from a federal welfare program called TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). Children who qualify for free or reduced school lunch assistance are eligible for the program.

The surprise program was added to state budget deliberations at the behest of Republican Governor Mike Foster and State Senate president John Haikel, a Republican from New Orleans. The state department of education was granted \$15 million for a similar preschool program in public schools. The public school program is scheduled to begin in January 2002.

The private school component of the program, which will be overseen by a division of the governor's office, is being completely directed and controlled by the Catholic Archdiocese of New Orleans and in particular Catholic Charities (CCANO). This direct collusion between church and state has raised a number of objections. State Senator Wilson Fields, a Democrat from Baton Rouge, tried to slash the Catholic school appropriation, but his amendment was rejected 32-7.

The Catholic school system, whose enrollment has been declining, jumped at the chance to administer the program and is attempting to begin classes by October. The 600 students (at \$5,000 per pupil allotment) will be accommodated in existing parochial school classrooms. The superintendent of the Catholic schools, Dr. Rene Coman,

called the federally-funded pilot program "a historic moment for education in Louisiana," adding, "It has taken us 34 years to get to this point."

Kirby Ducote, long-time lobbyist for the Louisiana Catholic Conference, hailed the program as a "radical change." When asked by reporters if this project could lead to more voucher-type proposals, Ducote responded, "I hope so. I hope we are opening a door."

The program mixes elements of education with the kind of collaboration between religion and government that President Bush is advocating in his "faith-based" initiative.

While 30 of the 46 nonpublic schools in Orleans Parish are Catholic (six are private, five are Episcopalian, and five are Protestant), the program is under the administration of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese in an official implementation plan signed by church authorities and the governor in August. It is not certain whether non-Catholic private schools will participate, though they are eligible. Catholic Charities was paid \$35,000 to help organize the program and advertise its existence to all nonpublic schools. The governor's staff insisted that parents will pick the schools for their children, not the Catholic Charities staff.

A blistering criticism of the program came from columnist James Gill in the *New Orleans Times Picayune*. Gill said the plan violated the idea of fairness and promoted one religion at the expense of others. "When government and religion are in cahoots, either freedom of conscience or civil rights – or both – are in jeopardy." Stay tuned.

House Approves Bush Charity Plan, Sends It to Senate

The U.S. House of Representatives approved President Bush's faith-based charity scheme in July. The bill is considered so flawed that onetime supporter Joe Lieberman of Connecticut has indicated that he could not support it without substantial alterations.

Following is an analysis of the religious, regional and partisan factors that shaped the House vote.

Analysis of the House Vote on H.R. 7

Protestants and Republicans fueled the House of Representatives' 233-198 approval of H.R. 7 on July 19, 2001. The lopsided 217-4 margin (98.2%) among Republicans suggested a party line bloc vote, with intense pressure applied by the Republican leadership and the White House, which issued a last-minute warning that the bill was of "intense personal interest" to President Bush. Only 7% of Democrats supported H.R. 7. Overwhelming support came from Methodists and Episcopalians, both predominantly Republican, even though the two most visible opponents of H.R. 7 belonged to these churches, Methodist Democrat Chet Edwards of Texas and Episcopalian Democrat Bobby Scott of Virginia.

Two groups associated with the Religious Right gave even greater support to the charitable choice proposal: Mormons, with 80% voting in favor, and Southern Baptists, who gave 82.5% support. Seventy percent of nondenominational Christians and 69% of members of smaller, mostly evangelical Protestant churches were favorable. Three of four Eastern Orthodox Christians voted yes, as did all

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September 11, 2001

Images of devastation, death, and horror from the events of September 11 are burned into the psyches of people across the land and the world, joining the pictures of Pearl Harbor, the London blitz, Nazi death camps, Hiroshima, and the killing fields of Cambodia. We grieve with everyone else and support efforts by the United States and other governments to bring the remaining conspirators to justice, perhaps through tribunals similar to those at Nuremberg after World War II.

We support measures designed to reduce the risk of future terrorist attacks, but believe that such measures should not erode the liberties at the core of the American way of life.

We applaud President Bush's appearance at the Islamic Center in Washington and his condemnation of prejudicial actions aimed at Americans of Arab ancestry or Muslim faith. We agree that Arabs and Muslims in general must not be ill-treated or blamed for the actions of a few fanatics. We disagree, however, with Mr. Bush's use of the word "crusade" to refer to possible responses to the terrorist attacks. That term, best confined to the eleventh to fourteenth century military expeditions by European Christians to oust Muslims from control of Palestine, can only offend Muslims everywhere.

Speaking of religion, it should be noted, as commentators infrequently did, that the September terrorists all appear to have been

fundamentalist fanatics. Why would reasonably bright men plan and train for a year or more for a suicide mission if they did not believe that their self-martyrdom would send them straight to paradise?

Which brings us to our domestic Taliban, televangelists Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. On the latter's "700 Club" gabfest on September 13 the Lynchburg loudmouth pontificated that the ACLU, People for the American Way, feminists, gays and lesbians, and supporters of abortion rights and church-state separation are partially responsible for the terror attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and the attack on the White House or Capitol foiled by the heroic passengers on the flight that crashed in Pennsylvania.

"I point the finger in their face and say, 'You helped this happen,'" Falwell spewed. "God Almighty," Robertson chimed in, "is lifting his protection from us," echoing the former Moral Majority honcho's comment about God "lift[ing] the curtain and allow[ing] the enemies of America to give us probably what we deserve."

Falwell and Robertson have tried to back away from their extremist rhetoric, but they cannot erase their implication that God and the terrorists might be collaborating. They have been spouting nonsense for too many years for their apologies to be taken very seriously.

Our nation needs to protect itself from both foreign terrorists and our would-be domestic Taliban.

Stem Cell Imbroglia

In August President Bush sought a middle way out of the embryonic stem cell research controversy. Scientists believe that stem cell material from human embryos holds promise for preventing, curing, or alleviating a variety of diseases from Alzheimer's to Parkinson's to diabetes. Anti-abortion activists believe that obtaining stem cell material from embryos means killing people. The policy Bush announced in August would restrict government-funded research to a few existing colonies of stem cells, which many scientists believe may not be at all adequate.

Opposition to embryonic stem cell research is based mainly on a theological belief in the personhood of embryos and fetuses. It is a belief with only problematical grounding in the Jewish and Christian scriptures and one all too often associated with a denial of the right of women to decide whether or not to continue problem pregnancies. Further, much of the stem cell material available for research comes from eggs produced as part of an in vitro fertilization process and is likely to be destroyed if not used.

In a response to Mr. Bush's policy announcement, Rev. Carleton Veazey, president of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, said that Bush's "decision to fund highly limited research on existing embryonic stem cells elevates respect for the embryo over respect for the lives of millions of people suffering from devastating diseases for which there is no cure."

"The decision lacks moral courage, vision, and understanding of what is meant by 'respect for life,'" Veazey added. "It will delay life-saving research, and it will not save a single embryo that is destined to be destroyed. It is morally unsound because it takes no stand, pro or con, opting instead for compromise. It is a decision that once again reveals the great power of religious extremists in this administration."

