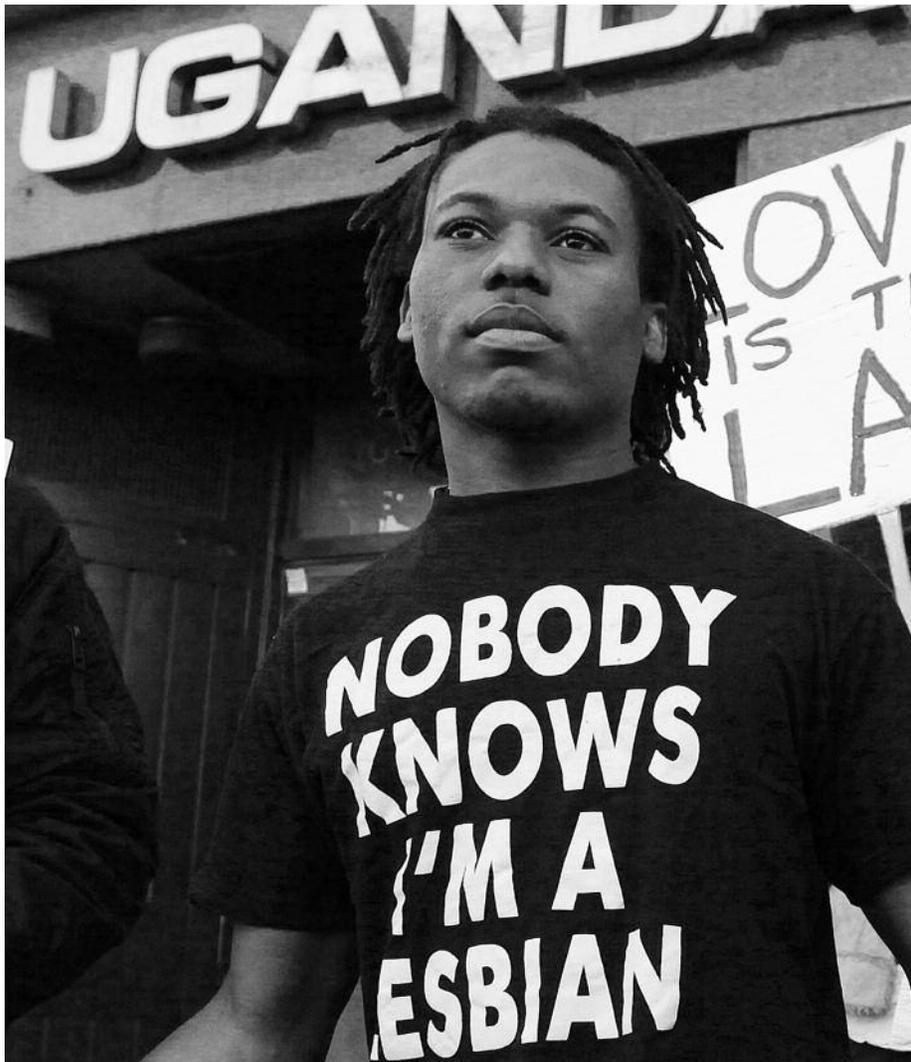


The Public Eye

A PUBLICATION OF POLITICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATES Winter 2009/Spring 2010 • Volume XXV, No.1

\$5.25



Shaun Curry/AFP/Getty Images

Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill proposed in Parliament in October has sparked protests around the world, including this one outside the country's embassy in London in December.

The U.S. Christian Right and the Attack on Gays in Africa

By Kapya Kaoma

The Uganda Story

For two days in early March 2009, Ugandans flocked to the Kampala Triangle Hotel for the Family Life Network's "Seminar on Exposing the Homosexuals'

Agenda." The seminar's very title revealed its claim: LGBT people and activists are engaged in a well thought-out plan to take over the world. The U.S. culture wars had come to Africa with a vengeance.

Gays in Africa continues on page 31

The New Christian Zionism and the Jews

A Love/Hate Relationship

By Rachel Tabachnick

In late October, Holocaust survivor and Nobel Peace laureate Elie Wiesel spoke at a Christians United for Israel (CUFI) event hosted by the controversial Christian Zionist John Hagee at his Cornerstone Church in San Antonio, Texas. Internationally broadcast on GodTV, Hagee presented \$9 million in donations to 29 Israeli and U.S. Jewish organizations.¹ Hagee is one of the world's most successful televangelists and a prolific author who prophesizes that apocalyptic wars and the migration of Jews to the holy land will help trigger the return of Jesus and his thousand-year reign on earth.

Wiesel joins a long list of Jews and Israelis who show no discomfort at being in the center of someone else's apocalyptic religious vision. Making common cause

New Christian Zionism and Jews continues on page 23

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— EDITORIAL —

It has been a pleasure editing the *Public Eye* for the past four-and-a-half years, and meeting committed writers who want to share a more analytical, less attack-driven view of the U.S. Right. So yes I am moving on, but not without taking the time to share a bit of what I learned.

The Public Eye has confirmed my belief that research and thoughtful analysis can enhance our struggle to make a just world. The latest example can be found right in this issue: Kapya Kaoma's research on the U.S. Christian Right's influence in Africa. Kaoma reports that while the Christian Right stirs up culture war sentiment against gays in Africa, they also succeed in casting gay rights as a Western import, part of a neocolonial agenda to take over the continent. Those who defend LGBT people are too easily dismissed as submitting to Western domination. This has immediate implications for strategy, and Kaoma encourages Americans concerned about the anti-homosexuality bills in Uganda and Rwanda to challenge the U.S. Christian Right here who might actually have some influence there. His acute sense that Rick Warren must speak out against the Uganda bill, which would subject LGBT people to the death penalty for certain actions, sparked a successful national campaign that left me in awe of the power of keen insight.

I've also learned that some progressives want to know about the Christian Right only to make fun of it. Increased partisanship and the cartoon communication nurtured by the blogosphere all contribute to this tendency. I cringe while watching smug web videos trashing true believers, such as women standing in line waiting for Sarah Palin on her recent book tour. I become impatient at those who dismiss the Right as "antiwoman," overlooking how women leaders and even feminists on the Right legitimize what I consider horrendous policy ideas. Our passions and certainties can be distorting, so we fail to see important trends reshaping politics, like evangelical youth's skepticism about the old timers (where will this lead?), or the largely White anti-abortion movement's attempts to reach African American church goers, all covered in these pages.

My background researching the secular Right during McCarthyism did not prepare me for all I had to learn about the religious Right to do my job well. Thank you to all who were so patient in teaching me about this crucial part of American political life. And stay tuned for a new *Public Eye*, as it begins to cover the success stories coming from progressive movements more systematically. This double winter 2009/spring 2010 issue gives the publisher time to reorient the publication under new leadership. We all owe our thanks to Political Research Associates for remaining dedicated to presenting in depth, high quality analysis of the Right even as our media world feeds on sound bites and quick takes that often lead nowhere close to justice.

— Abby Scher

To the Editor,

I'm a fairly new reader of *Public Eye* magazine and want to commend you on the Fall 2009 issue.

This is a wonderful example of a newsletter that is chock full of good information, very attractively laid out, enriched with great graphics, and which makes a very positive impression on the reader. All who have a hand in it deserve high praise.

I had not made the connection before between the religious right in the US and the anti-gay Christians in Africa. I believe you are correct that this alliance is an effort to hin-

To the Editor continues on page 38

The Public Eye

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Please make checks payable to Political Research Associates, 1310 Broadway, Suite 201, Somerville, Massachusetts 02144-1837. 617.666.5300 fax: 617.666.6622

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Website: www.publiceye.org

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ISSUE 66

Exporting “Traditional Values”

The World Congress of Families

By Gillian Kane

In August, at the fifth World Congress of Families (WCF) in Amsterdam, Austin Ruse, president of the New York-based Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute (C-Fam) warned “that UN radicals in alliance with radical lawyers and judges and other advocates around the world are attempting the greatest power grab the world has even known.”¹ What they want, he continued, is to impose their nefarious agenda—support for abortion and gay rights—on unsuspecting developing countries thereby leading to a “tsunami change in social policy and in the international system.”

But when Ruse told the Congress that UN “radicals” want to “decide for all mankind the most intimate details of people’s lives... from their lofty and elite perches at the UN in New York, at the European Union in Brussels and other centers of international power,” he failed to mention that in fact he and likeminded conservatives are doing the very same thing.

The U.S. Christian Right’s influence on international sexual and reproductive rights peaked at the beginning of the millennium with the full support of President George W. Bush. Before the Bush Administration, conservative U.S. nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) were mostly relegated to the sidelines at United Nations meetings, but they still managed to maximize their networking in the UN hallways where most of the lobbying takes place. Conservative anti-abortion NGOs like C-Fam, Concerned Women for America (CWA), and the National Right to Life

Gillian Kane is senior policy advisor with the international reproductive justice organization Ipas and a member of the Public Eye editorial board.



For the conservative World Congress of Families, the United Nations is a key battleground over abortion and “family values.”

Committee (NRLC) had for years worked the international UN circuit trying to influence conservative Latin American and Muslim countries to find common ground against abortion and gay rights.

Bush appointed many conservative Christian Right lobbyists as U.S. representatives to the UN. The administration also supported organizations like CWA, the Family Research Council, Focus on the Family and Priests for Life in gaining accreditation as UN NGO observers, which allowed them to directly lobby country representatives.² Barack Obama’s presidency thus presents a direct threat to these groups and their allies who are members, contributors or participants in the

World Congress of Families as they lose access to U.S. diplomats at the United Nations. They are scrambling to ensure the viability of their cause in this shifting political environment.

The WCF is a coalition of leading international advocates against abortion, reproductive and sexual rights that meets every few years to network and strategize. It is coordinated by the Rockford, Illinois-based Howard Center for Family, Religion & Society, led by the “natural family” advocate Allan Carlson.³ Past congresses took place in reliably socially conservative countries like Poland, Nigeria, and Mexico, and drew hundreds and sometime thousands of participants. Organizing a

right-wing event in Amsterdam, a city WCF organizers maintain has the “kind of culture traditionally minded people abhor,” is either a massive gesture of conciliation or a misguided effort to build on an emerging Dutch conservative movement.

Although the event did not meet organizers’ expectations—the WCF predicted 4,000 would show, the real number barely scratched 400—and it did not succeed in bringing in new Dutch converts or in fostering debate with reproductive justice activists, its impact is nonetheless being felt in disparate places such as the United Nations, the European Union, Albania, and Kenya.

André Rouvoet, the Dutch Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Youth and Family, opened the Amsterdam WCF conference with a tepid welcome message, giving tacit government endorsement to the event. Rouvoet presented his video address even though Dutch members of Parliament asked him to reconsider. The parliamentarians, while not opposed to hosting the congress in their country, were concerned about government participation in an event led by a coalition vehemently against abortion, same-sex relations and marriage, contraception, euthanasia, basically, the keystones of Dutch policy.

Rouvoet’s plug for building bridges between ideologically opposed social movements, and his call to “think about how we can live together in a multicultural society with differing attitudes of the family” was met with hostile silence and a smattering of forced applause.

Hosting the event in the Netherlands allowed the WCF to claim it was extending itself to the opposition and when the overture failed, it placed the burden of failure on progressives. Simon Polinder,

coordinator of the local Dutch WCF organizing committee, in his opening statement said the WCF had been accused of being afraid to debate. That’s why he explained, the WCF invited people with differing views to participate. However, they had declined. Polinder then asked rhetorically, “So who’s afraid to debate now?”

In fact, Dutch participants with moderate views on the family, LGBT rights and abortion did attend. The issue lay not in their lack of participation but rather in the WCF’s inability to accommodate their differing views into its platform. During the conference Austin Ruse twittered, “Lots of off stage excitement at the WCF. The local organizing committees are not American conservatives and they produced an un-

acceptable... Document that we had to get killed. A new document was produced by Allan Carlson that will be released today.”⁴

Ruse and others bullied their agenda into the WCF’s final document, congratulating themselves that “in the end, the Congress was a success.”⁵ Not because it brought two opposing sides together, but because the event succeeded in inching Dutch public discourse to the right. Indeed, the research department of the Dutch Christian Reformed Party (SGP), a WCF participant, recommended that Dutch family policy legalize marriage only for a man and a woman, impose stricter restrictions on divorce, and take away the rights of lesbian and gay couples to adopt.⁶

But one policy proposal does not a sea change make and it’s certainly too early to declare the Right’s ascendancy in the Netherlands following the WCF. Similarly, despite the poor attendance, it is also too early to sound the death knell for the WCF, as some progressives have.

The World Congress of Families, which began taking shape in the mid-1990s, has

never been a movement with a particularly large or active base. Their ability to influence policy at the national and international levels comes not from the grassroots, but rather from their well-connected and well-established leadership. The WCF cosponsors are a who’s who of the conservative right-wing in the United States, many of whom were warmly embraced by the Bush Administration. In the last decade these individuals have nurtured conservative leadership in Eastern Europe and the developing world to promote a reactionary agenda.

Two months following the August WCF, its members were celebrating international victories for the “natural family.” For years the WCF has decried what it sees as the “hard-edged intolerance by the UN to traditional values.”⁷ In October, the United Nations Human Rights Council approved a resolution proposed by Russia promoting “a better understanding of the traditional values of humankind.” While not defined in the resolution, traditional values, as understood by its promoters, means marriage between a man and a woman, and zero tolerance for abortion and homosexuality, among other issues.

The World Congress of Families has money and connections built up during the Bush Administration.

Julie de Rivero, Human Rights Watch’s advocacy director, is very concerned that such a “resolution fails to recognize that many values that political and cultural leaders exalt as ‘traditional’ can stand at odds with international human rights law.”⁸

According to WCF veteran Sharon Slater of the Arizona-based Family Watch



André Rouvoet, the Dutch Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Youth and Family, probably disappointed the World Congress of Families audience when he said they should build bridges with those they oppose.

International, the real intent behind the resolution is to “push back against UN member states that are seeking to overturn traditional values based on morality under the guise of protecting ‘human rights.’”

The Russian resolution was surprising given the country’s general support for women’s rights. When asked about the WCF’s role in the resolution Larry Jacobs, WCF Managing Director, noted that “There wasn’t any secret conspiracy. The interesting thing about the WCF is that we are just bringing groups together. And I will mention that there’s a group standing up for Eastern traditional values and Russia has a big leadership role.” Indeed, the idea for a “world congress of families” began in the mid-1990s when Allan Carlson, WCF Secretariat, met in Russia with Dr. Ivan Schevchenko, head of that country’s right-wing Orthodox Brotherhood of Scientists and Specialists.

Austin Ruse’s idea that UN radicals are working to stamp out the “natural family” presents neither a nuanced nor accurate view of what actually takes place in the United Nations or behind the scenes. U.S. Christian Right conservatives may no longer have presidential support, but they have made sufficient strides during the Bush years to maximize their international contacts. As Sharon Slater explains, “at the international level, we join with pro-family groups in other countries at the World Congress of Families conferences to network and strategize how to protect the family. At the UN we participate in a pro-family coalition.”⁹

And it’s not just connections; WCF members have money backing them. One of its members is the Christian-Right-oriented Alliance Defense Fund (ADF), which litigates internationally for religious freedom. The most recent ADF tax returns show its total revenue for 2007 was more than \$30 million.¹⁰

In addition to the UN, the WCF is also making inroads at the European Commission and the European Parliament. Anna Záborská, a Slovakian member of the European Parliament and, incongruously enough, chairwoman of the Committee on



Conservative Catholic activist Austin Ruse told the World Congress of Families that UN “radicals” want to “decide for all mankind the most intimate details of people’s lives.”

Women’s Rights and Gender Equality, is a WCF spokesperson; in 2004 she commented that “AIDS is God’s vengeance for homosexuality.”