"It is unethical," Veazey concluded, "to deny research funds because of anti-abortion politics and religious extremism, as this decision does."

We concur.

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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.

Bush Charity Plan, *continued from page 1*

Christian Scientists, Christian Reformed Church and Assembly of God members.

Fifty-eight percent of nondenominational Protestants and 50% of Lutherans voted yes. But only 42% of the large Catholic constituency supported the measure. Hispanic Catholics were overwhelmingly opposed to H.R. 7.

Table 1
H.R. 7 Vote by Religion

	<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>% For</i>
Roman Catholic	52	73	41.6
Baptist	34	30	53.1
Methodist	37	12	75.5
Presbyterian	25	13	65.8
Episcopalian	23	7	76.7
Jewish	2	23	8.0
"Protestant"	15	11	57.7
Lutheran	8	8	50.0
"Christian"	7	3	70.0
Mormon	8	2	80.0
All Other	22	10	68.8
No Affiliation	0	6	0
All	233	198	54.1
All Protestants	168	93	64.4
All Other Religions	65	105	38.2

Opposition was strongest from Jewish members, African American Baptists, and the religiously nonaffiliated.

Two significant facts stand out in the religio-political dynamics of this House vote. One is the return of the old Baptist-Methodist-Presbyterian coalition, whose 41-vote support margin (96-55) carried the day single-handedly. In the past these groups cast the strongest votes for school prayer, Prohibition, and restrictions on immigration, reflecting an older American worldview. The fact that these groups gained nine seats in the 2000 elections also shows that even minor shifts in religious voting patterns can shape the outcome of congressional votes that are steeped in religious values and expectations.

The second major fact is that Protestants, taken as a whole, were largely instrumental in passing H.R. 7. Protestants voted 168-93 (64.4%), a 75-vote margin, while members from all other religious traditions voted 105-65 against the plan, a support level of only 38.2%. This Protestants versus everyone else dichotomy is beginning to stand out in church-state votes in Congress, raising the old specter of sectarian majoritarianism versus pluralism and respect for diversity in U.S. public life. The overwhelmingly Protestant orientation to the drive to enact H.R. 7 is seen in the list of the proposal's co-sponsors. Thirty-four are Protestant and only ten are Catholic.

The South almost single-handedly provided the winning votes, with a 31-vote majority out of the 35 by which H.R. 7 carried. Every Southern state except Arkansas and, ironically, George Bush's Texas supported the plan. The Border South was even higher, with 70% support, including every single Kentucky member. The "cultural South" supported the Bush scheme by 100-56, while it failed 142-133 in the rest of the nation. The cultural South is the U.S. stronghold of conservative and evangelical Protestant Christianity and a bastion of religious homogeneity.

In the heavily Catholic and Jewish Northeast, only 41% voted yes. Every member from heavily Catholic Massachusetts and Rhode Island voted no. The religiously liberal and pluralistic Pacific Coast states gave the lowest level of support, only 38%, to H.R. 7. The

liberal coastal regions voted 94-61 against the measure. Among sub-regions, New England was strongly opposed 17-5, while the Mid-Atlantic states were surprisingly close.

The Midwest and Great Plains states voted 60% to 40% in favor of the measure, winning strong support among Mormons and Methodists. This Middle America heartland is becoming increasingly favorable to Republicans.

Table 2
Vote on H.R. 7 by Region

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>% Yes</i>
South	77	46	62.6
Border South	23	10	69.7
Northeast	35	51	40.7
Midwest-Plains	72	48	60.0
Pacific Coast	26	43	37.7
All	233	198	54.1

The Dissenters

Only 15 Democrats and four Republicans deserted their party's overwhelming majorities for or against the Bush plan. Their religious and regional identities are revelatory of the deep religious divisions in the United States.

Of the 15 Democratic supporters, 12 were Protestant and only three were Catholic. Moreover, all 12 Protestants came from the conservative or evangelical churches: four were Baptists, four Methodists, two Presbyterians and two were members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Two of the four Democratic Disciples in Congress, Ike Skelton of Missouri and Ron Lucas of Kentucky, backed H.R. 7.

On this issue the old traditional Evangelical Coalition of Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians formed the core of dissenting Democrats and were largely responsible for the House passage of H.R. 7.

Nine of the 15 Democratic supporters came from the South or Border South states. Gary Condit, who was born in Oklahoma, represents a Southern-flavored district in the Central Valley of California known for its "Okies," fellow migrants from Oklahoma and Arkansas. David Phelps, like Condit a Baptist, represents a heavily Baptist region in southern Illinois. Only one of the 12 Protestant Democrats to back H.R. 7 came from a northern state, Tony Hall of Ohio. One of the Democratic supporters, Frank Clement, represents Nashville, Tennessee, the home of the Southern Baptist Convention and the news service and publishing divisions of the United Methodists.

Of the three Catholic dissenters, two are frequent supporters of conservative social issues, William Lipinski of Chicago and Jim Traficant of Youngstown, Ohio. The third, John LaFalce of Buffalo, New York, was something of a surprise, since his voting record is usually liberal.

Only four Republicans bucked their party's hard-sell leadership tactics. The day before the July 19 vote, numerous "moderate" Republicans, including Jim Leach of Iowa, Nancy Johnson and Christopher Shays of Connecticut, and Mark Foley of Florida, threatened to vote against the Bush plan unless there were ironclad guarantees against discrimination based on religion, race, gender or sexual orientation.

But all buckled when the leadership gave verbal promises that such concerns would be addressed later in a House-Senate conference committee if the Senate passes the plan.

As a result, only four Republicans, less than 2% of their members, voted against H.R. 7, and only one, Connie Morella of Maryland, is a

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Vouchers Down, Public Schools Up: New Polls

With the Supreme Court about to hear a major case on school vouchers, it needs to be emphasized that the American people continue to reject the idea that they should be taxed to pay for sectarian and other private schools. In two dozen statewide referenda from coast to coast over the last 35 years, voters have rejected school vouchers and similar schemes by a two to one margin. California and Michigan voters turned down vouchers at the polls in 2000 by better than two to one.

Two new polls show continued and even increasing opposition to school vouchers.

The annual Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa poll, released in August, shows that by 71% to 27% respondents prefer "improving and strengthening existing public schools" over vouchers. By 62% to 34% respondents opposed "allowing students and parents to choose a private school to attend at public expense." On a question that confusingly mixed together public school choice and vouchers, opposition registered at 54% to 44%.

Probing further, Gallup/PDK found that by 82% to 16% respondents said that "private or church-related schools that accept government tuition payments should be accountable to the state in the way public schools are accountable." This condition, of course, is unacceptable to nonpublic school operators. Similarly, by 77% to 18% respondents indicated that charter schools should be accountable as regular public schools are, but by 49% to 42% the same respondents expressed opposition to charter schools.

By 54% to 41% respondents think that home schooling is a "bad thing for the nation."