**In October, the UN
Human Rights Council
pleased the WCF when
it approved a resolution
promoting “a better
understanding of traditional
values of humankind.”**

Ruse ended his Amsterdam WCF presentation by encouraging participants to “Go forth, my friends, go forth. Defend your countries. Defend your Churches. Defend your families. Defeat the radicals

in the courts: defeat them in Parliaments; defeat them in the universities; defeat them in the international institutions. Go forth.” Ruse received a standing ovation. ■

End Notes

¹ Austin Ruse, “The Effects of the UN on the Families of Developed Nations,” remarks to World Congress of Families V. <http://worldcongress.org/wcf5.spkrs/wcf5.ruse.htm>

² Esther Kaplan, *With God on their Side*, The New Press, 2004, p. 234.

³ For more on Carlson and the “natural family” ideology, see Jeremy Adam Smith, “Living in the Gap: The Ideal and the Reality of the Christian Right Family,” *The Public Eye*, Winter 2007. http://www.publiceye.org/magazine/v22n4/christian_family.html

⁴ <http://twitter.com/laustinruse>

⁵ Austin Ruse, “The World Congress of Families and the Limits of Dialog,” *The Catholic Thing*, August 21, 2009. http://www.thecatholicthing.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2079&Itemid=2

⁶ Jaco van den Brink, “Government and Family: Influence or Intrusion? A comparative study on family policies in an international perspective,” Guido de Bres-Foundation, Gouda, The Netherlands, August 2009, p. 65.

⁷ See Gwendolyn C. Landolt’s remarks at the 1999 Congress, for instance. http://www.worldcongress.org/wcf2_spkrs/wcf2_landolt.htm?search=traditional%20values&opt=EXACT

⁸ “Human Rights Council: ‘Traditional Values’ Vote and Gaza Overshadow Progress,” Human Rights Watch, October 2, 2009. <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/10/05/un-human-rights-council-traditional-values-vote-and-gaza-overshadow-progress>

⁹ Sharon Slater, *Stand for the Family*, (Gilbert, Ariz.: Inglestone Publishing, 2009), p. 150.

¹⁰ “ADF-allied attorneys reach milestone, donate \$100M of pro bono work for religious liberty,” Alliance Defense Fund, October 12, 2009. <http://www.alliancedefensefund.org/news/pressrelease.aspx?cid=5092>

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Intelligence Fusion Centers

A De-Centralized National Intelligence Agency

By Thomas Cincotta

In a 2007 article for the *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, Colonel Bart Johnson explained how state-level intelligence “fusion centers” collect data from a range of sources and connect “seemingly unrelated” incidents that could be precursors of terrorist activity. At the time, Colonel Johnson led the New York State (NYS) Intelligence Center in Albany, where officers from a range of federal, state and local police agencies as well as civilian analysts function as a “nerve center” for all calls into a statewide terrorism tip line. He explains how in July 2004, his fusion center received an anonymous call warning of a college senior leading the campus Muslim Student Association, who, the caller claimed, had expressed hatred for America and was only in the country to teach Islam.

While researching the case, a state trooper found a link between this student and a report of a traffic stop involving two Middle Eastern men, who claimed to be Israeli musicians looking for a nearby synagogue where they were to perform for a wedding. A license plate check of their vehicle linked the registrant to the same address as the university student.¹ The intelligence analysts then forwarded this information to the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force to investigate further.

We don’t know what happened next because Colonel Johnson ends his story there. But even with these sparse details, his story raises concerns about racial and ethnic profiling, violations of free speech, and the intrusive power of fusion centers. These concerns loom even larger now that former

Thomas Cincotta is civil liberties program director of Political Research Associates and a member of the Public Eye editorial board. His blog, Liberty Beat, tracking repression can be read at www.publiceye.org.



President George W. Bush signs the Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2004 in October 2003, launching fusion center financing.

Colonel Bart Johnson oversees the entire nationwide network of 72 fusion centers as Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Despite a chorus of official assurances that fusion centers focus solely on illegal acts, this incident shows how police forces can blur the distinctions between activists and terrorists, and between immigrants and violent extremists.² Here, the NYS intelligence center not only prompted a State Police investigation into a university student, whose politically oriented speech and religious identity triggered suspicion, but also initiated an investigation by the FBI Joint Terrorism

Task Force based on national origin, a traffic stop, and tenuous links to the original “suspect.” Even worse, it is likely that all these details reside somewhere in a government database, easily retrievable using names and other key words.

The New York and 71 other statewide intelligence bureaus scattered across the country vastly extend the breadth and penetration of government surveillance of our society.

Now six years old, the structure of this network is becoming clearer despite the woefully inadequate public exposure of its activities. This network constitutes a nascent *de facto* national intelligence agency, whose decentralized



structure diminishes transparency and accountability. Without effective oversight, a narrowly defined mission, and new legal structures, the capacity of fusion centers to undermine fundamental freedoms could grow unchecked.

A Locally Owned and Operated Intelligence Machine

The Department of Homeland Security's network of fusion centers operate under the auspices of state police or even large local police forces, thus sidestepping the guidelines enacted under the Privacy Act of 1974 that limit information sharing by *federal* agencies. Yet fusion centers have a national command center feel, with mosaics of television monitors, and desks for all the police agents assigned to work together and enjoy face time—the county sheriff, local police officers, the FBI, National Guard (restricted by law to drug-related missions), state police, Department of Homeland Security, and the civilian intelligence analysts. The FBI field office may rent space to fusion centers, and even helps run the Los Angeles fusion center, but it rarely plays a visibly lead role. Still, all the analysts are tied into federal information-sharing networks.

Since DHS launched the program in 2003, these centers have evolved largely independently of one another. At first glance, smaller, more diffuse centers might seem to pose a smaller threat to civil liberties than a KGB-like national force. In truth, however, this decentralized network may be more dangerous, because it obscures lines of authority, subverts Congressional oversight and privacy guidelines, and turns numerous state and local police into intelligence agents.

Around the world, the War on Terror has served as an “indispensable Trojan Horse [enabling] intensified surveillance for all sorts of purposes.”³ As early as 1978, the *Public Eye* reported on an effort to bring the U.S. intelligence bureaucracy under one Director of National Intelligence that unsurprisingly failed amidst fresh memories of COINTELPRO—the FBI's spying and dirty tricks program targeting

activists—and Richard Nixon's enemies list. By the 2001 attacks, memories of the domestic spying controversies of the 1970s had dimmed and calls for a national intelligence agency reemerged. Congressional sponsors of legislation that created the Department of Homeland Security wanted a fully functional intelligence organization within DHS, but the Bush administration preferred to realign organizations already under the authority of the FBI director, director of Central Intelligence, and the new director of national intelligence. As a result, Congress did not initially give DHS itself the capacity to produce raw intelligence.^{4,5} But today fusion centers give DHS the capacity to produce, not just receive, intelligence.

Fusion centers constitute a new piece in a vastly more powerful police apparatus.

They give the executive branch an incredible physical reach into state and local communities.

Nurtured by more than \$327 million in direct grant funding from 2004 through 2008, fusion centers won an additional \$250 million in President Barack Obama's stimulus plan to be spent by 2010 on upgrading, modifying, or constructing sites. DHS currently has 41 officers deployed at fusion centers and hopes to have an officer at every fusion center in the country by the end of 2010. By the end of 2008, governors, mayors, and police chiefs had established 72 operational centers within the United States and its territories, covering 49 states, the District of Columbia, and Guam. Additionally, fusion cen-

ters in Idaho, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are in the final stages of development.

What is a Fusion Center?

Fusion centers gather, mine, and “fuse” data to help police fight crime and FBI agents stop terrorism. Data streams in from multiple sources, including intelligence groups, the federal government, other states, private databases, and open sources. Moreover, analysts scrutinize daily crime and 911 reports for patterns. Tips may come in to fusion center tip lines from citizens or police officers. Fusion centers also respond to requests for analysis from law enforcement agencies in the field, primarily investigators seeking to spot trends in areas like drug crime, gang activity, or theft.

If the fusion center generates or receives information determined to have a “potential nexus” to terrorism, the center sends it upstream to the “information sharing environment” for other agencies to review. Local police and FBI Joint Terrorism Task Forces, not the fusion centers, are responsible for field investigations; although some, such as the Massachusetts Commonwealth Fusion Center, possess an investigative capacity.⁶

Fusion centers also aim to transform the culture of the intelligence community by forcing staffers from diverse agencies to work with each other. The civilian analysts come from a variety of backgrounds, consisting primarily of retired law enforcement personnel, former military intelligence specialists, and veteran analysts from previous information sharing networks, such as the multi-jurisdictional High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Task Force.⁷

While the leadership and composition of fusion centers vary state-by-state, all retain specialists in visually mapping data to discern patterns.⁸ The degree of private involvement in fusion centers is not known, but companies like Boeing have attended fusion center briefings and even sought high-level clearance.⁹ InfraGard, a partnership between the FBI and the private sector, has a permanent desk at the Los Angeles Joint Regional Intelligence



Center. The Illinois Infrastructure Security Alliance (ISA) seeks to link more than 70 companies to the Statewide Terrorism and Intelligence Center via the Homeland Security Information Network, a national database with information from fusion centers.¹⁰ Fusion centers also have formal information-sharing agreements with other states, nearby cities and towns, and federal agencies.

Most fusion centers are managed by the state police. In Massachusetts, the State Police commands the state fusion center, while the Boston Police Department operates its own center fewer than forty miles away, the Boston Regional Intelligence Center. In Florida, the state Department of Law Enforcement runs the fusion center, while the Miami Dade Police Department maintains an active intelligence unit in southern Florida. In jurisdictions where the state police perform largely traffic func-

tions, a state homeland security bureau may operate the fusion center. In Los Angeles, the Joint Regional Intelligence Center is led by the LA County Sheriff, LAPD, and FBI.

Some states house their centers with the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force; others rent space from the FBI field office itself. The physical integration of these agencies—for example, the Maryland State Police is headquartered in the same building as DHS—makes it more likely that information gathered in the course of political spying will be shared with other agencies and private partners.

Information Collection Squared

Fusion centers facilitate the collection of massive amounts of information. DHS—itself comprised of 225,000 people in 22 separate agencies—uses fusion centers,

information sharing, and agency integration as a “force multiplier” to tap into the potential of 718,000 state and local police in over 15,000 departments, plus local emergency responders, who could collect more data than 12,000 FBI agents. “There is never enough information when it comes to terrorism,” says Major Steven G. O’Donnell, deputy superintendent of the Rhode Island State Police.¹¹ Unfortunately, the information could be worthless and often is.

Fusion centers ostensibly complement the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Forces, which bring together local law enforcement with federal law enforcement components like Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Patrol, the Secret Service, and Transportation Security Administration. These two parallel systems for interagency coordination—one under DHS, the other under the Department of Justice—raise questions about

redundancy and waste. At the same time, though, the information from fusion centers gives DHS leverage and access to other federal intelligence.

It is a universe marked by redundancy. Information currently flows from fusion centers into a national “information sharing environment” such as the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN), Protected Critical Infrastructure Information (PCII) Program, and Homeland Secure Data Network (HSDN – for classified data), which all sit alongside the Department of Justice’s Regional Information Sharing System (RISS), the FBI’s Regional Data Exchange and eGuardian, the Naval Investigative Services’ Law Enforcement Information Exchange (LInX) and the Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit’s (LEIU) LEO network (LEIU is a private organization of public law enforcement officials, including chiefs of police).

Fusion Centers Fall Short

Fusion centers appear to be falling short on their original aim of detecting and preventing terrorist plots by analyzing data for patterns suggesting terrorism. In theory, fusion center analysts take information from local-level criminal activity and analyze it to determine whether any connection exists between seemingly typical low-level crime and terrorist activity.

Caroline Fredrickson, legislative director of the ACLU, notes that fusion centers are a direct institutional outgrowth of intelligence-led policing, targeting potential crime before it happens.¹² This means a shift from investigating crimes that already occurred. John Pistole, Deputy Director of the FBI, invoked two oft-cited events that provide ideological justification for tracking crimes and individuals not usually associated with terrorist activity:

For instance, fusion centers are keeping tabs on criminal activity—everything from tax evasion to cigarette smuggling to robbery. On the surface, these may seem like relatively low-level crimes that only have a local impact.

But several years ago, we uncovered a cigarette-smuggling ring operating out of North Carolina. Members of the cell were transporting the cigarettes across state borders to sell them at a profit—and were using the profits to support Hezbollah in Lebanon.

And in August 2005, police in Torrance, California, arrested two men in a gas station robbery. When they searched the men’s apartment, they found documents listing the

The Virginia Fusion Center identified “subversive thought” as a marker for violent terrorism.

addresses of U.S. military recruiting stations and synagogues. They called the Joint Terrorism Task Force, and together we uncovered a terrorist cell, disrupted a terrorist plot, and possibly saved many lives.

We never know when something that seems typical may be connected to something treacherous.¹³

In each of those instances, however, traditional police work, not fusion centers, established the links between unlawful acts and terrorism (see box on Torrance). In practice, fusion centers are using their data systems to find missing persons or solve traditional crime; they are reacting to events more than preventing crime. Their analysts respond to incoming requests, suspicious activity reports, and/or finished information/intelligence products, and rely on existing understanding of problem areas to pull out data and patterns.¹⁴

Further, the logic of this network approach means that those who commit

any infraction, as well as their innocent associates and family members, may be scrutinized for possible links to terrorists. According to a National Research Council study funded by DHS, “automated identification of terrorists through data mining (or any other known methodology) is neither feasible as an objective nor desirable as a goal of technology development efforts” because it inevitably conflicts with efforts to protect individual privacy.¹⁵ Continued funding for fusion centers as an antiterrorism tool should be premised on an empirical assessment of whether data analysis at the local level truly prevents terrorism. If this approach can only identify unsophisticated criminals and terrorists, an outcome that police seem to be accomplishing without fusion center support, fusion center practices and resources are not worth the risks to privacy and civil liberties.

Mission Creep

Although originally justified as an antiterrorism initiative to improve information sharing and collection at the local level, fusion centers rapidly drifted toward an “all-crimes, all-hazards” policy that is “flexible enough for use in all emergencies,” not just those specifically linked to terrorism. Mission creep is significant because it undercuts the political justification for the network as a critical counterterrorism tool, and it opens the door for surveillance and repression of protected free speech activity in order to “counter radicalization” or otherwise prevent “disorder” or nonviolent civil disobedience.

The vast majority of fusion centers now track major or organized crimes such as narcotics, violence and gangs, sexual offenses, or crimes that may be used to support terrorism efforts, but may not. Rather than each department or squad having its own databases, fusion centers allow access to multiple databases and sources of intelligence; the drug squad in one community can share information with the anti-gang task force in another, picking up on patterns that may suggest an emerging threat as gangs set up to move into a new market or distribute new contraband. In addition,

TORRANCE: THE FUSION CENTERS' CREATION MYTH

A string of robberies in southern California in 2005 by two people with an interest in violent jihad has taken on mythic importance in the drive to develop fusion centers; it has become a creation story with ideological force. Counterterrorism professionals retell the tale of the Torrance gas station terrorism investigation, and media outlets uncritically report it as “the most celebrated example” of the success of a fusion center.

Bart Johnson, who now heads the DHS Intelligence & Analysis division, FBI Deputy Director John Pistole, and Michael Downing, the Deputy Chief and Commanding Officer of the Los Angeles Police Department's (LAPD) Counter-terrorism Department, all invoke Torrance as the reason why fusion centers are vital in helping agencies gain a more comprehensive picture of the threats they face.³⁴ Journalist Judith Miller breathlessly wrote about Torrance in the Manhattan Institute's *City Journal*,³⁵ and a *National Journal* article on L.A.'s Joint Regional Intelligence Center repeated the story of how virtually every agency in the area jumped on the investigation after investigators found *jihadist* literature in the home of a robbery suspect.³⁶

According to the myth created by the Torrance incident, fusion center experts analyze data from many sources to reveal links to terror plots, and the discovery of this plot proves that this strategy works. But reference to Torrance in this context is overreaching and disingenuous at best.

Torrance does demonstrate three truths: 1) potential terrorists may commit crime to finance an operation, 2) alert, well-trained police officers can help detect links to terrorism, and 3) deploying law enforcement resources from many jurisdictions can help solve crime and foil terrorism plots.

However, if the Norwalk, California-based Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRIC) played any role in strategically analyzing these robberies and uncovering a nexus to terrorism, officials have been mum on the details. Most likely, the Torrance case had nothing to do with a fusion center.

On the surface, eleven gas station robberies in Los Angeles and Orange counties between May 30, 2005 and July 5, 2005 appeared to be typical local crime sprees. During one escape, a thief dropped his cell phone, giving police a rare lead. City police traced the phone to Gregory Vernon Patterson, a 21-year-old local man with no criminal record, and placed him under surveillance. According to a criminal complaint, on the evening of July 5, Patterson and Levar Haney Washington, who, later investigations showed, was an L.A. gang member, drove to a gas station in

Fullerton, east of Torrance in Orange County. Washington, dressed in a dark hooded sweatshirt and carrying a shotgun, robbed the clerk, according to the complaint. Police arrested the two men and then searched Washington's apartment in South Los Angeles.

During that search, Torrance police officers found documents outlining an imminent attack, lists of potential targets, knives, bulletproof vests, and *jihadist* propaganda material that wasn't available from the usual sources on the Internet, investigators said.

Almost immediately, one of the officers involved in the search, who had been trained to spot terrorist warning signs, called local counterterrorism officials. The L.A. anti-terrorist apparatus swung into high gear with more than 200 federal and local investigators working the case. According to an FBI affidavit, Washington told investigators that he led an “Islamic council,” which was planning violent jihad in the United States “to respond to the oppression of Muslims in Iraq and Afghanistan by the U.S. government.”³⁷

Investigators tied Washington to Kevin James, a former Hoover Street Crip gang member who, while in prison, founded a group called Jam'yyat Al-Islam Al-Saheeh (JIS). While serving a ten-year sentence, James converted Washington and recruited him to join JIS. Upon his release in 2004, Washington then formed a cell with two recruits. The group actively started researching targets such as military installations, the Israeli Consulate, and synagogues, and it funded its operations through the robbery of gas stations.

The four men were indicted in October 2006. Washington was the first to be sentenced, receiving a 22-year federal prison term in June 2008. During his sentencing hearing, he told the judge that the members of JIS waged war against their own country because they opposed U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and stated that “calamities affecting the Muslim world” had influenced his outlook. He explained that the cell had robbed gas stations because oil is a political symbol. Shortly after the robberies, the FBI and DHS launched initiatives to assess and address the risk posed by radicalized prisoners.

For the domestic security bureaucracy, Torrance functions as a political symbol, used to buttress support for fusion centers' vast surveillance powers. The value of the story is not that traditional police work solved the case, but rather the unrealized possibility that data-crunching can uncover nefarious plots. The political and economic support for fusion centers relies on myths like Torrance. Without such “examples,” the public might be less willing to sacrifice freedom and privacy in the name of prevention.

fusion centers assist with searches that cross jurisdictions, as when a baby was stolen in Tennessee and a serial killer went on a shooting spree in North Carolina.¹⁶

The leaders of some fusion centers have admitted that they switched to an “all-hazards” approach so they could apply for a broader range of grants, and because there was far too little terrorism-related information to analyze.¹⁷ They were agencies in need of a mission. According to documents provided to the Massachusetts ACLU, in 2006 the Massachusetts fusion center analyzed copper theft for four outside partners, studied school violence at five schools, investigated calls for fire department service, conducted three studies for the gang working group, while also compiling reports on port security, transportation security, gang assessments, and prisoner radicalization. Counter-terrorism is not their exclusive, let alone primary, priority.

The lack of a narrowly defined mission poses unnecessary risks to civil liberties. One fusion center study postulated that “there is, more often than not, insufficient purely ‘terrorist’ activity to support a multi-jurisdictional, multi-governmental level fusion center that exclusively processes terrorist activity.”¹⁸ Consequently, there is a risk that analysts’ skills could atrophy as would their interest, from a lack of relevant work.¹⁹

In the absence of purely terrorist activity, DHS’s emphasis on “ensuring that our communities are not places where violent extremism can take root” may invite fusion centers to identify local threats based on political rhetoric that is critical of government policies. Evidence suggests this is already happening. In February 2009, the North Central Texas Fusion System issued a “Prevention Awareness Bulletin” calling on law enforcement to report the activities of Muslim civil rights organizations and antiwar protest groups. In March 2009, the Missouri State Highway Patrol was forced to halt the distribution of a report prepared by the Missouri Information Analysis Center that linked extremists in the modern militia movement to supporters of third-

party presidential candidates such as Congressman Ron Paul of Texas and former Congressman Bob Barr of Iowa. The report also said that some militia members subscribe to anti-abortion beliefs or oppose illegal immigration—suggestions that created a public uproar among law-abiding groups concerned that they were being lumped in with violent, dangerous people.²⁰

Furthermore, the Virginia Fusion Center’s 2009 Threat Assessment identified “subversive thought” as a marker for violent terrorism and thus targeted “university-

Most government data mining today occurs in a legal vacuum outside the scope of the Fourth Amendment barring unreasonable searches.

based student groups as radicalization nodes for almost every type of extremist group.”²¹ In words reminiscent of “communist front” theory dating to the Cold War, Virginia Fusion Center analysts warned of the Muslim Brotherhood’s alleged strategy of boring from within by infiltrating different Islamic organizations and obtaining leadership roles. DHS also monitored the D.C. Anti-War Network and shared information with the Maryland State Police—most likely through the fusion center—during a year-long infiltration of Baltimore area peace and social justice organizations in 2007-2008.²²

Recording Our Legal Activities – LAPD’s Special Order #11

In early 2009, casino security officers contacted the Southern Nevada Counter-Terrorism Center after witnessing three men taking photos of the casino’s ceiling on a quick visit to the building. Analysts

reviewed the casino’s surveillance videos and issued a law enforcement bulletin asking other casinos to report any similar activity. Three months later, officials had nothing more to report.²³

Fusion centers encourage corporate partners and local police alike to report activities such as people taking photographs. These “suspicious activity reports” (SARs) become data, waiting to be activated by an analyst working in the fusion center system. The growing popularity of SARs are tied to a new criminal intelligence theory, supported at the highest levels of the U.S. domestic intelligence enterprise, that collecting outwardly innocuous behaviors enhances security. The Los Angeles Police Department’s “suspicious activities” program is a national model that the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) set out to replicate and standardize at fusion centers around the country in 2008.²⁴ LAPD had ordered its officers to report behaviors that include innocuous activities clearly protected by the First Amendment’s assurances of free speech, such as:

- taking measurements
- using binoculars
- taking pictures or video footage “with no apparent esthetic value”
- abandoning a vehicle
- drawing diagrams
- taking notes
- espousing extremist views

Drawing on this strategy, in January 2008, the Director of National Intelligence urged state and local law enforcement to “report non-criminal suspicious activities,” which were defined as “observed incidents or behaviors that may be indicative of intelligence gathering or pre-operational planning related to terrorism, criminal, or other illicit intention.” The standards left the meaning of “other illicit intention” and “terrorism” to people’s imaginations.²⁵

In August 2008, the U.S. Departments of Justice and Homeland Security, along with the Major City Chiefs Association, issued a report recommending the expan-

sion of the LAPD suspicious activity program to other U.S. cities. Currently, Los Angeles, Boston, and Miami are among the sites experimenting with this standardized reporting process. As one official observes, “In many instances the threshold for reporting is low, which makes it extremely difficult to evaluate some of this information.”²⁶ The reduced threshold for reporting also leads to too much collection. In the words of Bruce Fein, once a staffer to former Republican Congressman Bob Barr of Iowa,

Since anything might be a clue as to a possible psychological inclination to commit terrorism, everything is fair game for intelligence collection. But when everything is relevant, nothing is relevant. Finding something useful in the mass of undifferentiated intelligence reports and analysis is thus akin to looking for a needle in a haystack. That may explain why there is no credible evidence that fusion centers have frustrated a single terrorist plot – their primary *raison d'être*.²⁷

Data-Mining and Private Databases

Fusion centers reflect the tendency of surveillance systems to grow both in depth—with reams of information on any one person—and in breadth by broadening the variety of sources of personal data that they draw on. With unprecedented access to criminal, intelligence, and private sector databases, fusion centers give local authorities an exceptional capacity to monitor behavior and select individuals or communities for intervention. Accordingly, fusion centers responded with vigor to the FBI and Department of Homeland Security’s 2006 guidelines urging them to “obtain access to an array of databases and systems.” Although the guidelines listed only public information assets, such as motor vehicle databases, state fusion centers now contract with private data brokers to access private information like unpublished cell phone numbers, consumer credit profiles,

insurance claims, car rentals, and real estate sales. In 2009, DHS announced a new arrangement with the U.S. Department of Defense that allowed select fusion center personnel to access terrorism-related information from the Department of Defense’s classified network.

The logic of surveillance systems is to grow.

The rise of cyberspace, mobile telephones, and a nearly universal reliance on credit and debit cards has, as James Rule put it, “created cornucopias of actionable personal data to tempt the surveillance appetites of institutions.”²⁸ For instance, in Massachusetts, the Commonwealth Fusion Center website boasts access to Accurint, Lexis-Nexis, LocatePlus, and Autotrack, a

product of Atlanta’s Choicepoint, the giant private data aggregator that moved aggressively into the domestic intelligence market after 9/11.²⁹ Autotrack permits subscribers to browse through more than 17 billion current and historical records on individuals and businesses with as little as a name or social security number as a starting point. In Maryland, authorities similarly rely on a data broker called Entersect, which maintains 12 billion records on about 98 percent of Americans. Systems like fusion centers feed on steady diets of supposedly “actionable” personal information— all accessed without a warrant.

Privacy Pitfalls

State governments established fusion centers with federal dollars in the absence of any legal framework, and their data mining occurs in a legal vacuum outside the scope of the Fourth Amendment, which bars unreasonable searches.³⁰ Although data mining can have real consequences for

BIPARTISAN CALL FOR OVERSIGHT

The Constitution Project, a bipartisan think tank, called on President Obama in the first month of his administration to curb the ambiguities and excesses of fusion centers. Its Liberty and Security Committee, co-chaired by progressive Georgetown Law Professor David Cole and David Keene, chairman of the American Conservative Union, asked for Congressional oversight hearings and demanded that:

- All information collected, analyzed, or shared must comply at a minimum with the federal Privacy Act of 1974;
- Fusion centers must have a clearly defined scope and a single operational definition;
- DHS should fully disclose the location, jurisdiction served, and amount of federal funding for each intelligence fusion center;
- DHS should prohibit no-bid contracting, and require publication of contracts and listing of all private sector data sources used in fusion center data collection and analysis;
- The U.S. military should be strictly prohibited from participating in domestic intelligence activities;
- Inspectors General should launch an investigation to review fusion centers’ compliance with existing federal laws protecting due process, privacy, civil liberty, and civil rights.
- Congress should restrict the collection of personally identifiable information that is not linked to illegal activity, using previous versions of 28 CFR Part 23 as a guide.

The Constitution Project, “Recommendations for the Next Administration and Congress,” Washington, D.C., January 2009.

http://2009transition.org/liberty-security/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=10&Itemid=20

individuals tracked, there are no legal guarantees for the accuracy or appropriateness of the data or the searches, no redress for people injured by being falsely identified as posing a threat, and no judicial or legislative oversight. Some fusion centers purge data searches after one or five years, but no one is responsible for doing so. Fusion center records are also beyond the reach of the Privacy Act of 1974, which regulates and gives individuals access to the files of federal agencies.

The main federal regulation governing criminal intelligence databases is 28 CFR Part 23. Congress enacted Part 23 in a series of reforms initiated during the 1970s to curb widespread abuses of police investigations for political purposes. It is designed to ensure that police intelligence operations focus on illegal behavior by requiring that criminal intelligence systems “collect and maintain criminal intelligence information concerning an individual only if there is reasonable suspicion that the individual is involved in criminal conduct or activity and the information is relevant to that criminal conduct or activity.”

Fusion centers receiving federal funds are required to abide by Part 23, but the federal government *actively promotes* the violation of the regulation by encouraging fusion centers to collect noncriminal intelligence and to draw on public and private sector data. Not only is the government failing to enforce or intensely monitor compliance with Part 23, but this regulation may not go far enough to protect privacy and free expression in the current environment.

Part 23 may not apply to the data-mining and access functions of the fusion centers since it regulates collection rather than the processing of information held by other parties. For example, New Mexico's All Source Intelligence Center has access to 240 state, regional, and federal agency databases, including agricultural and parks agencies. Establishing what kinds of information fusion centers are processing can be difficult, according to Peter Simonson, executive director of the New Mexico ACLU chapter, because they do not store

the records nor even collect them, but simply mine them through digital gateways. Records are accessed, not retained as they would be in specific case or investigative files.³¹ Therefore, fusion centers may technically comply with Part 23, but still actively assault the right of individuals to be free from government surveillance and its concomitant social pressures to conform.

In their 2005 book, *Protecting Liberty in an Age of Terror*, Juliette Kayyem and Philip Heymann argue that we need new protections for individuals against what appears to be the unrestricted authority of the government to collect and mine information. They recommend a system where courts must give authorization before agencies can collect and access data on individuals,

The lack of a narrowly defined mission poses unnecessary risks to civil liberties.

Congress sets standards for the various types of authorization, and the legislative branch oversees the whole process. To date, no such protections exist.³² Perhaps there is “hope” in the fact that Kayyem now serves as Assistant Secretary of Intergovernmental Programs at DHS.

Resist Mass Surveillance

The logic of surveillance systems is to grow. Because there is no “natural limit” to the incorporation of personal information in systems of mass surveillance, our only defense is collective action to impose limits on the post-9/11 intelligence apparatus.³³

Russell Porter of the Iowa Fusion Intelligence Center keeps a copy of the Bill of Rights posted near the front door of the center's office, and he insists that fusion centers are only interested in investigating criminal activity. That should provide lit-

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tle comfort. The good intentions of some government officials will not protect the public from abuse that will inevitably occur given lax oversight, ill-defined missions, and inadequate legal protections. Executive-branch repression of dissent using personal data stretches back as far as the Palmer Raids after World War I. More recently, President Ronald Reagan used tax audits to pressure critics of his Central America policies and George W. Bush enacted his secret warrantless wiretap program. Based on the historical record, American intelligence agencies have not earned the trust of Congress, the courts, or the people when it comes to domestic surveillance.

An engaged Congress which takes its oversight role seriously must enact a new series of legal protections on the scale of those of the 1970s. (See box on Constitution Project proposals.) Just as during Americans' fight for reform in the 1970s, it will take investigations by Congress, state legislatures, attorneys general, journalists, and citizens to expose the current practices of fusion centers and build the political pressure necessary for change. Lawyers representing protestors and defendants in terrorism cases can also play a key role in discovering how these institutions are monitoring their clients. Lastly, just as DHS engages academia in promoting troublesome theories of intelligence-led policing and violent radicalization, civil libertarians must respond in kind. In a free society, civil liberties must be the cornerstone of antiterrorism policy, not an afterthought, as it has been in the development of fusion centers. ■

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ANTI-ABORTION STRATEGY *con'd from page 22*

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Anti-abortion Strategy in the Age of Obama

By Frederick Clarkson

It didn't turn out like they had planned. Two decades of political investment by the antiabortion movement and the Religious Right did not result in the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. Even conservative Chief Justice John Roberts acknowledged during his confirmation hearing, "*Roe v. Wade* is the settled law of the land." Then the rising prospects of the Democratic Party, and the historic election of the prochoice president Barack Obama and a Democratic Congress, seemed to have secured *Roe* for the foreseeable future.