Gallup/PDK found that three-fifths of Americans believe that school quality and spending on public education vary considerably from district to district (there are about 15,000 public school districts in the U.S.), and fully two-thirds believe that the amount of money spent on public school students' education affects the quality of education a great deal. Three-fifths agreed that parents are more important than the school in determining how well students learn.

On questions that Gallup/PDK have used before, the poll found that only 23% of respondents rated public schools nationally with an A or B (51% a C), while 51% of the same respondents rated public schools in their own communities A or B, with 30% rating them C. But 68% of the very same respondents rated the public school their oldest child attends A or B, with 22% giving it a C. What this means, clearly, is that people give a good rating to the public schools with which they are most familiar, while apparently falling for the anti-public school propaganda being dished out by supporters of school vouchers.

Released in late September, a National School Boards Association/Zogby International poll obtained similar results.

NSBA/Zogby found that only 12% of adults and 5% of African-Americans think that vouchers would be the best way to improve public schools. African-Americans are seven times more likely to believe that reducing class size is the best strategy.

Opinion on vouchers in the abstract was evenly divided, though opponents of vouchers were firmer than voucher supporters. Fifty-seven percent of African-Americans opposed vouchers.

What support there is for vouchers fades considerably if they are seen to be shifting support away from public schools.

NSBA/Zogby found that 80% of respondents oppose private school discrimination in admissions. The poll also found that 61% of all adults and 74% of African-Americans oppose vouchers for existing private school students; 89% of adults and 90% of African-Americans oppose targeting vouchers only to students in urban public schools; only 14% of adults and 17% of African-Americans favor

vouchers limited to low-income families.

The bottom line, it is clear, is that there is no way to design a voucher plan that would be popular or practical or acceptable to the nonpublic school clientele. There is simply no alternative to improving our public schools and funding them more adequately and equitably.

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moderate or liberal member of the GOP. Morella, the only Catholic Republican to oppose H.R. 7, represents the prestigious Washington, DC, suburb of Montgomery County.

The other three GOP dissenters were conservatives. Bob Stump of Arizona is a Seventh-day Adventist, a religious group traditionally suspicious of ties between government and religion and keenly alert to religious discrimination. (The other Adventist Republican in the House, Bob Bartlett of Maryland, however, supported H.R. 7.) The only Baptist Republican to break ranks was Donald Manzullo of Illinois, a staunch conservative. The third GOP dissenter was Ron Paul of Texas, a quirky man whose anti-government views make him closer to Libertarians than to conservative Republicans. Paul, a non-denominational Protestant, ran for U.S. president on the Libertarian Party ticket in 1988 before rejoining the GOP.

Finally, there was one interesting irony: Such controversial members as Gary Condit (D-CA), Bob Barr (R-GA), Henry Hyde (R-IL), Jim Traficant (D-OH), and Dan Burton (R-IN) voted for the Bush plan.

The Democratic and Republican parties clearly appeal to different religious electorates. Fully 50% of the House Democrats, but only 23% of Republicans, are Catholic, Jewish or religiously non-affiliated. But 22% of Republicans and only 11% of Democrats are Mormons, non-denominational Christians, "non-denominational Protestants," or are members of small, mostly evangelical, religious groups. About 55% of Republicans belong to the mainstream Protestant denominations, compared to 39% of Democrats. These denominational divisions are clearly reflected in votes that are influenced by religious affiliation or tradition. (Incidentally, H.R. 7's "official" name is the Community Solutions Act of 2001, a terminological obfuscation. It might better be called the Religious Discrimination Act.)

Table 3
Vote by Party Affiliation

	% Yes
Republican	98.2
Democrat	7.2
Independent	50.0

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Momentum Slows for Bush "Faith-Based" Initiative

While the U.S. Senate is scheduled to take up President Bush's proposal to fund distinctively religious charities, there is no indication that it faces easy sledding. The House's narrow approval and a rising tide of opposition have slowed down whatever momentum the scheme may have had earlier in the year. There are some indications that Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle will not schedule hearings until next year. He has also expressed opposition to key passages in the bill, implying that it could not pass in its present form.

The biggest bombshell was the announcement that John DiIulio, the Philadelphia Democrat who heads the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Services, was leaving in September. DiIulio, in effect the czar of the program, cited health and personal reasons for his departure. But insiders believe DiIulio was discouraged by the rightward drift to administration policies on many fronts. He felt himself to be a fish out of water. With the imminent departure of a moderate Texas Democrat overseeing education reforms, the "last moderates" in the Bush administration are departing, according to *Newsweek*.

President Bush seemed unfazed by DiIulio's resignation and mounting criticism of the scheme. In a radio address from his ranch on August 18, Bush urged the Senate to pass the faith-based scheme "promptly." Bush has frequently expressed impatience with the pace of deliberation in Congress.

The Bush White House did initiate one major attempt to influence public opinion. At the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC in August, top administration officials released a report entitled "Unlevel Playing Field," purportedly a survey by five cabinet departments (Education, Labor, Justice, Health and Human Services and Housing and Urban Development) of fifteen "barriers to participa-

tion by faith-based and community organizations in federal social service programs."

The five "Centers" established by the president in these federal departments claimed that there is a combination of bureaucratic foot-dragging, funding gaps between secular and religious programs, and a "widespread bias against" the participation of faith-based organizations in federal social service programs.

The administration survey lamented that faith-based groups had received "only" 21% of funds going to nonprofits participating in the "abstinence only" program under the HHS Adolescent Family Life program. Faith-based groups received 16% of funds in HUD's programs for the homeless, 3% of the Youth Opportunity Grant Program in the Labor Department, and 2% of competitive grant funds in Labor's Welfare to Work services. Faith-based groups received 2% of the discretionary grants to eleven Department of Education programs, and one-third of 1% to programs at the Department of Justice.

While admitting that "some restrictions on the full participation of faith-based organizations are required," the Bush administration claims that "many of the regulations are needlessly burdensome." The Bush team also claims that existing programs "restrict some kinds of religious organizations from applying for funding" and that some bureaucrats "restrict religious activities that are not prohibited by the Constitution" and "do not honor rights that religious organizations have in federal law."

The "Unlevel Playing Field" report further laments that "federal administrators have done little to help or require state and local governments to comply with the new rules for involving faith-based providers" under the 1996 Charitable Choice provisions of the Welfare Reform Act.

New Jersey, Virginia Races Have National Impact

The New Jersey and Virginia governor's elections in November loom as important political tests. The two populous Eastern states have both nominated candidates with starkly different views on church-state issues. Considerable national attention will be focused on them because the party which captures both state houses usually wins the next presidential election. The stakes are high. Both parties are well financed, and national figures, including President George W. Bush, are expected to campaign in these pivotal races.

The New Jersey election is a battle of the mayors, between the GOP's Brett Schundler, mayor of Jersey City, and Jim McGreevey, mayor of Woodbridge, who almost ousted Republican governor Christie Whitman four years ago. Schundler is a charismatic politician with a flair for the dramatic, as in his call for the abolition of the state's hated road tolls. This kind of "stunt" issue has worked in other states, especially in Virginia, where Republican Jim Gilmore promised to do away with the state's unpopular car tax and rode the minor issue to victory in 1997.