But due to the success of the notion of "abortion reduction," the general approach driving the politics of the antiabortion movement for at least two decades may succeed.¹

A broad strategy to reduce the number of abortions performed in the United States has been pursued by most of the movement, although there are disagreements about how to do it, notably over violence and other criminal acts. The tactics employed fall under three broad categories: erecting legal obstacles to abortion at the state level such as mandatory waiting periods; preventing the use of public funds for the provision of abortion care at all levels of government; and political, legal, and extralegal interference with obtaining and providing abortion care, which includes harassment of patients and clinic staff, violence and threats of violence. A goal of the last tactic is to get doctors to



Anti-abortion leaders such as Wendy Wright of Concerned Women for America spoke out against making "common ground" with prochoice groups. Here, a banner at the 2009 "March for Life" in Washington, D.C.

Alex Wong/Getty Images

abandon the practice and discourage new doctors from including abortion as part of standard ob/gyn practice. "We have opportunities before us which if properly exploited," declared militant strategist Mark Crutcher, of Life Dynamics in 1992, "could result in an America where abortion may be perfectly legal, but no one can get one."²

In the mid-90s, the mainstream of the anti-abortion movement found itself in crisis in the wake of high profile assassinations of doctors and clinic staff in Florida, Massachusetts and Canada; an escalation of death threats, bomb and anthrax threats as well as actual bombings and arsons. Movement leaders were beset by an unflattering media circus in the wake of the incendiary claims of some that the murder of abortion providers was "justifiable homicide."³ What's more, many proponents of anti-abortion violence shared the anti-government ideology and revolutionary rhetoric

of the Christian Patriot and militia movements of the era. They saw legal abortion as violence waged against the people by an increasingly secular and tyrannical government.⁴

Then, as now, there was a prochoice Democratic president, and the end of legal abortion was nowhere on the horizon. In the wake of the 2009 assassination of prominent abortion provider Dr. George Tiller by a veteran of both the Patriot movement and militant antiabortion activism, and a dramatic escalation in militant antiabortion activism and violent rhetoric, the movement finds itself in an analogous situation today.⁵ As in the 1990s, steady efforts to reduce access to abortion provide a viable, incremental, way forward for the movement as it copes with the climate as well as actual violence promoted by their co-belligerents in the war on abortion.

But there is also an important difference.

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Battleground Democratic Party

The anti-abortion movement could not have anticipated that elements of the prochoice Democratic Party would promote policy in their direction just at the moment of the Democrats' political ascendance. Although there had been rumblings and debate,⁶ the first real indication of this move was during the election campaign of 2006, when the centrist, business-funded think tank Third Way advised Democratic candidates to try to neutralize the issue by saying, "We must reduce the number of abortions while protecting personal liberties."⁷ They claimed to want to appeal to anti-abortion Roman Catholics and conservative evangelicals as part of the party's various "faith outreach" efforts. However this approach to finding common ground required turning a blind eye to the reality that access to abortion care in the U.S. is receding, and that this approach mainstreams a fundamental concept of anti-abortion strategy and related terminology. It recasts contraception and sex education as if their primary purpose was to achieve the goal of reducing the number of abortions.

This approach to finding common ground was accompanied by an effort to "dial down" the rancor of the so-called culture war. The Democratic Party and its presidential candidate sought if not a reduction in the number of abortions, a reduction in the "need" for abortion through public policy that supports women so that they are less likely to become pregnant, or so they enjoy support if they do become pregnant.⁸

This notion of "abortion reduction" and its close variants were at the heart of a number of Congressional legislative proposals in 2009, none of which gained much support. The bill most favored by Democratic advocates of "common ground" on abortion, "Preventing Unintended Pregnancies, Reducing the Need for Abortion and Supporting Parents Act," (best known as the Ryan-DeLauro bill) was introduced with much fanfare and enjoyed the support of leading prochoice organizations, and some anti-abortion groups and

individuals – but it attracted not a single significant anti-abortion advocacy group or any major anti-abortion religious leaders or organizations. As if to underscore the lack of political viability of this approach, anti-abortion Congressman Tim Ryan, the Ohio Democrat, says he was "booted" from the advisory board of Democrats for Life for taking the lead with the prochoice Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut in sponsoring the bill.⁹

What's more, with some minor exceptions, the large Roman Catholic wing of the anti-abortion movement would not sign on

Gloria Feldt, a past president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, warned that the anti-abortion, abortion-reduction agenda was being further enshrined by the courts.

because, while some conservative Protestant evangelicals view contraception as an acceptable way of preventing unwanted pregnancies and thus abortion, few Roman Catholic leaders take that view. Douglas Johnson of the heavily Catholic National Right to Life Committee, for example, has repeatedly called the president's efforts at finding common ground on abortion a "scam."¹⁰

If, as seems likely, given the current legislative standoff, there will be little in the way of change in abortion policy coming out of Washington any time soon, the public policy action for the anti-abortion movement will be in the states, where it has mostly been for two decades. What's more,

the issue of "conscience clause" exemptions from acknowledgment, let alone provision of abortion in reproductive health care, will continue to be vigorously pursued by the anti-abortion movement both in federal policy and in the states. This will likely remain a serious fissure in "common ground" conversations in the current and likely ongoing efforts to reform the health care system in the U.S. Indeed, at this writing, anti-abortion advocates are seeking to expand the opportunities for health care providers to opt out of providing, and even health insurers from covering, abortion care.

What's Past Is Prologue

The standoff over the Ryan-DeLauro Bill must have been a disappointment for advocates of the "common ground" abortion reduction agenda that emerged in 2009, sponsored jointly by Third Way and the liberal think tank Faith in Public Life, an offshoot of the Democratic Party oriented Center for American Progress. Their paper was titled: *Come Let Us Reason Together: A Governing Agenda to End the Culture Wars* (CLURT). Ostensibly moderate evangelicals David Gushee, formerly of Southern Baptist Seminary; the Rev. Jim Wallis of Sojourners, and Ron Sider of Evangelicals for Social Action played important roles in the development of the manifesto. CLURT highlighted sexuality education (with an emphasis on abstinence) and access to contraception, in addition to economic supports for women and improved adoption options as areas of "common ground" on abortion. All these elements, though, were missing from its landmark predecessor, the anti-abortion, bipartisan but Republican-oriented manifesto from the 1990s, *The America We Seek: A Statement of Pro-Life Principle and Concern*, of which Gushee was the principal author.¹¹ (See sidebar.) This was the mainstream antiabortion leaders' effort to salvage the movement's focus and credibility, partly in response to the public backlash against the assassination of doctors and other violence.

CLURT represented a hybrid of tradi-

The America We Seek and the Origins of Abortion Reduction

The general approach crystallized over several months in early 1996 when 45 antiabortion and religious right leaders, organized by the neoconservative Ethics and Public Policy Center, formally adopted abortion reduction as a series of related tactics short of criminalization.³⁸ Their manifesto, *The America We Seek: A Statement of Pro-Life Principle and Concern* was published in the flagship journal of Roman Catholic neoconservatism, *First Things*.

The writers were inspired by the 1992 Supreme Court decision in *Casey v. Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania*, which ratified the state level laws seeking to discourage abortion by making the procedure more difficult to obtain.³⁹

“Now, as pro-life leaders and scholars,” they declared, “we want to propose a program of action...” And the core of that program was abortion reduction via the erection of barriers to abortion access “in all 50 states” while also creating incentives for women to carry unplanned pregnancies to term. While they understood that the legal obstacles upheld in the Casey decision “do not afford any direct legal protection to the unborn child,” they stated that “*experience has shown that such regulations—genuine informed consent, waiting periods, parental notification—reduce abortions in a locality, especially when coupled with positive efforts to promote alternatives to abortion and service to women in crisis.*” [Emphasis added]

Under pressure to distance themselves from the anti-abortion violence of the era, anti-abortion leaders had found a way to hold to a credible political strategy that conveyed a sufficient urgency. Nevertheless, they struggled with the emotional and political disconnect between the demagogic, if heartfelt, “bloody shirt” type rhetoric (i.e.: abortion is “murder” or a “holocaust”) and the moderate, incremental policy ideas of abortion reduction. They declared, for example, that abortion “has killed tens of millions of unborn children,” but that they were nevertheless committed to abortion reduction and providing “the infrastructure for “alternatives” to abortion via a national network of 3,000 “Crisis Pregnancy Centers.”

More consistent with their sense of moral urgency was their referencing bills then being considered in Congress that involved “criminal sanctions” for abortion providers, and demanded that Congress “recognize the unborn child as a human person entitled to the protection of the Constitution.” The America they seek is one whose politics and public policy advances reduce abortions while seeking to build political clout sufficient to criminalize abortion forever. But they recognized that while criminalization was unlikely in their lifetimes, they were not then, and are not now, without options. But of course, the tension remains, and the state level campaigns aimed at constitutional declarations of fetal personhood and thus challenges to the constitutionality of *Roe*, are ongoing.

The authors of *The America We Seek* were a bipartisan group led by George Weigel of the Ethics and Public Policy Center (the official biographer of Pope John Paul II) and included Roman Catholic legal scholars Robert P. George of Princeton and Mary Ann Glendon of Harvard (whom George W. Bush would appoint as Ambassador to the Vatican), Father Frank Pavone of Priests for Life; Clarke D. Forsythe of Americans United for Life; James Dobson of Focus on the Family; Ralph Reed of the then-powerful Christian Coalition, Beverly LaHaye of Concerned Women for America; William Kristol, former Chief of Staff to Vice President Dan Quayle; Phillip E. Johnson founder of the theocratic think tank of the “intelligent design” theory, Discovery Institute; Jean Bethke Elshtain, a political philosopher at the University of Chicago, and currently a cochair of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life; and former Gov. Robert P. Casey, (D-PA).

Three of this group later played pivotal roles in the development of Third Way’s *Come Let Us Reason Together* document outlining an abortion reduction plan for the Democrats: David Gushee, then of Southern Baptist Seminary; the Rev. Jim Wallis of Sojourners; and Ron Sider of Evangelicals for Social Action.

tional progressive approaches and elements of the 1990s anti-abortion agenda—but its signature approach was the idea (and borrowing the language) of abortion reduction as a policy goal on which both sides could supposedly find common ground.¹² CLURT avoided discussing issues of access and barriers to abortion care, key areas where the anti-abortion movement has gained ground since the 1990s through its state and local-level incremental political strategy of forcing waiting periods and the like on those seeking abortions.

“Public policy has its limits,” David Gushee declared at the January 15th press conference announcing CLURT, which was hosted by Faith in Public Life and Third Way. “We call for abortion reduction. I support this because I believe that one of the things that must not be done to human beings is to abort them; and yet those facing crisis pregnancies need help to create the conditions in which they can sustain and protect the lives for which they are now responsible.”¹³ Rachel Laser of Third Way summarized the point on behalf of the group:

Reducing abortions through addressing the root causes of abortion. The policies in our shared agenda prevent unintended pregnancies and support pregnant women and new families; they do not ban or even restrict legal access to abortion in any way. They include but are not limited to comprehensive sex education, increased access to contraception for low-income women, expanded health care coverage for pregnant women and children, and support for pregnant and parenting students, and for adoption.¹⁴

The CLURT authors had, as shown above, blurred the careful wording of the 2008 Democratic Party platform position on abortion that had rejected language emphasizing reducing the *number of abortions* in favor of emphasizing the right to choose and reducing the *need for abortion*. The platform also called for greater support for women who seek to carry their

pregnancies to term and for better adoption options. The White House Office of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (OFBNP) embraced this general thinking in its mission statement posted on the White House web site: “It will be one voice among several in the administration that will look at how we support women and children, address teenage pregnancy, and reduce the need for abortion.”

This won attention from Wendy Wright of Concerned Women for America, (formerly a militant leader in Operation Rescue) who misleadingly (but perhaps understandably), claimed that the Office of Faith Based and Neighborhood Partnerships “is now tasked with reducing the number of abortions – something that pro-life groups have very good experience in accomplishing.” She then restated a key element of the abortion reduction agenda, “Pregnancy resource centers and regulations on abortion have a terrific track record in helping women choose alternatives to abortion. Funding abortion or abortion providers is one of the worst things that could be done.”¹⁵

Meanwhile, Gloria Feldt, a past president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, warned that the abortion-reduction agenda was being further enshrined by the federal courts. “A cascade of more than 30 post-*Roe* Supreme Court decisions—starting with 1980’s *Harris v. McRae* (upholding the Hyde Amendment’s prohibition on Medicaid abortion coverage) through *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (allowing legislatures to restrict abortion in any way that does not create an “undue burden”)—laid a smooth path for 2007’s *Gonzales v. Carhart* decision, which upheld the first ever federal abortion ban (misnamed the Partial Birth Abortion Act). The Roberts Court reversed the often-reaffirmed precedent that women’s health is paramount in abortion law, and it used anti-abortion code language to signal that it will likely allow states and Congress to limit women’s reproductive rights further.”¹⁶

Roman Catholics and “Common Ground”

While Gushee and some prolife evangelicals can accept targeting federal funds for improved family planning and sexuality education on the prevention side of pregnancy—key parts of the common ground strategy—few Roman Catholic leaders will ever go along. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, (USCCB) has opposed legislative efforts to enhance access

The Feminist Majority Foundation’s annual survey on clinic violence found that in 2008, “one in five clinics experienced severe violence.”

to contraception even though it is well established as the most reliable way to prevent unintended pregnancies. Deirdre McQuade, assistant director of policy and communications at the “pro-life secretariat,” of the Bishops’ Conference told *U.S. News and World Report*: “The phrase ‘reducing the need for abortion’ is not a common-ground phrase. We would say that there is no need for abortion, that abortions are signs that we have not met the needs of women. There is no authentic need for abortion.”¹⁷

Pushing the divide even wider, ever larger numbers of Catholic Bishops are taking aggressive stances against prochoice politicians, refusing communion, publicly declaring their stances on abortion, stem cell research and LGTB civil rights as not only at odds with Catholic teaching, but “anti-Catholic.” The most recent elected official to receive such treatment was Rep.

Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) son of the late Sen. Ted Kennedy. But the spectacle of about 70 Catholic Bishops¹⁸ denouncing the decision of Notre Dame to invite president Obama to speak last year—solely because he is prochoice—may be a bellwether. Several American Cardinals and a third of the American Bishops are due to retire in the next few years, providing the opportunity for Pope Benedict XVI to set an even more profoundly “theologically orthodox” direction for the American church for a generation.¹⁹

Religious Supremacism, or You Can’t Be Prochoice and Religious

David Gushee himself later aired doubts about the entire Democratic common ground project.²⁰ What’s more, he indicated to journalist Sarah Posner, he has not abandoned the long-term goal of criminalization, stating that “the principles articulated [in *The America We Seek*] still reflect my own views.”²⁰

Integral to the approach of a wide swath of the movement is their embrace of religious supremacism. This aspect of ideological anti-abortionism, which is even held by such supposed moderates as Gushee, may pose an unbridgeable chasm in ever finding any actual common ground. This is evident in Gushee’s subtle, but ominous, warning on the op-ed page of *USA Today* soon after President Obama took office. The occasion was Obama’s expected lifting of the Bush-era executive order barring federal funding of international family planning groups that support abortion and embryonic stem cell research.²¹

“I do confess,” Gushee declared, “that my desire to retain good relationships with the Obama team has tempted me to give what was asked in return for the big payoff of a serious abortion-reduction initiative that I could wholeheartedly support.” Gushee wrote that he does not want to sacrifice principles in order to ensure access to power and he found himself struggling with what he saw as the reality that his side might lose on other aspects of abortion policy “for

a long time to come.” He is worried that taxpayer funds might be used to pay for abortion services in violation of the “sacred beliefs” of his movement’s members. He is also worried that tax-exemption or taxpayer subsidies for religious institutions and anti-abortion healthcare professionals could be jeopardized if they are “required as a condition of accreditation, or employment, or contact with federal dollars, to actively facilitate or perform deeds that their conscience forbids them from doing.”

“And if we lose there,” he dramatically concluded, “*then the entire relationship between religious faith and American society will move into a period of profound crisis.*” [Emphasis added]

Gushee has neatly expressed, here, the religious supremacism that remains a distinguishing feature of the anti-abortion movement. We can hear it in its refusal to acknowledge that the vast majority of Christians, Jews and others—as well as clear majorities of Americans, see abortion as a moral choice.²² Their movement’s unambiguous implication is that anyone who is prochoice cannot be religious.²³ We increasingly hear such expressions not only from well known leaders of the Religious Right, but from ostensibly moderate and liberal Roman Catholic and evangelical abortion opponents. Two liberal Roman Catholic advocates for abortion reduction gave us a high profile and exceptionally clear example in a 2009 op-ed in *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*. “Secular progressives who view access to abortion as a fundamental right” are, in their formulation, pitted against “religious Americans who believe it is a profound threat to the sanctity of life.”²⁴

Underscoring the stark distortion of such views is the fact that most of the major institutions of mainline Protestantism and the major bodies of Judaism, among others, are officially prochoice and are members of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC). The conflation of anti-abortionism with religion itself, and the prochoice view as inherently nonreligious, or “secular,” sets the stage for a one-sided conflict that goes far beyond matters of incivility, or “rancor.”

This situation has had consequences far beyond the issue at hand. As we have reported in *The Public Eye*, for example, there has been a quarter century of organized assault on prochoice mainline Protestant churches.²⁵ Rightwing outside interests, working with conservative dissident factions, have used abortion and homosexuality as wedge issues to keep prochoice, progressive Protestant denominations in turmoil and headed for schism. This has widened the opening for conservative Catholicism and evangelicalism to increasingly displace them at the center of American culture. These efforts have been led, in part, by some of the same neoconservative Catholic leaders behind *The America We Seek*.²⁶

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Public Financing of Abortion

Another stumbling block for the common ground alliance is the anti-abortion movement’s opposition to public funding of organizations with expertise in birth control and sexuality education but that also provide abortions, even if the funded project has nothing to do with abortion.

As journalist Adele Stan has detailed in *The Public Eye*, a wide swath of the anti-abortion movement, Catholic and non-Catholic, is ratcheting up its longtime

campaign against Planned Parenthood by seeking to thwart public sector grants and contracts at all levels, no matter what the grants and contracts are for.²⁷ This revived coalition was sparked by the opening of a new clinic in Aurora, Illinois after a bitter battle. But the war of attrition has also had successes. In Orange County, California a \$300,000 health and sexuality education grant to the local Planned Parenthood was cancelled by a unanimous vote of the Board of Supervisors. County Supervisor John Moorlach told *The Los Angeles Times*, “I personally have a problem with government funding of an organization that provides abortion services.”²⁸

The looming intertwined issue of public financing of abortion and services deemed to be related to abortion is not new and dates back to the 1970s and the Hyde Amendment, which barred Medicaid and other federal funding of abortion in 1976. In fact, you could call Hyde the first volley in the abortion reduction strategy.

Before the Hyde Amendment, about a third of all abortions performed in the United States were for poor women on Medicaid. “No other medical procedure was singled out for exclusion,” the National Network of Abortion Funds (NNAF) reported. “Today, 33 states have followed suit, prohibiting state Medicaid funding as well.” All but one of these states (South Dakota) follows the Hyde exceptions of rape, incest, or life endangerment. The report details the disproportionate burdens placed on disadvantaged women, and observes that “women of color disproportionately depend on such coverage, making abortion funding a matter of racial justice as well as economic justice and women’s rights.”²⁹

But the federal restrictions did not stop there. Over the years, Congress has also legislated against access to abortion services for women in the military and Peace Corps, disabled women, residents of the District of Columbia, federal prisoners, and women covered by the Indian Health Service. Indeed, it could be fairly argued that except for the legal right to an abortion, federal policies constitute the greatest abortion



reduction program of all. “Prior to 1996,” states the NNAF report, “legal immigrants and U.S. citizens were equally eligible for Medicaid.” But the 1996 welfare reform law signed by President Clinton required a five-year waiting period before most new legal immigrants could even apply. Fewer than half of the states fill in the five-year gap with their own funds, and nine states permanently deny Medicaid coverage to noncitizen residents.

As of this writing, House Democrats passed a healthcare reform bill that would extend the principles of the Hyde Amendment to the proposed overhaul of the health care system, and further block federal subsidies for private health insurance that covers abortion care. While President Obama reportedly opposed the move, he told Katie Couric on the *CBS Evening News* in July that there is a “tradition” in Washington “of not financing abortions as

part of government funded health care.”³⁰ Obama’s approach to common ground on abortion in the health care debate has been advanced under the rubric of seeking to keep the legislation “neutral” on abortion. But anti-abortion legislators in both parties argue that some funds might go to subsidize abortions covered under private insurance.

A spokesman for the USCCB told *The New York Times*, “The concerns are kind of intractable.”³¹ Prochoice leaders point out that without the subsidies, private insurers, which already cover abortions, might no longer do so. Obama and others, perhaps gulled by their efforts to find common ground, were taken by surprise that Hyde operating as the default principle guiding public programs does not go far enough for the USCCB and many antiabortion Democrats who support universal health-care. All appeared willing to sacrifice it over

arguably minor issues of the commingling of private and public funds that might touch on abortion.

Defenders of abortion rights might rightly worry that “conscience clauses” could also be said to have a venerable history. The original conscience clause legislation passed in 1973 in the wake of *Roe* “states that public officials may not require individuals or entities who receive certain public funds to perform abortion or sterilization procedures or to make facilities or personnel available for the performance of such procedures if such performance “would be contrary to [the individual or entity’s] religious beliefs or moral convictions.”³² This provision has allowed even major medical facilities such as Roman Catholic hospitals to refuse to deal with abortions without jeopardizing their ability to receive public grants and contracts or affecting their tax exempt status. A new

rule promulgated late in the Bush administration expanded and particularized the exemptions, stating that healthcare workers may even refuse to provide information or advice regarding abortion. The Obama administration has rescinded the Bush rule, but says it plans to leave some “reasonable” exemptions in place.

What we see now is a far ranging effort on the part of anti-abortion forces to use conscience clauses as a wedge, pitting religious supremacist notions of religious freedom against the civil, human, and even religious rights of others.

What's missing?

Anti-abortion leaders know that state-level barriers to access have reduced the number of abortions, and that any advance in abortion coverage in the current health care reform debate or improved access in any way would be a reversal of their fortunes. Abortion services are unavailable in 87% of the counties in the United States, according to a study by the Alan Guttmacher Institute.³³

Prochoice leaders recognize the situation as well. NARAL reports that “more than 500 anti-choice measures have been enacted in the states since 1995” and that in effect these measures, all legal under *Casey*, are “essentially rolling back this fundamental right for many women.” Such laws are known as TRAP laws (Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers). These include, among others, abortion bans after 12 weeks, counseling with an antiabortion slant, mandatory delays, insurance prohibitions for abortion, and allowing health care providers such as hospitals to refuse to provide medical services and referrals.

In 2009, improved access was nowhere on the national political or legislative agenda in Washington, apparently so that fighting over abortion would not derail healthcare reform. Even some prochoice groups and legislators went along with this. The key piece of prochoice legislation is the Freedom of Choice Act, (FOCA) which has been introduced in every Congress since 1989. FOCA would codify *Roe v. Wade*, and eliminate the legal barriers to

access. That is why the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and leading antiabortion groups waged a vigorous preemptive lobbying campaign before the new Congress was seated in 2009. All year (and as recently as December 2nd) the conservative weekly *Human Events* issued screeching fundraising letters signed by Mike Huckabee warning about “this EVIL law,” which he described as “the most radical piece of pro-abortion legislation ever proposed.” In fact, the bill was not even introduced in the 111th Congress—even though President Obama had previously said he would sign it if it reached his desk.

But the reality of the Washington moment does not alter anyone’s understanding of the stakes.

Matt Bowman of the Alliance Defense Fund, (the leading legal strategy group of the Religious Right) said: “FOCA will strike down other laws, state and federal, that reduce abortions and will force states to facilitate abortions.... 125,000 children were not killed this year because we have these laws, and 125,000 children (added to the existing 1.3 million abortions) will be killed in 2009 and every year after if FOCA is passed. FOCA is indeed a staggering expansion of abortion, both in principle and in actual lives lost.”³⁴

A 2009 *Washington Post* story on post-*Casey* abortion reduction policy battles in the states underscored the effectiveness of the TRAP laws. The article focuses on Mississippi as an example of “one of the most restrictive states in the country and a model for antiabortion forces elsewhere.” Women seeking abortions “must go twice to the clinic, at least 24 hours apart.” This can be significant in terms of travel time and costs since Mississippi, which used to have six clinics, now has only one. The Chicago-based Americans United for Life, a key anti-abortion legal strategy center, takes credit for “helping state after state become more pro-life every year.” “The greater goal, even in legislation, is to influence the culture,” said Terri Herring, head of Mississippi’s Pro-Life America Network. “This is a major culture war that isn’t going away.”³⁵

All this is occurring in a hostile and

sometimes violent environment for abortion providers. The Feminist Majority Foundation’s annual survey on clinic violence found that in 2008, “one in five clinics experienced severe violence. The most common severe forms of violence reported in 2008 include blockades, facility invasions, and stalking.” It lists a host of harassments faced by patients and staff in 2008 from death and bomb threats to vandalism, home picketing, and break-ins. Unsurprisingly, the Feminist Majority Foundation also reports that the number of abortion providers has dramatically declined: from 739 in 2005 to 683 in 2008.³⁶

In short: Barriers to access are up; the number of abortion providers is down; and the only legislative remedy is stalled in Congress with its future uncertain.

Conclusion

As a practical matter, militants like Mark Crutcher and advocates of incrementalism via policies that advance abortion reduction do not disagree on ends so much as means. But it should be noted that Crutcher and his ilk are not going to “dial down” their rhetoric or their activities just because some people would prefer that they do so.

“Obviously, we cannot look for common ground with these people;” Crutcher declared in 2006, “without giving the impression that even we believe their position has at least some moral legitimacy. It would be no different than if representatives of the Jewish people would have agreed to sit down and look for common ground with the Nazis while the ovens at Auschwitz were burning day and night. The Nazis would have loved it because it would have given moral credibility to their position.

“When we agree to look for ways to reduce the ‘need for abortion,’” he continued (making the same point at the spokesperson for the Catholic Bishops quoted above), “by definition we are conceding that such a need exists. After all, rational people don’t go looking for something unless they believe it actually exists. In other words, when we engage in com-

mon ground discussions we reinforce one of the abortion lobby's fundamental arguments."³⁷

The strategy of the antiabortion movement, which like any other movement is never homogeneous, has nevertheless changed little since the 1990s when abortion reduction became, in all of its variants, a major thrust of the movement. Political realism on the part of both militants and pragmatists, the reality of the steady decline in the number of abortion providers, and the increase in state level obstacles make Mark Crutcher's aphorism of the 1990s as true today as it was in 1992.

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²⁸ Tami Abdollah, "Orange County board votes to suspend Planned Parenthood contract," *Los Angeles Times*, March 10, 2009.

²⁹ Shawn Towey, Stephanie Poggi and Rachael Roth, "Abortion Funding: A Matter of Justice," National Network of Abortion Funds, Boston, Mass., 2005. <http://www.nnaf.org/pdf/NNAF%20Policy%20Report.pdf>

³⁰ *CBS Evening News*, July 21, 2009. <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/07/21/eveningnews/main5178682.shtml>

³¹ David D. Kirkpatrick, "Abortion Fight Complicates Debate on Health Care," *The New York Times*, September 28, 2009. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/29/health/policy/29abortion.html>

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³⁴ Matt Bowman, Barack Obama's "Freedom of Choice Act" Would Mean 125K More Abortions, *LifeSiteNews.Com*, September 24, 2008.

³⁵ Peter Slevin, "Antiabortion Efforts Move to the State Level: Legislatures Often Mandate Restrictions," *The Washington Post*, June 8, 2009. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/07/AR2009060702500.html?nav=rss_email/components

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NEW CHRISTIAN ZIONISM *cont'd from page 1*

with Christian Zionists are the lobby group American Israel Political Action Committee (AIPAC), which hosted Hagee as a conference keynote speaker in 2007, and Israeli ambassador Michael Oren, who attended a CUFI summit last July.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the country, a very different kind of “pro-Israel” gathering was taking place. J Street, the “pro-peace, pro-Israel” lobby group, was holding its first national conference with panels featuring American, Israeli and Palestinian speakers. Hundreds gathered in the ballroom of the Washington D.C. Grand Hyatt for the conference, whose program explicitly stated that J Street aims to challenge “right-wing Christian Zionists”—the very people Wiesel was addressing.²

J Street’s leaders are not the first in the Jewish community to resist the embrace of Christian Zionism. Rabbi Eric Yoffie of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism has stated that an alliance with Christian Zionists must be rejected for the sake of Israel.³ Still, there has been little education in the Jewish community on the precise nature of these dangers. Indeed, some Jews may avoid publicly criticizing Christian Zionists out of concern that it would damage interfaith relations—though Christians show no hesitation in criticizing Hagee. Others, including a few questioned at the J Street conference, say Christian Zionist beliefs are of absolutely no interest to them.

Yet it is their beliefs about the end times which drive their activism. The traditional fundamentalist leaders of the movement preach that Jews returning to the Holy Land are a necessary part of the end times in which born-again Christians will escape death as they are raptured into heaven. Jews and other nonbelievers will remain on earth to suffer under the seven-year reign of the Antichrist. Then, as the story goes, Jesus will come back with his armies, be

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The mayor of the West Bank settlement town of Ariel, Ron Nachman, gives a gift to Christian Zionist John Hagee and his wife Diana during the couple’s visit in 2008. Pastor Hagee’s movement has donated millions of dollars to the settlement and supports a “greater Israel” that includes Palestinian territory.

Jack Guez/AFP/Getty Images

accepted by the surviving Jews, and reign for a thousand years. This belief motivates adherents to send funds for West Bank settlements, to lobby for preemptive wars seen as precursors to the end times, and support Jews in the diaspora to make *aliyah* and move to Israel.

Some Christian Zionists believe a second holocaust is necessary to force the repentance of Jews.

Now Christian Zionism—along with much of evangelicalism—is being swept by beliefs from the independent charismatic and Pentecostal streams of Christianity that change the role of Jews in their end times narratives.⁴ These charismatics, like Pentecostals, believe that they are endowed by God with supernatural spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues and faith heal-

ing. However, these charismatic also believe that God directly reveals new prophecy to their leaders who are unifying the church in preparation for the end times. In their increasingly popular narrative, it is not unconverted but *converted* or so-called Messianic Jews who will serve as the trigger for the return of Jesus and the advent of the millennial (thousand year) kingdom on earth. This growing belief is driving the movement to aggressively proselytize Jews and to support “Messianic” ministries in both Israel and Jewish communities worldwide. One splinter group has even taken this story to an extreme, saying they themselves are the “true Israelites” who will play the prophetic role of establishing heaven on earth by moving to Israel.

As we shall see, these distinct end times narratives share an implicit antisemitism, creating the movement’s paradoxical love/hate relationship with the Jews. Far from positive, the obsessive “philosemitism”—or love of Jews—of Christian Zionists is tied to a volatile and changing view of the end times that also changes their view of how they should “support” Jews and Israel in fulfilling prophecy. And this obsession has a history of turning ugly.