Schundler is also an ultraconservative on church-state and social issues. He opposes abortion even in cases of incest and rape and routinely refers to the procedure as "murder." He is a national poster boy for vouchers and other forms of public aid to private and parochial schools. He has fought for years almost single-handedly on the school aid issue.

Schundler has already thrust the abortion issue center stage in his campaign. After being denounced by McGreevey as "outside the mainstream" for his abortion views, Schundler promptly enlisted

Pope John Paul II as his ally and called his opponent "anti-Catholic." How McGreevey, a Catholic of Irish ancestry, can be seen as anti-Catholic when Schundler is an evangelical Presbyterian, has emerged as one of the most curious and bizarre issues in the Garden State's election.

Schundler should not be underestimated. He has been elected and reelected mayor of overwhelmingly Democratic, and largely Latino and African-American, Jersey City. He easily defeated the more moderate candidate, ex-Congressman Bob Franks, in the Republican primary for governor. Schundler hopes to win crossover votes from minority group Democrats and from the state's large Catholic community, which, at 47% of the population, can be decisive, as it was for Clinton and Gore in recent presidential races. Schundler expects to hold his white Protestant base, which faithfully supports the Republican Party.

Jim McGreevey, a pro-labor and progressive politician, hopes to hold traditional Democrats and moderate Independents, especially in the cities and suburbs. He could capture some of the moderate Protestant Republican vote disturbed by Schundler's stubborn support for right-wing positions. He has already denounced Schundler's injection of religion into the campaign, a volatile issue that could upset traditional voting patterns.

Schundler, who favors an expansion of charter schools and who has never spared his harsh criticism of public education, criticized the state's schools for "teaching facts but not teaching truth." He also

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said that his campaign was all about "the moral culture of the state."

Virginia has had eight years of Republican governors, as has New Jersey, but the state's voters may decide that eight years is enough. Alexandria businessman Mark Warner, who almost toppled Republican Senator John Warner in 1996, is running a strong campaign highlighting public education. He has not yet spelled out his views on church-state issues, other than to state his firm opposition to vouchers.

His Republican opponent, state attorney general Mark Earley, has not shown any reticence to discuss church-state issues. Long an ally of the Religious Right, Earley has tried to push Virginia law as far as possible to accommodate religious (read: Conservative Protestant) activities in public schools, and to place as many restrictions on access to abortion services as are constitutionally permissible. He favors tuition tax credits as the way to aid private and parochial schools. "Vouchers have become problematic," Earley told a Richmond audience in July.

Earley has attempted to make dinnertime prayers at the Virginia Military Institute a central issue in his campaign. The Virginia ACLU filed a lawsuit in federal court in May on behalf of two cadets who complained about the mandatory nature of prayers before the evening meal each day, a custom dating only to the 1950s. (The academy was founded in 1839.)

Earley, in his last official act as Attorney General before resigning to begin his campaign, defended the VMI custom and claimed that required participation in obligatory prayers is not a breach of the First Amendment principle of church-state separation. Issuing the state's response to the lawsuit, Earley claimed that the prayers are "clearly compatible with the Constitution in the eyes of the Founders." Earley was seen as taking the easy way out, since polls show most Virginians favor the practice, whether it is constitutional or not.

Earley is expected to move even closer to the Christian conservative voters who form a cadre of activists in all statewide Republican campaigns. But since both Warner and Earley are running rather folksy campaigns, emphasizing rural and family values, the advantage to the GOP may not be that one-sided. And while Virginia is still heavily white and Protestant, it is also increasingly diverse in religion and its Protestant community includes many moderates who have never supported Religious Right objectives.

What's Scientific About Creation Science?

By Samuel Rabinove

Reading the Book of Genesis and interpreting it literally, one can hardly escape the conclusion that our earth is flat. Indeed, for many centuries, Jews and Christians believed just that.

But, as we knew, that is not all. Genesis teaches that the earth is the center of the universe, that the earth was created first (followed by the sun, moon and stars), all of which revolve around the earth.

There aren't many people today who believe that the earth is flat but, incredibly, there still are some who insist that the sun and stars revolve around the earth because the Bible says so, and the Bible is the inspired word of God., scientifically and historically true in every detail. This is a triumph of faith over fact, which leads directly to so-called creation science.

Creation science is an attempt to cloak fundamentalist religion in the language of science. It matches the biblical account of creation, as set forth in Genesis. Public school systems have been pressured to revise biology curricula to enable the teaching of this account as an explanation for the origin of life. To advance this objective, bills have been introduced in recent years in at least 15 states to require public schools to teach this story of creation.

In 1925, John T. Scopes was tried for teaching Darwin's theory of evolution to high school students, in violation of Tennessee law. He was convicted. Evolution, which was regarded as heresy by fundamentalist Jews and Christians, was virtually absent from American public schools for many years. In contrast to fundamentalists, most mainstream churches and synagogues interpret at least some of the Bible as allegory, and hence are open to evolution as an explanation for the origin of the species.

Only in the past 50 years has evolution been expounded in biology textbooks. In 1968, in the case of *Epperson vs. Arkansas*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that a statute that, for religious reasons, made it unlawful to teach evolution in public schools violated the First Amendment.

The two pivotal points of conflict between creationists and evolutionists concern the beginning of mankind and the age of the earth.

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To the creationists, any theory that man evolved from lower forms of life is anathema because of the biblical account of God's special creation of Adam and Eve. They believe that all basic types of plants and animals were made by direct acts of God during the week of creation, and revealed in Genesis. And while evolutionists cite overwhelming scientific evidence that the earth is several billion years old, creationists place the earth's age at about 10,000 years.

In 1980, Arkansas passed another law, this time requiring equal time for creation science in public school science classes whenever evolution is taught. This law was challenged in the case of *McLean vs. Arkansas*. It was overturned as unconstitutional in federal district court as an attempt to teach religion in public school.

At one point during the trial, Judge William Overton, a Methodist, asked, "What kind of scientific theory is this that is not subject to revision - ever?" His decision against the law was never appealed. But in 1987, in *Edwards vs. Aguillard*, a challenge to a similar Louisiana law reached the Supreme Court. The court ruled that laws requiring equal teaching of creation science, when evolution is taught in public school science classes, are unconstitutional since creation science is a religious belief and not a scientific theory. (Imagine a state law requiring equal treatment of astrology whenever astronomy is taught.)

Like any scientific theory, of course, evolution can and should be subjected to critical scrutiny. Evidence either for or against it can be adduced, examined and either accepted or rejected. Creation science, on the other hand, is not really a theory at all. Rather, it is an article of faith.

While those who now accept evolution are free to change their minds if new evidence is found, the creationists enjoy no such freedom. For them to change their minds would be to reject the word of

In the United States of America, we have been largely spared religious warfare, despite a proliferation of different forms of worship. The genius of the Founders was to appreciate that the state should stay far away from religion - not to suppress faith but to let its diverse forms flourish. Ours was the first nation to make religious tolerance and state neutrality the national creed. America has had its share of religious crusades and great awakenings, and they are protected by the Constitution. They ebb and they flow, and mercifully they have never turned into religious warfare so far.