Antisemitism and the History of Christian Zionism

The partnership of Christian Zionists with Israeli leaders dates back to the 1970s, when Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin of the Likud Party and Christian Right leader Jerry Falwell joined forces to oppose U.S. President Jimmy Carter's support for a Palestinian state. Israel's alliance with Christian Zionists has only grown in recent decades. As support from increasingly alienated U.S. Jews lagged, Christian Zionists filled the gap with donations and tourism. Israeli Ambassador Oren even rejected an invitation to attend J Street's October conference while attending CUFI's in July.⁵

Ambassador Oren would be wise to reconsider his choice of allies.

Camouflaged in love and an exuberant support for Israel, Hagee and other Christian Zionists openly teach narratives that parallel the story lines of overt antisemitism in which Jews are portrayed not as ordinary people, but as superhuman or subhuman. With almost no challenge (and often endorsement) from Jewish leadership, Christian Zionists are stripping away the hard-won humanity of Jews with a broadcast capacity and international reach that overtly antisemitic organizations could never match. Their belief that they are saving Jews from themselves allows them to proceed with a sense of self-righteousness and to draw in millions of well-meaning people. History demonstrates that once this humanity has been stripped away, the door is opened for unconcealed hatred, fear, and even genocide of these perceived superhuman/subhuman beings.

Even the long-established Christian Zionist narrative has antisemitic undertones. Some Christian Zionists talk about themselves as “fishers” who entice Jews to move to Israel, while “hunters” are those who violently force the Jews who are unresponsive to the fishers. This well-used motif—found throughout the movement's media—is problematic for many reasons, not in the least in requiring a worldwide wave of antisemitism, described by some as a second holocaust, to ensure Jews ful-

fill their prophetic destiny.

Hagee is always careful not to use the phrase “second holocaust,” but he drew on this motif when he notoriously said that Hitler was a hunter sent by God, prompting John McCain to reject his endorsement in the 2008 Presidential race.⁶ The Anti-Defamation League's Abraham Foxman and other Jewish leaders should not have accepted Hagee at face value when he said he was joining rabbinical discourse in making his Hitler remark.⁷

Christian Zionist literature regularly uses this threat of the second holocaust to

**Christian Zionists
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antisemitic story lines.**

warn, or intimidate, Jews to move to Israel before it is “too late,” and steep it with additional antisemitic imagery. In *Let My People Go*, Tom Hess describes his vision of trains taking fleeing Jews from the major cities of the world as they voluntarily leave for Israel, thus saving themselves from an impending holocaust. Its cover shows a Jewish businessman chained to Wall Street, and the book is filled with stereotypes of Jews as money-oriented materialists and worse.⁸ Hess' ministry, based in Israel, sends the books to Jewish households around the world, and claims to have distributed tens of thousands to the “fish” as he calls the Jews of Russia and Ukraine. Hess also hosts the annual Christian Governmental Leaders Luncheon in conjunction with the Knesset's Christian Allies Caucus.⁹

Another book, *Blow the Trumpet in Zion*, lists “The Jew's Final Holocaust”

above “Why Christians Should Love Jews” on its back cover promotion.¹⁰ Its author is Richard Booker, who has worked with the Christian Allies Caucus and Jerusalem Connection, headed by former CUFI director James Hutchens.¹¹ Another prominent Christian Zionist describes this second holocaust as “beyond the horrors of Sobibor, Treblinka, and Auschwitz—all of the death camps combined.”¹² These Christian Zionists believe a second holocaust is necessary to force the repentance of Jews.

Hagee argues that his support for Israel has “absolutely nothing to do with eschatology,”¹³ referring to end times theology. Yet he has built an international broadcast audience advertised as reaching 190 nations with his apocalyptic sermons echoing these themes. Hagee often delivers these sermons while standing in front of large panels illustrating figures of the end times including the Antichrist—whom he describes as gay and “partially Jewish as was Adolph Hitler”—and the “Great Harlot of Mystery Babylon,” whom Hagee claims represents “Romanism” or the Roman Catholic church.¹⁴

Former Israeli Ambassador Dore Gold, when questioned about the dangers of this end times eschatology—which ends with the destruction of Judaism—responded, “All religions have eschatology. The question is whether somebody believes they can move the clock of eschatology forward by themselves. The only one who says that is Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the president of Iran.”¹⁵

But in fact many Christian Zionists do believe they can move the clock, as a quick glance at Armageddonbooks.com shows. Among the titles is *Hastening the Coming of the Messiah, Your Role in Fulfilling Prophecy*. The author, Johannes Facius, is a former head of the Ebenezer Emergency Fund and Operation Exodus, credited with moving over 116,000 Jews to Israel from the former Soviet Union. Hagee's mentor Derek Prince wrote the foreword. Its fourth chapter is titled “Fishers and Hunters.”¹⁶

John Hagee's ministry magazine also

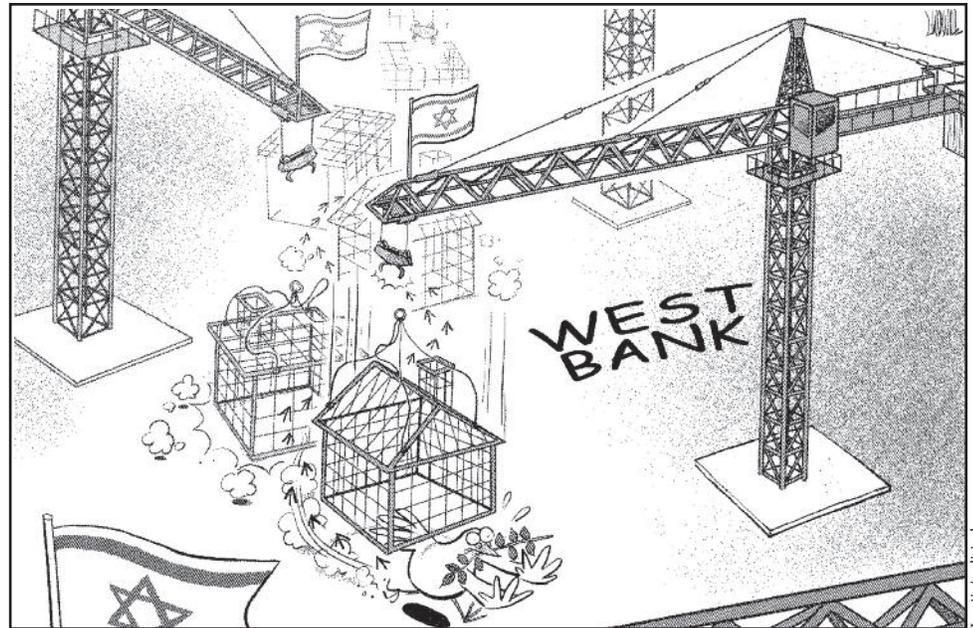
suggests evangelicals can move the clock by donating to Hagee's ministry. In an issue with a dramatic war scene and the words "World War III Has Begun" on its cover, a page two ad solicits funds with the headline, "Become a Part of Biblical Prophecy." The ad's donation form states, "I want to be a part of fulfillment of prophecy and the courageous effort to return Jewish families to their homeland."¹⁷

Millennialism and Anti-semitism, Past and Present

Unless put in the context of these paradoxical end times narratives, it is easy to misinterpret Christian Zionists' millennial obsession. CUFI's Jewish participants are moved by the Christian Zionist outpouring of emotion for Israel, and the trappings of Jewish ritual: blowing shofars, singing in Hebrew, wearing *tallitot* (prayer shawls), and celebrating Jewish holidays. The CUFI "Night to Honor Israel" event at which Wiesel spoke was double-billed as the "Feast of Tabernacles,"¹⁸ a celebration based on the Jewish holiday of *Sukkot* which Hagee infuses with a millennial and Christian supremacist theology.

Wiesel acknowledged the outpouring of support for Israel at the event, saying, "Never in the history of my people have we witnessed an event such as this."²⁰ Yet the current wave of Christian Zionism is eerily reminiscent of the wave of Judeocentric millennialism of a century ago, picking up on similar terminology and end times narratives. The millennial wave of the last century included fascination with Hebrew roots, groups claiming to be Israelites, and a philosemitic embrace of Jews.

Narratives based on biblical genealogy and Israelite "Identity" included Anglo- or British-Israelism, which was exported to the United States and adopted by evangelists including Charles Parham, the founder of Pentecostalism.²¹ Queen Victoria's genealogy was traced back to King David, and colonialism was justified as the proper role of the "chosen people"—Anglo-Israelites. Like the Christian Zionists of today, they described wars in terms of biblical genealogy, and depending on strate-



gic alliances of the moment, described Germans as either fellow "Israelites" or descendants of the hated Assyrians. These philosemitic British Israelites attacked antisemitism from the pages of the journal *The Banner of Israel*.²² But a prominent British Israelite was also editor of the notoriously antisemitic *Dearborn Independent*, a lead newspaper publishing conspiracies based on the notorious forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The movement's philosemitism easily transitioned into antisemitism.

The volatility of the last century's obsession with biblical genealogy and Judeocentric narratives also spawned Christian Identity, the theology held by contemporary White supremacists. They view Jews as an evil race descending from Esau, and see themselves as the true heirs of Israel.²³ Their practice often includes "Hebrew" ritual including the "Feast of Tabernacles" based on *Sukkot*.

Hagee shares this obsession with a distinct race descended from Esau. In his book *Jerusalem Countdown*, he claims that a genetically evil race of "half-breed Jews" spawned Hitler and credits Esau's descendants with the persecution of Jews throughout history.²⁴

The recognized theological source of modern Christian Zionism is U.S. fundamentalism from the last century, which has

its own history of embracing antisemitism. Many leaders such as William Bell Riley, perhaps the major leader of fundamentalism, merged religious narratives with secular antisemitic conspiracies including *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* which they saw as supporting their end times narrative.²⁵

Today's internationally broadcast Christian Zionist media is a major source of anti-Jewish conspiracy thinking and features New World Order conspiracism.²⁶ Hagee preaches from the pulpit that the American dollar is being intentionally devalued through the Federal Reserve by a conspiracy of the Illuminati, Rothschilds, and European bankers.²⁷

These narratives echo claims from the Middle Ages that Jews have supernatural control over the destiny of others, a concept that is now being spread by Christian Zionists to Africa and other continents, paving the way for acceptance of virulently antisemitic conspiracy theories.

Entire Christian Zionist books are dedicated to linking natural or human disasters to Israel. For instance, in John McTernan's recent book, *As America has done to Israel*, he claims that Hurricane Katrina victims were drowned in their attics as God's retribution for the removal of settlers from Gaza who had fled to their rooftops to avoid eviction.²⁸ William Koenig's 2004

book *Eye to Eye* lists terrorist attacks and misfortunes of presidents as God's revenge on America for "land for peace" negotiations.²⁹ The writers frame their accounts as pro-Israel, and the fulfillment of Genesis 12:3, which reads, "And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse."

Hagee picks up on another antisemitic story line with a long history when he demeans the much revered Rabbi Hillel. In *Final Dawn over Jerusalem*, Hagee states that antisemitism comes from the bowels of hell but, in the same book, claims Hillel was an "extremist" and his Pharisee followers were "sword-carrying legalists" who plotted to have Jesus killed. It is they, he claims, who are responsible for Christian antisemitism.³⁰

The Jewish philosopher Martin Buber analyzed how propaganda mischaracterizing the Pharisees as the more legalistic sect of Judaism in the time of Jesus affected 1920s anti-semitism. Author Paul R. Mendes-Flor states about Buber, "Debating the opponents of Jewry, he realized that the anti-Pharisaism which pervaded modern attitudes toward Judaism was not only a distortion but animated virtually every species of metaphysical anti-Semitism."³¹ The demonization of Pharisees is becoming increasingly common today, particularly in Pentecostal and other charismatic media. They equate the Pharisees with a literal demon said to be the source of legalism and division in the church.³²

Today those Jewish leaders who embrace Christian Zionism heap ridicule on those who resist, accusing them of being overly defensive. In *Evangelicals and Israel*, author Stephen Spector quotes George W. Bush's foreign policy advisor Elliot Abrams as saying "anti-Christian bias seems to be the only form of prejudice that American Jews consider respectable."³³ The unwillingness of Jews to return the embrace of that era's millennial-minded "philosemites" was also ridiculed in a famous publication of 1920:

The future of the Jew, as prophetically outlined, is intimately bound up

with the future of this planet, and the Christian church in large part—at least by the evangelical wing, which the Jews most condemn—sees a Restoration of the Chosen People yet to come. If the mass of the Jews knew how understandingly and sympathetically all the prophecies concerning them are being studied in the Church, and the faith that exists that these prophecies will find fulfillment and that they will result in great Jewish service to society at large, they would probably regard the Church with another mind.³⁴

The quote is from Henry Ford's *The International Jew*, derived from his reading of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

If progressive Jewish organizations are going to challenge the shortsighted embrace of Christian Zionists, they will have to become literate in end times narratives.

Marketing efforts by CUFI and others to convince today's Jews to embrace Christian Zionists frequently cite the last century's support for "regathering of the Jews" in Palestine as evidence that the movement is friendly or benign. This cherry-picking of history ignores the fact that the same millennial narratives played a significant role in the objectification of, and obsession with, Jews in the early 20th century. Since then these quasi-religious narratives have kept the motifs of antisemitism alive during a time when overt antisemitism is not acceptable in society. Today's Christian Zionism has reintroduced these dehumanizing narratives back into the mainstream of much of the evangelical world as well as the general public.

Christian Zionism in Transition

As Christian Zionism changes, attacks on Judaism are becoming more overt. The bulk of the shift in Christian Zionism is a result of the growing international dominance of charismatics who reject the concept of being raptured and stress the conversion of Jews to trigger the end times.

In their version of the end times drama, they do not watch idly from the grandstands of heaven after being raptured but remain on earth to fight evil and the Antichrist themselves. It is Jesus who remains in heaven until the job is completed and a Christian Israel calls out for his return. This cleansing of the earth is done by the combined forces of charismatic or "spirit-filled" Christians and their Messianic partners, the term applied to Jews who convert but retain Jewish identity. The shorthand catchphrase for this distinctive end times narrative involving converted Jews is "one new man in Yeshua."

Not surprisingly, the growing importance of converts in the end times narrative is encouraging a new wave of proselytizing to convert Jews to Christianity. As Hagee's Jewish allies are quick to point out, he publicly opposes proselytizing, but much of his organization's leadership and events are hosted by those who have embraced this "one new man" ideology and you can find it throughout Christian Zionist media. Hagee also publicly endorsed a Messianic ministry in Israel.³⁵

These charismatics identify with a coalescing movement called the New Apostolic Reformation (or simply "Apostolic and Prophetic") which teaches that a unified church will lead the fight during the end times. Lou Engle, made famous in the film *Jesus Camp*, is a leading "Apostle" in the movement and Ted Haggard, the former president of the National Association of Evangelicals, partnered in the movement's launch. Sarah Palin has close ties to leading Apostles and during the 2008 elections their broadcasted prophecies claimed that Palin was divinely "anointed" for leadership.³⁶

CUFI director Stephen Strang is a prominent Apostle and uses his magazine, *Charisma*, to promote it.³⁷ In celebration of Israel's sixtieth birthday, *Charisma* dedicated much of its May 2008 issue to Christian Zionists and Messianics who are working to proselytize Jews in Israel. Another CUFI director, Robert Stearns, is the editor of a popular Apostolic and Prophetic magazine and cofounder of the Day of Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem (DPPJ).³⁸ The DPPJ is the largest single Christian Zionist event, with advertised participation of 200,000 churches in 175 nations, and is endorsed by the Knesset's Christian Allies Caucus.³⁹

What are these 200,000 churches praying for when they pray for the peace of Jerusalem?