— Robert Kuttner, co-editor of *The American Prospect*. This is an excerpt from a column in the *Boston Globe*, September 10, 2001.

God, which is unthinkable.

Creation science is a throwback to the Dark Ages, when religious zealots hounded men of science, like Copernicus and Galileo, when the scientists' observations failed to conform to the dogma of that time. It does not belong in public school science classes.

Rabinov is the former legal director of the American Jewish Committee. This article originally appeared in the White Plains Reporter Dispatch.

ARL Signs Freedom Statement

On September 20 at the National Press Club in Washington, Americans for Religious Liberty joined more than 150 civic, labor, civil liberties, religious, and other groups, along with 300 law professors and 40 computer scientists, in expressing support for the following declaration:

In Defense of Freedom

1. On September 11, 2001 thousands of people lost their lives in a brutal assault on the American people and the American form of government. We mourn the loss of these innocent lives and insist that those who perpetrated these acts be held accountable.
2. This tragedy requires all Americans to examine carefully the steps our country may now take to reduce the risk of future terrorist attacks.
3. We need to consider proposals calmly and deliberately with a determination not to erode the liberties and freedoms that are at the core of the American way of life.
4. We need to ensure that actions by our government uphold the principles of a democratic society, accountable government and international law, and that all decisions are taken in a manner consistent with the Constitution.
5. We can, as we have in the past, in times of war and of peace, reconcile the requirements of security with the demands of liberty.
6. We should resist the temptation to enact proposals in the mistaken belief that anything that may be called anti-terrorist will necessarily provide greater security.
7. We should resist efforts to target people because of their race, religion, ethnic background or appearance, including immigrants in general, Arab Americans and Muslims.
8. We affirm the right of peaceful dissent, protected by the First Amendment, now, when it is most at risk.
9. We should applaud our political leaders in the days ahead who have the courage to say that our freedoms should not be limited.
10. We must have faith in our democratic system and our Constitution, and in our ability to protect at the same time both the freedom and the security of all Americans.

Update

Cleveland Voucher Update

A new study of the Cleveland voucher program concludes that one out of three students participating in the plan had attended other private schools before transferring to the voucher program. Only one in five students transferred from Cleveland public schools. The largest chunk – 46% – of participating students had previously attended kindergartens or come from schools outside of Cleveland.

“The numbers suggest that vouchers in Cleveland are serving more as a subsidy for students already attending private schools than a way for students to leave badly performing public schools,” said Zach Schiller, a senior researcher at Policy Matters Ohio, a nonprofit research group that prepared the study. Responded Tom Mooney, the president of the Ohio Federation of Teachers, “This study shows that the subsidies are primarily benefiting the parochial schools and the people who are already in them or would have been in them. It calls into question what taxpayers are paying for here.” Added Cleveland State University professor James Carl, “The numbers suggest the program is more a subsidy for private schools rather than an alternative for public school students.”

The US Supreme Court has announced that it will hear an appeal to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals’ decision striking down the voucher program last December. Already, the Bush administration has filed a legal brief asking the justices to uphold the Ohio program and to reverse the *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* ruling. The Justice Department brief, written by Solicitor General Theodore Olson, claimed the plan is constitutional because it “benefits religion only in an incidental and indirect way.” The state of Ohio also asked the Supreme Court to take the case and hired former Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr, now a Washington lawyer, to prepare its brief.

State Aid to Religious Charities Increases

Perhaps as a consequence of the Bush administration’s push for a new national program of aid to religious charities, many states have suddenly begun to move in the same direction. Fifteen states have appointed government liaison persons to encourage church involvement in social welfare programs and new collaborations between clergy and state social service departments. A number of these new officials are members of the clergy, including Anthony McClarn, the “faith and families coordinator” for the Georgia Department of Human Resources.

New religious coalitions are applying for government financing for church-run programs dealing with job training, juvenile delinquency prevention, mentoring, sexual abstinence, housing, and economic development.

Even states that have not created new positions have begun to order state social service agencies to include religious groups in their programs. In the cities 121 mayors have appointed official staff liaison to religious groups, and 37 others are expected to do so, according to the United States Conference of Mayors.

Problems can occur in the implementation of state programs, and some have resulted in lawsuits. California is being sued for setting aside money expressly for religious agencies, while Texas once financed a job training program that required students to study the Bible. (The program has been defunded.)

Charitable choice guidelines approved in 1996 allow faith-based programs to “offer but not require” religious teaching. But in practice those guidelines are slippery. In Philadelphia Muslim participants in a job-training program complained that they were required to read from the Bible. State investigators allowed them to read from the Koran or other sources as part of the language training exercises.

Church groups new to government financing were warned by one

Virginia pastor, Rev. Alfred A. Terrill, “The government can scrutinize your methodology, your staff’s qualifications and your building for safety and health regulations.”

Still, as *The New York Times* noted on July 21, “A new era of partnership between government and religion” is about to begin.

Tax Credit Scholarships: Back Door Vouchers?

A 1997 Arizona law authorizing tax credits for contributions to scholarships has been a boon to private, parochial and home schooling. Taxpayers or businesses can deduct \$500 from their state income taxes and transfer that money to one of 34 student tuition organizations. Private schools are the primary beneficiary.

Wrote Ted Hayes in the conservative weekly *Insight*, “Parochial schools have restarted their building programs across the state; one has realized more than \$10 million in scholarships.” Another supporter, Darcy Olsen of the public school-hating Cato Institute, said, “The Arizona program is a blockbuster. It opens up funding opportunities to every kind of school, including religious and home schools. It could tilt the playing field.”

In Arizona last year, 30,000 taxpayers provided \$17.2 million in the tax-credit scholarships. The average grant was \$1,200 per student (some got \$3,000) and 14,000 private school students were subsidized by taxpayers. This represented 15 percent of all private school students.

Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota have similar programs, but no data are available. Eight other states considered similar legislation during recent legislative sessions, but none were passed. Bills may be reintroduced in New Jersey, Florida, Utah, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland and Colorado.

At the federal level at least four bills authorizing tax credit scholarships have been introduced. The leading supporter of the concept is Senator John Kyl (R-Arizona). The harm to public schools is real. Representative Charlie Rangel (D-NY) is a vigorous opponent. He wrote recently, “Tax credits for scholarships really are no different than private school voucher programs. Both give up on our public schools and aim to save a few children by helping them to attend private schools.”

Federal Court May Resolve Episcopal Dispute

A federal judge is expected to rule on a series of motions presented in late August by the acting Episcopal bishop of Washington, D.C. and a dissident Prince George’s County, Maryland, parish. The dispute revolves around whether Christ Church in Accokeek, Maryland, which dates back to 1696, can name the Reverend Samuel Edwards as its pastor (or rector under Episcopalian canon law), even when he denies the authority of the bishop of the diocese in which the parish is located.

The bitter dispute involves theology, national and international politics, gender, and church law, all intersecting to create a potential disaster for the US Episcopal Church. While American Episcopalians recognize the supremacy and final authority of bishops, as do all churches belonging to the international Anglican Communion headquartered in Canterbury, England, the American Church has since 1789 allowed the Vestry, a locally elected board of laypeople, to choose the parish clergy. The bishop has 30 days in which to ratify or reject the Vestry decision. Rejection is almost unheard of, because it would create a crisis of authority.

That is precisely what has happened in this dispute since acting bishop Jane Holmes Dixon took more than 30 days to decide on the qualifications of Father Edwards, leader of an ultraconservative faction in the church which opposes the ordination of women and of practicing gays and lesbians. Edwards came from the diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, one of four dioceses that refuse to ordain women to the Episcopal priesthood. (Nationwide, about 15% of Episcopal

priests are women, as are 40% of deacons.) Edwards has received the support of and intervention from the Fort Worth bishop, another highly unusual development in which one bishop claims canonical authority in another bishop's diocese. Several Anglican bishops in Africa and Asia are also supporting the parish, claiming that the leadership of the U.S. church is "apostate." Traditionalist Anglicans, who resemble the Lefevre movement in Roman Catholicism, see the Accokeek dispute as perhaps the final step toward the disintegration of the Anglican Communion.

The official leadership of the U.S. Episcopal Church backs Bishop Dixon. If she wins, the parish may secede, since a majority of members support the Vestry and Father Edwards. Then a property dispute is the next likely problem. Supporters of the Vestry-Edwards faction are asking that the federal court step aside from this case and remand it to an ecclesiastical court, which would appear to be the first step of adjudication required by Episcopal canon law. They also cite the bishop's refusal to abide by the 30-day rule. Bishop Dixon waited almost 90 days to reject Edwards and claims that canon law is advisory, not binding, a concept supported by a nine-member Episcopal review committee on September 5.

In intrachurch disputes, the U.S. Supreme Court has, since the *Holy Trinity v. U.S.* decision of the late 19th century, tended to stay out of internecine conflicts and defer to the kind of church polity (government) peculiar to each tradition (whether Congregational, Synodal or Episcopal). This will probably mean a victory for Bishop Dixon. But complicating it are two factors: The Maryland Vestry Act of 1789 affirms Episcopal authority, but Christ Church parish received its original charter from the crown of England.

Now it's up to U.S. District Judge Peter Messitte.

Catholic Church Backs Child Molesting Legislation

The Massachusetts Catholic Conference, the lobbying and public affairs arm of the Roman Catholic Church, announced in August that it supported a bill in the legislature adding the clergy to the list of people who must report suspected child sexual abuse to the authorities. The church reversed its position, after initially opposing the bill and claiming that it would violate confidentiality between priest and parishioner.

The bill exempts information gained during the sacrament of confession or during religious counseling. The church's about-face may have been prompted after a disclosure that Cardinal Bernard Law admitted in court papers that he knew a priest, John Geoghan, was a child molester when he transferred him from parish to parish. Lawyers for the cardinal sought to keep his name secret, but Law was forced to admit that he had foreknowledge of accusations of Geoghan's child abuse. Geoghan, accused of abusing 77 young people in Boston parishes from 1968 to 1995, was removed from the priest-

hood in 1998. Victims have been suing the archdiocese of Boston.

Massachusetts requires doctors, psychologists, nurses, dentists, teachers and day care workers to report child abuse. If the legislation passes, the state will join eleven other states that require the clergy to report instances of child sexual abuse to law enforcement agencies. Some states, including Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio and Texas, do not provide exemption for priests who learn information about sexual molestation in the confessional, while some other states provide an exemption to protect the "seal of the confessional."

In a related case, a federal court overturned the manslaughter conviction of a man who talked about his memories of the crime with Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) members. U.S. district Judge Charles Brieant ruled in August that Paul Cox, convicted of two stabbing deaths, should be accorded "a privilege granted to other religions similarly situated." AA has long denied that it is a religious group, though a 1999 federal appeals court held it was a religion.

An outraged district attorney appealed the ruling, claiming that "conversations" in an open AA meeting are not the same as confidential religious counseling. The district attorney who tried the case also claimed that the defendant talked about the crime to AA members outside of AA meetings.

Home Schooling Gains in Popularity

Several new studies indicate that the home schooling option is drawing an increasing number of students. A federal report shows 850,000 students were being taught at home in 1999. Other studies suggest double that amount, with up to 4% of the total school population schooled at home. (This figure is almost certainly too high.) Home schooling is growing by about 11% a year.

The home schooling community is changing. For one thing, fundamentalists appear to be a declining percentage of the total phenomenon. Write John Cloud and Jodie Morse, "The Conservative Christians who worked so hard in the 1980s to make home schooling legal in every state are as committed as ever, but more politically moderate Christians have also joined the movement."

Still, a survey by the U.S. Department of Education found that 38.4% of those surveyed said they home-schooled their children for "religious reasons" while another 15.1% said they did so "to develop character and morality."

Home schooling parents are still somewhat more affluent and educated than all American parents (25% are college graduates compared to 20% of all U.S. adults, for example), and most children live in stable two-parent households. More than half of the parents have only one spouse in the labor force, more than double the average for all parents. This home environment may explain why home schoolers average 1100 in SAT scores, compared to 1019 for the general population, say researchers at the University of Maryland.

There is also more fluidity, more give and take, between home schoolers and local public schools. About one-fifth of home schoolers take some courses at public schools, which raises hackles among public school authorities since state education funds are reduced when children are educated at home. Florida, for example, has only 1.7% of its children learning at home, but this represents a loss of \$130 million in public school expenditures per year.

The home schooling movement has a friend in President Bush, who recently hosted a White House reception for home-schooled students. Bush's Undersecretary for Education, Eugene Hickok, has praised home schooling. William Bennett, who was Ronald Reagan's Secretary of Education, has become a leading advocate of home schooling. Bennett is now promoting his own curriculum for the movement.

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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Arizona Court Says No to Abortion

The Arizona Court of Appeals ruled in August that Arizona taxpayers do not have to pay for abortions for poor women. The judges unanimously rejected the contention that failure to provide abortion services to the impoverished is a violation of the equal rights protection. An appeal to the Arizona Supreme Court is likely. Supporters of tax-funded abortions are expected to invoke the right to privacy provisions of the Arizona constitution.

Manna from Heaven

Seven U.S. religious charities that engage in international relief services received \$409 million from the U.S. government's Agency for International Development last year. Government support amounts to a major chunk of many organizational budgets.

World Relief, run by the National Association of Evangelicals, gets 47% of its annual funds from U.S. taxpayers. Church World Service, representing 36 Protestant, Orthodox and Anglican churches, receives 30% of its income from the U.S. government. World Vision, a conservative Protestant group, gets 19% of its funding from the government.

On the domestic front, three large "faith-based providers" received \$4.5 billion from federal, state and local governments in the year 2000. Lutheran Services in America received \$2.7 billion, Catholic Charities \$1.4 billion, and the Salvation Army \$400 million from government sources.