In a 2005 Christian Broadcast Network interview, Stearns said that all participating churches received the book *Your People Shall Be My People* which explains the "one new man in Yeshua" ideology and pleads with churches to support Messianic ministries.⁴⁰ Author Don Finto introduces a multidenominational council of charismatic leaders whose mission is to "recognize and welcome Jewish believers in Yeshua without requiring them to abandon their Jewish identity and practice" with the "ultimate purpose in unifying the Body and restoring the Jewish believers to their rightful place in the hastening of the coming of the Lord Yeshua in glory and the full accomplishment of His work in the kingdom of God."⁴¹

By repenting of the Holocaust and allowing Messianics to retain their Jewish identity, these Christian Zionists teach that the stumbling blocks will be removed and Jews will convert in large numbers. In his book *Prepare the Way*, Stearns claimed that this is happening at an unprecedented rate, stating, "Our elder brother is returning from the dead."⁴² This echoes his CUFI colleague Hagee, who after his infamous Hitler as hunter quote said, "Now they [the Jews] are physically alive, but they are not spiritually alive."⁴³

Stearns ally Jack Hayford, a charismatic leader who cofounded the Day of Prayer,

also founded The King's College and Seminary which has a special division to train Messianics to become the "anointed Spirit-filled team players in the redemption of all Israel."⁴⁴ The seminary coordinates with Messianic Jewish Bible Institute, which trains Messianic leaders in Jewish communities in Argentina, Brazil, Israel, Russia, and Ukraine in order to bring "life to the dead" as stated in its promotional materials.⁴⁵

Another stated goal of the Christian Zionist/Messianic partnership is to fight antisemitism. However while they are very anxious to defend Israel from an Islamic world they view as a common enemy, this conceals the fact that they are equally determined to save Israel from Judaism.

Believing themselves to be better Jews than the Jews, some Christian Zionists call themselves the true Israelites.

In *Your People Shall Be My People*, Finto quotes convert Dan Juster as stating "Rabbinic Judaism is a more severe departure from biblical faith than I had ever realized in my early days of Jewish recovery... We who are Jewish are biblical New Covenant Jews, not Rabbinic Jews!"⁴⁶

Stearns describes Juster as the Thomas Jefferson of Messianic Judaism and a "sovereign vessel the Lord has raised up to pioneer this End-Time move." Juster explained to the 2009 Promise Keepers revival in Boulder that, "The conversion of Israel is a necessary precondition for ushering in the Messianic age. We can only accomplish this task by coming together as one new man. Only then will we have the power to convert Israel."⁴⁷

Despite easily accessible evidence to the contrary, Robert Stearns was portrayed

throughout the book *Evangelicals and Israel* as the ideal Christian Zionist who refuses to proselytize and has no ulterior end times motives.⁴⁹ Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has personally endorsed Stearns' ministry.⁵⁰ *Evangelicals and Israel* has endorsements on the back cover from ADL's Abraham Foxman and Walter Russell Mead. And in a truly wrongheaded review of the book in *Foreign Affairs*, Mead suggested that Democrats court Christian Zionists to join their party.⁵¹

Millennial Disillusionment: Better Jews Than the Jews

Richard Landes, director of the Center for the Millennial Studies project of Boston University, has described cycles of millennial expectation and disappointment dating back to the year 1000. In 1999 he described the modern wave as constituting "the most sustained and unusually philo-Judaic apocalyptic manifestation in the history of Christianity."⁵² Many Jewish leaders dismiss millennialism as benign because they don't believe that the predicted trials or Jesus' return to earth will take place. However, Landes warns that the real danger stems from the disillusionment when Jesus doesn't come back. He asks, "How long can an apocalyptic wave continue? Does all this apocalyptic philo-Judaism of the upswing imply a coming wave of equally intense anti-Judaism in the wake of (inevitable) disappointment?"⁵³

We already are seeing the onset of disillusionment with Jews who resist playing their assigned prophetic role. Believing themselves to be better Jews than the Jews, Christian Zionists step in to fill the role themselves. Like the British Israelites of the last century, today a group calling themselves Ephraimites believe themselves to be the true Israelites. But unlike the British Israelites, they are multiracial, including Whites, Blacks and Latinos, and even international.

Members of Israel's Likud Party are working with these Ephraimites and other Christian Zionists through World Likud, headed by Danny Danon.⁵⁴ Following a 2007 conference in Texas with Likud lead-

ers, Joel Bell and friends launched a new organization called Worldwide Biblical Zionism (WBZ) to provide housing; legal assistance, employment aid, and military training to Christian Zionists who wish to make *aliyah* to Israel and the West Bank.⁵⁵

Several leaders in Benjamin Netanyahu's government participated in the inaugural WBZ event on November 16, 2008, including Gideon Sa'ar, current Minister of Education; Ayoob Kara, Deputy Minister of Development of the Negev and Galilee; and Yulie Edelstein, Minister of Information and Diaspora Affairs.⁵⁶ Much of the outreach in the United States has been by Sagiv Assulin, the Knesset Leader of the Young.

One group reporting contact with Assulin is the Messianic Israel Alliance (MIA), whose name is misleading since the organization is comprised of Ephraimite Christians who believe they have a right to land in Israel. Before their 2008 national convention, they formed a "Provisional Israelite Council in Exile" and demanded their "inalienable right of return to their biblical inheritance and historical territory located in current Samaria and Judea."⁵⁷

The Ephraimites of MIA believe that they must be fruitful and fill the population gap that will occur as Israel expands to its future borders and "to replace the 235,000,000 non-Jews" who will be removed from the "Red Sea" to the "River Euphrates." MIA's leader, Angus Wootten, stated in a 2008 newsletter, "If YHVH would tomorrow remove the million plus Palestinians, who are citizens of Israel, and the three and half million in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, how would, or how could, the present Jewish population of Israel take possession of the land the Palestinians had occupied? And if that isn't a big enough challenge, add taking possession of Southern Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Western Arabia, and the Sinai."⁵⁸

Christian Zionists commonly describe the millions of current occupants as expendable, and John Hagee has written, "In modern terms Israel rightfully owns all of present-day Israel, all of Lebanon, half

of Syria, two-thirds of Jordan, all of Iraq, and the northern portion of Saudi Arabia."⁵⁹

In his December 18, 2007 newsletter, Wootten, unhappy with the then-current Israeli government, stated, "SOS Israel, an umbrella group of Jewish settlers now living in Judea and Samaria, has said that in fulfillment of their biblical mandate they will declare a new Jewish state independent of Israel... Their objective is to form a New Jewish Congress that will eventually gain sovereignty of the Jewish Nation over the secular state." Any Israeli government that does not see Christian Zionists as part of the "Nation of Israel" is illegitimate, he charged.⁶⁰

On August 10, 2008, as part of their international convention, the MIA conducted a "March to the Arch," carrying banners, shofars, and flags, and wearing t-shirts stating, "We are Israel."⁶¹

It is not clear whether WBZ will succeed in bringing substantial numbers of Christians to the West Bank even as Christian Zionist funds continue to flow to the region; Ariel, described as the capital of "Samaria," has a swimming pool named for CUFU director Billye Brim, located in the "John Hagee Building." In fact, there are signs of a backlash within Likud against Christian Zionism that could interfere with the Ephraimites fulfilling their hopes. Moshe Feiglin is among the most right-wing of Likud politicians, but he recently disengaged from his partnership with Christian Zionists.⁶² He wrote in the *Jewish Press*,

The Christian conquest is much more dangerous than the Muslim conquest because it is not direct. It is not violent. Embracing and supportive, it connects with Israel against the Muslim enemy. It supports a Jewish Land of Israel in its entirety—even speaking up for the sanctity of the connection between the Nation of Israel, the Land of Israel and the Torah of Israel. It just forgets to specify which Nation of Israel and which Torah.⁶³

Christian Zionism Goes Global

In Singapore a stadium of people sings popular Messianic music in Hebrew. In Zambia a network of churches defines itself as Messianic, calls its preachers "rabbis," and celebrates Christianized versions of Jewish holidays. In London, Christian Zionist leaders endorsed by the Israeli Knesset's Christian Allies Caucus meet with members of Parliament in order to lobby for support of Israel based on biblical mandates.⁶⁴ In Germany, Christian Zionists who call themselves the Saxon Christian Friends of Israel join with Israeli representatives to commemorate the Holocaust by attacking Islam as the "next reincarnation of fascism."⁶⁵

A Nigerian pastor travels to Jerusalem and tells the Knesset that any nation that does not serve Israel will perish, and adds that African Christians "would love to kiss the feet of a Jew."⁶⁶ Seven hundred Brazilians travel to Jerusalem to celebrate the annual Feast of Tabernacles event sponsored by the Christian Embassy of Jerusalem, joining thousands from around the globe.⁶⁷ In Tübingen, Germany, a congregation described by the pastor as 70 percent children and grandchildren of Nazis, "reconciles" with Jews by sponsoring Messianic music productions and joint Christian and Messianic Jewish events including Messianic Holocaust memorial events.⁶⁸ These have now been imported to the United States.

From Argentina to Ukraine "pro-Israel" groups are singing in Hebrew to the same popular Messianic melodies, dressing in similar costumes, and waving similar flags. It is increasingly difficult to tell if the participants are Christian Zionists or Messianic Jews.

Christian Zionism is increasingly global, aggressively missionary, and openly attack-

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ing Judaism as the obstacle to a Christian utopia on earth. Nevertheless, the current Israeli government views the growth of Christian Zionism as an opportunity for building increased support internationally for Israeli policies and is endorsing the spread of this ideology and activism around the globe. Even liberals are uninformed on this issue. In a conversation at the J Street conference, a U.S. Congressman told me that Hagee could not possibly be spreading antisemitic notions. "You must be confused," he added. "Hagee is pro-Israel!"

The widely held belief that a visibly "pro-Israel" Christian Zionist could not possibly be a danger to Jews needs to be reevaluated.

If J Street and other moderate and progressive Jewish organizations are going to challenge the shortsighted embrace of Christian Zionists, they will have to become literate in end times narratives, and competent in explaining the serious threats, to both Israel and Jews worldwide, from this millennial movement. ■

End Notes

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GAYS IN AFRICA *continued from page 1*

To put on the conference, the Uganda-based Family Life Network—led by Stephen Langa with the goal of “restoring” traditional family values and morals in Uganda—teamed with two U.S. hatemongers from the Christian Right, Holocaust revisionist Scott Lively and Dan Schmierer of the ex-gay group Exodus International.¹ Vocal opposition in international circles did not stop the country’s high profile religious leaders, parliamentarians, police officers, teachers, and concerned parents from attending. Indeed, parliamentary action to wage war on gays was on the conference agenda. It was not enough that homosexuality is illegal in Uganda. As one speaker stated from the podium,

[The parliament] feels it is necessary to draft a new law that deals comprehensively with the issue of homosexuality and ...takes into account the international gay agenda. ...Right now there is a proposal that a new law be drafted.²

The unsuspecting audience heard Lively promote his book, *The Pink Swastika*, and his argument that not only are gays seeking to take over the world, but they also threaten society by causing higher rates of divorce, child abuse, and HIV/AIDS. Legalizing homosexuality is on par with accepting “molestation of children or having sex with animals,” he said. As Lively put it, LGBT issues cannot be considered human rights issues. “The people coming to Africa now and advancing the idea that human rights serves the homosexual interests are absolutely wrong,” he said. “Many of them are outright liars and they are



In March 2009, Scott Lively, the Holocaust revisionist and author of The Pink Swastika, warned Ugandans that gays posed a dire threat to their children and society.

Kapya Kaoma is an Anglican priest from Zambia and project director of Political Research Associates. He is author of PRA's October 2009 report, Globalizing the Culture Wars: U.S. Conservatives, African Churches and Homophobia.

manipulating history; they are manipulating facts in order to push their political agenda.” Lively even labeled abortion rights as “a product of the gay philosophy” meant to promote sexual promiscuity in order to “destroy the family.” In sum, he warned, U.S. homosexuals are out to recruit young people into homosexual lifestyles, and they must be stopped.

Lively had a receptive audience. Harry Mwebesa of

Family Life Network told the crowd,

Dr. Scott told us about Brazil where 10 years ago, homosexuality was unheard of....Today it is the capital....There are people that have been against homosexuality that are having to leave because of the pressure and the threats that they are putting on them. That is how serious it is.

Sadly, the sensitivity of mainline church leaders in the United States to charges of colonialism can silence them from speaking out on LGBT issues.

Another participant who called himself Elijah said,

The man of God [Scott Lively] told us about...a movement behind the promotion of homosexuality and it is called gay movement. Me, I had never heard of that. But I got to

know that there is a force behind homosexuality which we need to tackle with force. He also told us that these people who are behind this...evil, they have all resources that they need...to spread this evil. [In] Africa, Uganda in particular...it is more easy for the young generation to get attracted into the evil. Since that day...we need to stand firm to fight homosexuality.

If only Lively’s influence ended there. But a few days later, he met with Ugandan lawmakers and government officials, some of whom would draft parliament’s Anti-Homosexuality Act of 2009 the next month. This act would ban LGBT organizing and give the death penalty for gays, though not heterosexuals, who have sex with someone underage or while infected with the HIV/AIDS virus.³ Lively and the “traditional family values” language of U.S. antigay campaigners echoes through the draft legislation:

Research indicates that the homosexuality has a variety of negative consequences including higher incidences of violence, sexually transmitted diseases, and use of drugs. The higher incidence of separation and break-up in homosexual relationships also creates a highly unstable environment for children raised by homosexuals through adoption or otherwise, and can have profound psychological consequences on those children. In addition, the promotion of homosexual behavior undermines our traditional family values.

Family Life Network’s Langa pushed people at a follow up meeting to stand up for the tougher law against homosexuality for their children’s sake, echoing Lively in charging that Ugandan gays and activists were being paid by U.S. gays to recruit schoolchildren into homosexuality.

Amid the hysteria, any sense that homosexuality has been in Africa from time immemorial was lost. While hardly embraced, and indeed illegal in many countries, at least LGBT people were not

hounded by churches and police alike—until American culture warriors came to Africa. Bishop Christopher Ssenjonyo, one of the most progressive voices on LGBT issues in Uganda, expressed his own concerns about the Americans’ role to me in March, “I am sure that these lies will incite public hatred against gays.”

How Did We Get Here?

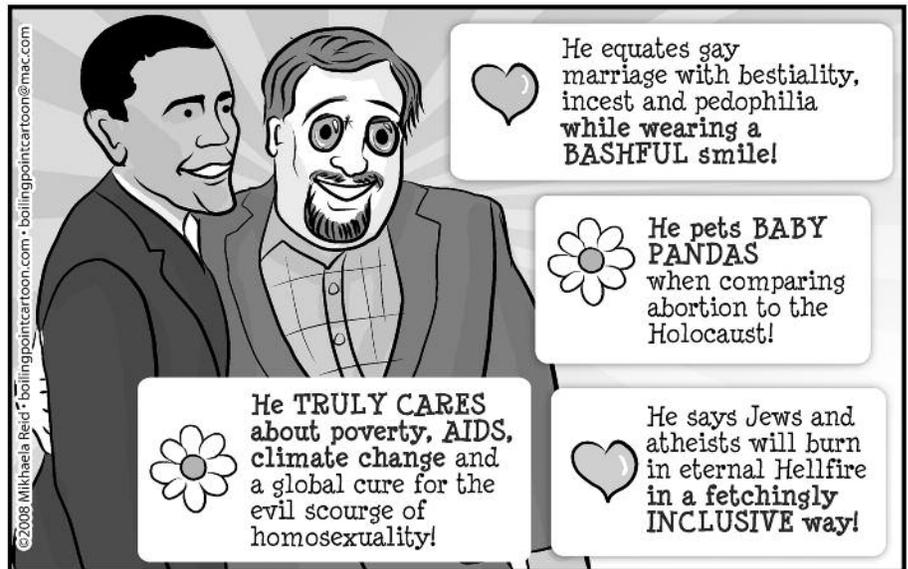
How did we get to this point? Scott Lively and Don Schmierer are just two among a parade of right-leaning American Christians who have brought the U.S. culture wars to Africa. But unlike the United States, in Africa sexual minorities are only thinly organized and have few allies who will stand up with them. Those who do are labeled neocolonialist and racist, because of the effectiveness of U.S. Right organizing in Africa. The result is tragedy.