Bias Pervades Air Force Chaplaincy

Religious, racial and gender discrimination are pervasive within the U.S. Air Force chaplain corps, according to a just-released survey of its members ordered by Air Force chief of staff, General Michael Ryan.

The survey found that black and female chaplains are underrepresented in promotions. While 13 percent of the 592 active-duty chaplains are black, only 5% of the colonels – the top position – are black.

Evangelical chaplains said they were overlooked for the highest-ranking positions, while Catholic chaplains "receive inordinate amounts of remote and short-tour assignments" because they are unmarried. The study was conducted by Global Services and Systems Inc., which concluded that "a strong perception that racial prejudice plays a significant role" in the chaplaincy corps had led to low staff morale. Religious groups were also suspicious of each other, feeling that rival religions were receiving the bulk of the key assignments and top jobs.

Church-State End Run

On September 25 a bipartisan House-Senate conference committee unanimously and without debate approved a measure to allow religious organizations to get federal funding for after-school activities. Such religious groups would have to adhere to the same hiring and civil rights rules as school districts, but opponents of the plan believe it cannot overcome First Amendment church-state problems.

Employees Claim Buddhist Indoctrination

Ten Jacksonville, Florida, firefighters filed suit in federal court alleging that their constitutional rights were violated when the city of Jacksonville ordered all Fire and Rescue Department employees to participate in a training program that "expressly promoted the Buddhist religion." The lawsuit alleges that the program, "Secrets of Successful People," emphasized the concept of "dharma" and the "Four Noble Truths of Buddhism." The ten dissenting firefighters,

all Christians, are being supported by the conservative American Family Association's Center for Law and Policy.

Bush Appoints Land

President Bush appointed a Southern Baptist conservative, the Reverend Richard D. Land, to the federal panel that monitors religious freedom abroad. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom was established by Congress in 1999 and has nine members, six appointed by Congress and three by the White House. Land is an outspoken conservative who has been identified with Religious Right activities.

A Second Try for the Ten Commandments

Republican Representative Robert Aderholt of Alabama announced plans to reintroduce a bill allowing states to display the Ten Commandments in public buildings. A similar bill passed the U.S. House in 1999 but did not reach a floor vote in the Senate. Alabama's Chief Justice, Roy Moore, recently placed a monument including the commandments in the state Judicial Building.

Rehnquist Allows Minute of Silence

U.S. Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist turned down an ACLU request for a temporary injunction to halt Virginia's moment of silence law in public schools. The September 12 action allows the practice to continue until the Court decides whether to hear the challenge to the Virginia law.

A July 24 ruling by the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld Virginia's law that requires public school students to observe a daily minute of silence. The 2-1 ruling from the most conservative appellate court in the nation says Virginia schools may continue to set a minute of classroom silence for students to "pray, meditate or conduct another silent activity of their choice."

The majority held that prayer or meditation "in a silent and non-threatening manner" introduced a "minor and non-intrusive accommodation of religion that does not establish religion." The dissenting judge, Robert King, called the Virginia statute a "Trojan horse, a hollow guise" and "an effort to once more usher state-sponsored religion into public schools."

International

Athens: The Greek Orthodox Church demanded in late August that the government allow a referendum on the exclusion of religious affiliation from identity papers carried by Greek citizens. Archbishop Christodoulos collected three million signatures – 27% of the population – in parishes throughout the nation. Church authorities claim that the Socialist government of Prime Minister Kostas Simitis has downgraded the established Orthodox Church. The government responded that the action is in line with European Union policies on privacy and individual freedom. The Conservative political opposition has tried to steer a middle course, urging a new law in which mention of religion would be optional. Orthodox authorities are also angry that the Socialists have tried to eliminate discrimination against evangelical Protestants in public sector employment, especially in the police and the armed forces.

Leeds: Christianity "has now almost been vanquished" in Britain, said the nation's Roman Catholic Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor in an address to priests on September 5. The cardinal of England and Wales (Scotland has its own cardinal) lamented this demise and claimed that the Christian faith had been "replaced by New Age and occultic spiritualities, music, drugs, environmentalism and unbridled capitalism." He also apologized for clerical sexual

abuse, acknowledging that the church had been guilty of "apathy and negligence that can no longer be tolerated."

New Delhi: India's parliament has approved an amendment to the Indian Divorce Act of 1869, which now gives Christian women equal divorce rights with Christian men. The archaic law, dating from British colonial days, allowed a Christian husband divorce on grounds of adultery, desertion, change of religion or cruelty. But a woman had to prove several or all of these factors, making the law discriminatory. Alimony claims, child support and the waiting period for divorce were all liberalized. All of India's Christian churches supported the changes.

Rome: The new U.S. ambassador to the Holy See, R. James Nicholson, former Republican National Committee chairman, met with Pope John Paul II on September 13. A few days later he spoke to American Catholics resident in Rome at Santa Susanna Church, the "American" church in the Eternal City. Also present was Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. The congregation was joined by Italian well-wishers and others who expressed grief at the terrorist attacks in the United States. *The New York Times* reported, "With abortion overshadowing other concerns of the church, there seems to be close to unanimous support for the Bush administration inside the Vatican. This is so despite the fact that the pope is considerably more liberal than the president on several other issues - labor, immigration, third world debt and poverty programs. Church officials are also cautioning the United States to respond with restraint to the recent terrorist attacks."

Tokyo: Japan's ancient Shinto faith is experiencing a serious decline. A generation ago, 70% of Japanese were married in Shinto

rites; today, fewer than 20% are. Visits to shrines are diminishing, and some shrines are selling land to survive. Women are now welcome in the priesthood, since men have lost interest in it. In Tokyo 25 of 404 head priests are women. Controversy occurs every year when the prime minister must decide whether to visit a Tokyo Shinto shrine which honors Japanese war dead. A visit by the present prime minister provoked outcries throughout Asia.

Vatican City: An international Jewish-Catholic scholars group investigating the Vatican's role during the Holocaust abruptly ended its work in late July. Jewish members said they could not continue their research without more access to church archives, which the Vatican said were unavailable for "technical reasons." Mutual suspicion and animosity may underlay the termination. The two Catholic members of the panel, including University of Virginia historian Gerald P. Fogarty, criticized the Jewish members for "attacking" the Vatican. Then, a Vatican official, Peter Gumpel, a Jesuit priest who is working for the beatification and canonization of Pope Pius XII, criticized the Jewish scholars for "leaking distorted and tendentious information and mounting a slanderous campaign" against the Vatican. World Jewish leaders expressed dismay over the shutdown of the project and the resulting recriminations. Some Vatican-watchers cited the bureaucracy of the Vatican as a problem, noting, for example, that even cardinals who oversee major Vatican departments often do not receive access to restricted Vatican archives.

Meanwhile, a papal aide, Monsignor Emilio Colagiovanni, is in hot water before a federal court in Bridgeport, Connecticut. The Vatican official, who controls an account in a Vatican City bank that serves religious groups, is accused of helping an international financier, Martin Frankel, scam millions of dollars from insurance companies. They are accused of buying up insurance companies and then looting them of more than \$200 million. Frankel is being held in federal prison on fraud, racketeering and money-laundering charges. The monsignor is under house arrest after posting bond of \$500,000 in September. If convicted, he faces up to 25 years in prison.

Warsaw: Poland's September 23 elections were won by the Democratic Left Alliance, made up of former Communists. The once powerful Solidarity, closely identified with the Catholic Church in this overwhelmingly Catholic country, virtually collapsed, winning no seats in Parliament. The Catholic Church is seen as a big loser, as its leaders had urged people not to vote for any party with links to the Communist past. Church leaders also attacked the Democratic Left for its support for abortion rights.

NEW FROM ARL!

The Case Against Charitable Choice:

Why President Bush's Faith-Based Initiative is Bad Public Policy

Albert J. Menendez and Edd Doerr

A 51-page study of the flaws in this proposal and its implications for religion, government and society.

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The Case Against Charitable Choice

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Books

Mind Siege, by Tim LaHaye and David Noebel, Word Publishing, 355 pp., \$21.99.

Televangelist Jerry Falwell has said that Tim LaHaye "has set the agenda for evangelicalism more than any other person." LaHaye was a co-founder of Falwell's now defunct Moral Majority organization and is closely tied to Falwell's Liberty University. Over 41 million of LaHaye's fundamentalist "Left Behind" books and "related products" have been sold. Were it not for his importance as a leader of America's own Taliban movement, his new book, a poorly written rehash of stuff he has published before, would not merit serious comment.

Mind Siege is a bizarre paranoid rant against humanism, which, LaHaye and his co-author shriek, is not only the "mother" of communism but dominates the National Academy of Science, public education, the major TV networks and newspapers and news magazines, the State Department, "scores" of major foundations, the UN, the "left wing of the Democratic Party," plus Harvard, Yale, and "two thousand other colleges and universities."

LaHaye scapegoats humanists just as the Nazis scapegoated Jews and does so, like the Nazis, to promote a political agenda. All evil, to

hear LaHaye tell it, has to do with sex and Darwin. There is no mention of the real world evils of poverty, exploitation, racism, sexism, bigotry, environmental degradation, or crime. LaHaye's aim is to harness conservative churches and ministers to a political movement to restrict abortion rights, reinstate public school prayer, institute school vouchers, restrict gay rights, impose religious tests for public office, and weaken church-state separation.

One example of the book's general silliness is the claim that only 20% of Americans are professing Christians, of whom fewer than 10% "possess a Christian worldview." That is far fewer than the number of people who have bought LaHaye's books!

— Edd Doerr

New Historical Atlas of Religion in America, by Edwin Scott Gaustad and Philip L. Barlow, Oxford University Press, 435 pp., \$145.00.

This one-volume masterpiece is a library of information about the religious history of the United States. In text and in hundreds of large-scale color maps and graphs, this stunning accomplishment replaces all existing studies.

Covering every religion, small and large, and including Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Jains, Sikhs, Bahais and Asian American groups, it shows how religion has flourished in a nation which separates the institutions of religion and government and attempts to create a level playing field for competing religious traditions.

Chapters are devoted to religion and education, denominational geography and demography and to religion and politics. Congressional religious preferences from several time periods are charted, showing "the growing pluralism making its way, however slowly, into the legislative halls." The authors observe that "the alliances between religion and political parties have shifted in the 1980s and 1990s. A religious map of the Democratic and Republican members of Congress in 1960 would differ markedly from a similar map showing the religious affiliation of the two parties in 1990."

This wealth of data is admirably conveyed in lucid text and in stunning maps. Lengthy bibliographies follow each section to guide researchers to many hundreds of relevant books and articles. Graphs comparing denominational strengths in each state in 1890 and 1990 are absorbing and reflective of the nation's religious change. (There is even a section on Canada and on religious influences on the names found on U.S. maps.)

All in all, every good library in the nation should own this book, and no seminary or university library should be without it.

— Al Menendez

Taking Heaven by Storm: Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America, by John H. Wigger, University of Illinois Press, 269 pp., \$19.95.

The Methodists seem to be making a comeback in U.S. political life, after decades of decline. President Bush, Vice President Cheney, several cabinet members, White House chief of staff Andrew Card (whose wife is a Methodist minister), and the First Lady, Laura Bush, as well as the former First Lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton, belong to the Methodist faith. A middle of the road tradition, with both conservative and liberal wings, Methodists have always been engaged in politics.

So this interesting historical study of "the dynamics of early Methodist growth in America" by an associate professor of history at the University of Missouri is well timed. Methodism spread rapidly in the early nineteenth century because its democratic structure and populist theology appealed to frontier America. But it varied widely from region to region. Writes Wigger, "Because of its popular and voluntary nature, American Methodism was both sustained and constrained by the beliefs and sentiments of its members in each locality."

Wigger also notes that Methodism was not "a movement controlled by social elites," and it "participated in, and even anticipated, the development of modern managerial styles." Also, "Early Ameri-

can Methodism produced change in American culture and society from the bottom up, influencing millions through its doctrines and practices, even as it adapted to the demands of America's cultural, economic and religious marketplaces."

— Al Menendez

A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation, by Diana L. Eck, Harper San Francisco, 404 pp., \$27.00.

Harvard Professor Diana L. Eck has produced a first-rate book about America's remarkable religious diversity, concentrating on Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims. These relatively new arrivals in the U.S., numbering in the millions, are changing the U.S. religious landscape, probably forever. And these religious groups are themselves becoming adapted to American ways of thinking. "Not only is America changing these religions, but these religions are also changing America," she writes.

Eck argues that the presence of millions of adherents of religions extrinsic to the Judeo-Christian heritage of the nation's majority will have profound effects on church-state intersections and problems regarding religion in public schools and other public institutions.

Eck traces the backlash against the new religions in some communities, where prejudice and discrimination have reared their ugly heads, and she warns, "Today all of us are challenged to claim for a new age the very principles of religious freedom that shaped our nation. We must find ways to articulate them anew. We must embrace the religious diversity that comes with our commitment to religious freedom. Today, right here in the U.S., we have an opportunity to create a vibrant and hopeful pluralism, in a world of increasing fragmentation where there are few models for a truly pluralistic, multireligious society."

Two recent symbols of the new pluralism are the June 25, 1991, appearance of a Muslim imam in the U.S. House of Representatives, delivering the daily prayer as chaplain of the day, and a similar appearance by a Hindu priest in September 2000.

But only a strong commitment to these principles will ensure religious diversity and tolerance, Eck implies. "The very principles on which America was founded will be tested for their strength and vision in the new religious America. And the opportunity to create a positive multireligious society out of the fabric of a democracy, without the chauvinism and religious triumphalism that have marred human history, is now ours . . . The twin principles of religious freedom and nonestablishment provide the guidelines for a multireligious nation, the likes of which the world has rarely seen."

— Al Menendez

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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 Patron |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Student and Low Income |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Sustaining | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Renewal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Supporting | <input type="checkbox"/> New Membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Sponsoring | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Donation |

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

(The ARL newsletter is sent to all contributors.)