Thankfully, because of Kenya’s democratic past and stronger civil society, citizens managed to challenge and slow down efforts for broad criminalization of homosexuality. But in more authoritarian countries, like Uganda and Nigeria, where some counties punish homosexuality with death, U.S. religious conservatives are better able to promote their anti-LGBT agenda, building on decades of missionary work.

Rick Warren and the Episcopalians

Pastor Rick Warren’s partnership with African religious leaders also extends to supporting breakaway Episcopal churches in the United States that join African dioceses rather than remain in American ones that support gay ordination.³¹ As early as 2005, he spoke at a conference for conservative Anglicans in Pittsburgh.³² On the same day Warren claimed that homosexuality is not a human rights issue, he also supported African Bishops for boycotting the Anglicans’ 2008 Lambeth Conference where gay ordination was a key agenda item. “The Church of England is wrong [on supporting LGBT clergy] and I support the Church of Uganda on the boycott... We shall not tolerate this aspect at all,” he said.³³

Obama’s pick for his inaugural invocation celebrates DIVERSITY and the “magic of this country!” Because...
Rick Warren is a CUTER Kind of HATER!



U.S. evangelicals like California’s Rick Warren have turned their attention to Africa as its role in global Christianity has grown. As Warren recently told the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, “If you want to know the future of evangelicalism, it is in [Africa, Asia and Latin America.] To give you an example, in 1900 there were only 10 million Christians in all of Africa—10% of the population. Today there are 360 million Christians in Africa, over half the population.”³⁴ Warren’s numbers are wrong and fewer than half of Africans are Christian. Still, 30 million of the Anglican Communion’s 77 million members live in Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya.

Warren is influential on the continent, enjoying close ties to African religious and political leaders. They quote him to justify discrimination against LGBT people, and to support their challenge to U.S. mainline Protestants who are liberalizing their policies around gay ordination. “Homosexuality is not a natural way of life and thus not a human right,” Warren said during a March-April 2008 visit with African religious and political leaders in Rwanda, Uganda, and Kenya. That quote has reverberated ever since.⁵

Warren’s bestselling book, *A Purpose Driven Life* is studied across sub-Saharan Africa and his Saddleback Church in Lake

Forest, California has close ties with leaders across Africa, including, until recently, Martin Ssempe of Uganda’s Makerere Community Church. Ssempe is one of the key architects of the antigay bill and persecution of LGBT people in Uganda. He made global news when he published the names of LGBT people in the local press and destroyed condoms to promote abstinence-only programs in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Uganda. Ssempe was a regular visitor to Saddleback until Warren distanced himself from Ssempe in 2008.

Within Africa, Warren seems to be progressive when it comes to fighting poverty, illiteracy and HIV/AIDS and these efforts have painted him as a real partner in development. However, his antipoverty and education strategies also promote conservative institutional power and ideologies in Africa, including homophobia.

As Warren’s “purpose-driven” projects in Rwanda, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda have grown, so too have levels of active homophobia and proposed laws against LGBT people. And Warren’s allies – particularly Anglican Archbishops Henry Orombi of Uganda, Peter Akinola of Nigeria, Emmanuel Kolini of Rwanda and Benjamin Nzimbi of Kenya – are in the forefront of advocating for stiffer laws against LGBT persons in their countries.⁶

Archbishop Orombi argues that U.S. homosexuals should be kept out of Uganda because they are “taking advantage of the abject poverty in Africa to lure people into their club [homosexuality].”⁷⁷ In neighboring Nigeria, Archbishop Akinola wrote, “We are especially concerned about those who are using large sums of money to lure our youth to see homosexuality and lesbianism as normative. We must consistently and faithfully teach about God’s commands on this ungodly practice and help those with such orientation to seek deliverance and pastoral counsel.”⁷⁸

History of U.S. Conservatives in Africa

If they had faced strong opposition, U.S. conservatives might not have been so successful in promoting their homophobic politics. Traditionally, evangelical African churches have been biblically and doctrinally orthodox but socially progressive on such issues as national liberation and poverty, making them natural partners of the politically liberal western churches. But their religious orthodoxy also provides the U.S. Right with an opportunity. Africans resonate with the denunciation of homosexuality as a postcolonial plot; their homophobia is as much an expression of resistance to the West as it is a statement about human sexuality. Similarly cam-

paigns for “family values” in Africa rest on rich indigenous notions of the importance of family and procreation. In Africa, “family” expresses the idea that to be human is to be embedded in community, a concept called *ubuntu*. African tradition values procreation, making those hindering this virtue seem like enemies of life.

Ironically enough, although American conservatives repeatedly accuse progressives of being imperialist, it is their dealings with Africa that are extremely imperialistic.

Although Rick Warren’s involvement in Africa is the most celebrated, and Lively’s perhaps the most notorious, they are not the first U.S. conservative evangelicals to influence African policies. Pat Robertson’s television show *The 700 Club* is watched across sub-Saharan Africa. Yet most

Africans are not aware that Robertson supported the civil war in Angola and the oppressive White governments of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and South Africa. He was one of many U.S. conservative evangelicals, some of whom came to Africa as missionaries in the 1980s, who sided with those White minority governments in their effort to stop the spread of liberation theology. Allied with them was—and is—the Institute on Religion and Democracy (IRD), a U.S. neoconservative group that also supported White regimes and challenged the National Council of Churches (NCC) as a group of dangerous Marxists supporting subversion. The IRD formed in 1981 with the goal of weakening and splitting U.S. mainline denominations in order to block their powerful progressive social witness promoting social and economic justice.⁹

During this same period, the U.S. mainline churches sided with oppressed Africans living in White regimes. Along with exposing the crimes committed in the name of fighting communism, these churches provided financial and social support to displaced families in Africa, Asia, and South America.

But today the mainline churches are labeled as neocolonialists and this history is forgotten. You can still hear snippets of the old right-wing scripts in today’s attacks on the mainline churches. James V. Heideringer II, the president of Good News, the United Methodist Church’s renewal movement which opposes gay ordination and supports conservative theology, claimed official Methodist churches lacked “a theology of mission but bought into liberation theology. Mission for them involves bringing about social and political change in third world countries. They favor social ministry at the expense of evangelism.”¹⁰

Similarly, IRD’s executive director, Mark Tooley, recently sought an apology from the NCC and World Council of Churches for supporting “Marxist” revolutionaries in Africa. His organization is a lead force in mobilizing renewal movements like Heideringer’s to use African leaders and the debate about gay ordination and marriage

Gays and Single Women

In Africa, sexuality is linked to procreation. John C. Caldwell, Pat Caldwell and Pat Quiggin argue that many Africans believe a virtuous person is one who has more children. How one gets these children is of little importance in African morality.³⁴

The largest difference in African and Western notions of “traditional values” relates to extramarital affairs. In the United States, “family values” means one man-one wife. In “traditional African family values,” a man can take pride in fathering children outside of marriage. African politicians and religious leaders are likely to condemn homosexuality as immoral while accepting a “celibate” priest fathering children among parishioners.³⁵

In valuing procreation, Africans tend to be suspicious of both homosexuality and childlessness. An infertile person is a skeleton to be kept in the family closet, while siblings secretly bear or conceive a child for a barren relative. In fact, women who insist on limiting their families are sometimes considered as behaving in a “monstrous fashion.”³⁶ It is this fear that U.S. conservatives have capitalized on in their presentation of homosexuality in Africa.

as a wedge in U.S. mainline conflicts – IRD’s latest but perhaps most effective tactic in diminishing the social witness of its mainline church opponents (for more on the U.S. conflict, see the box on this page and my recent report, *Globalizing the Culture Wars: U.S. Conservatives, African Churches, and Homophobia*).¹¹

The torrential flow of conservative Christian resources to Africa helps wash away the memory of their alliances with White regimes. Through their extensive communication networks in Africa, social welfare projects, Bible schools, and educational materials, U.S. religious conservatives warn of the dangers of homosexuals and present themselves as the true representatives of U.S. evangelicalism, effectively marginalizing mainline U.S. churches that once had strong relationships on the continent. Right-wing groups have enticed African religious leaders to reject funding from mainline denominations – which require documentation of how the money is spent—and instead to accept funds from conservatives, further empowering the U.S. evangelical viewpoint while giving local bishops the opportunity to line their pockets.

To reach Africans, U.S. evangelicals now broadcast their Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) and Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Although generally disinterested in helping poor Blacks in their own backyard, in Africa U.S. White conservatives driven to convert the continent dominate social services, run orphanages, schools and universities, and provide loans.¹² These conservatives and evangelical charities like World Vision, Solar Light for Africa, and the IRD-founded Five Talents use their presence in Africa to address the question of homosexuality from a conservative albeit misleading position. In this way, almost all U.S. conservative Christians working in Africa are responsible for exporting homophobia to Africa.

Indeed, Africans do not distinguish between the moderate evangelicals in World Vision and hard-right figures like Scott Lively. For them, the term “evangel-

ical” conveys the notion of Protestant Christianity as a whole, without the substantive distinctions made by U.S. religious groups. And U.S. conservative evangelicals support diverse Anglican, Presbyterian and Pentecostal church leadership in Africa with which they share no denominational tie. For instance, the Providence Christian Reformed Church in Holland, Michigan is not an Episcopal congregation yet it provides funding to the Anglican Church of Uganda.¹³ Some U.S. support goes directly to salaries, and has since 1998, as Reverend Aaron Mwesigyi of the Ugandan archbishop’s office explained.¹⁴

Opposing Mainline Witness

While U.S. evangelicals are actively disseminating their antigay views through their mission work, American mainline renewal movements reach out to African churches for support in fights

against gay ordination and marriage, helping to further crystallize this as an African issue. At their behest, Anglican churches in Uganda, Kenya, and Nigeria rejected funding from The Episcopal Church USA in 2004 over disagreements about gay ordination and other culture war issues. While these attacks have resulted in schisms within the Episcopal Church USA and the Presbyterian Church USA and continue to threaten the unity of the United Methodist Church, they offer African churches financial and ideological benefits, including a voice in international circles. As Kenya’s Rosemary Mbongo told me, “Africans, Asians, and Latin American evangelical Christians have the voice today; they owe it to American conservatives.”

Although conservative circles celebrate this rejection of aid as a sign of Africans’ moral purity, Africans simply responded to U.S. conservatives’ demands. A Kenyan

How it Works: The Case of the Methodist General Conference

The renewal movements and the right-wing Institute on Religion and Democracy (IRD) mobilize their African allies to support anti-LGBT actions within the international conferences of their denominations. Before the United Methodist Church’s General Conference in 2008, for instance, the IRD prepared the voting materials for African delegates. Joe Wesley Kilpatrick, the former vice president of a Georgia renewal group, and Paul Law, the president of the ministry Appointment Congo, traveled across Africa training delegates to take the “right” side at the conference.³⁷ Unfortunately, the campaign materials misrepresented the UMC mainline leadership as ignoring the alleged threat of Islam, and the persecution of Christian minorities in Africa and rejecting the authority of the Bible.³⁸ The materials also told Africans whom to vote for during the General Conference.

Rev. Dr. Eunice Musa Iliya, the director of Directorate of Evangelism and Stewardship of the United Methodist Church in Nigeria remembered, “I was under extreme pressure from conservatives to vote for conservative candidates. U.S conservatives told us to vote for certain names as a way of saving the Church. We were told to use our “power” to influence the outcome of the General Conference. ...the UMC leadership was said to be “practicing occultism, ignoring the expansion of Islam in Africa, rejecting the authority of the Bible and Jesus as well as promoting the homosexual agenda... I voted differently from other African delegates because I knew those claims to be false.”³⁹

Dr. Iliya further pointed out that this misrepresentation did not end with the 2008 General Convention. The U.S. conservative smear campaign for the next General Conference in 2010 has already begun. “In 2009, Steve Wood of the Confessing Movement came to West Africa to conduct leadership training sessions in different countries including Nigeria... I was surprised with how much the U.S. church was demonized by Steve. When I tried to ask a question, my Bishop (Jerry Kulah) told me to sit down. I was broken... These guys went to an extent of telling Africans to have nothing to do with American liberals and promised Africans scholarships.”

professor noted, “American conservatives have been in my office several times requesting that we cut ties with The Episcopal Church USA and other progressive funders in exchange for their funds. They have succeeded in getting small colleges into their camp but we have refused.”¹⁵

The apparent plan is to encourage African church leaders to swap their relationships with mainline churches for U.S. conservative organizations and individuals.

While it is largely U.S. evangelical money displacing mainline funds supporting African churches, renewal movements within mainline U.S. churches reap the rewards by securing the alliance of Africans in fighting their battles over gay ordination and other issues at home and in international venues. This effort started as early as 1999, when members of the IRD-affiliated renewal movement in The Episcopal Church USA went to Africa to ask African bishops to support suspending the American church from the worldwide Anglican Communion for being too gay friendly and socially liberal.

More recently, IRD and United Methodist Church renewal groups organized African delegates to prevent the United Methodist Church from lifting its ban on the ordination of LGBT clergy during its global General Conference in 2008. Jerald Walz of IRD put it this way, “Wherever there is theological agreement, Americans are making ways of helping their brothers and sisters both financially and theologically... In the UMC, Americans reached out to the African delegates by helping them navigate the system... Americans are also reaching out to their African friends by giving them a voice at international gatherings.”¹⁶

Africa’s attacks on U.S. mainline churches intensified when The Episcopal Church USA consecrated an openly gay person, Gene Robinson, as a bishop in 2004. On the surface, Bishop Robinson’s consecration was an Episcopal issue. However, renewal movements in the Episcopal, United Methodist, and Presbyterian

churches, and other U.S. conservatives used it as an organizing tool to preach hatred against LGBT people. In addition to citing Robinson as an example of Western corruption, they partnered with African religious leaders to demand that the Episcopal Church USA be excommunicated from the worldwide Anglican Communion and replaced with conservative leadership.

The churches then used their “principled” rejection of mainline money as a fundraising opportunity. In appeals to U.S. conservatives, Canon Allison Barfoot said the Anglican church of Uganda in Kampala lacked working phones because

Local fears that this lack of accountability breeds corruption appear well grounded. Canon Alison Barfoot, an American conservative, administers American funding at the Anglican Church of Uganda headquarters without giving African accountants any access to U.S.-related financial information or books, we learned.²⁰ Furthermore, dissident U.S. Episcopal Bishop John Guernsey of Woodbridge, Virginia, vets all U.S. donations and mission partnerships with Uganda to ensure they come from “friendly” churches, and other U.S. conservatives play that role for other countries, bypassing usual safeguards.²¹ Their safeguards are loose enough that Bishop Samuel Sekadde, the retired Bishop of Namirembe, is under suspicion for alleged misuse of church funds.²² The independent *Uganda Monitor* observed that the bishop’s estates and private home suggest that “the good bishop was either living beyond his means or helping himself to church property.”²³

Warren’s bestselling book, *A Purpose Driven Life* is studied across sub-Saharan Africa and his Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California has close ties with leaders across Africa.

it had rejected money from the Episcopal Church USA.¹⁷ Two years after the Anglican Church of Kenya cut ties with the Episcopal Church USA in 2004, the Reverend Canon Rosemary Mbogo, its Provincial Mission coordinator, appealed for tithing from U.S. evangelical churches “to help the Kenyan province.”¹⁸ Their requests to U.S. conservatives appear to have been answered, since both churches confirmed that U.S. conservatives provide regular funding to churches in both countries.

U.S. evangelical money is attractive because it does not come with the demands for strict accountability made by mainline churches.¹⁹ Bishops can spend it as they like. Ironically, U.S. conservatives have always campaigned against “unrestricted” giving in U.S. mainline churches. But in Africa, they prefer unrestricted giving as another way of undermining progressives.

Neocolonial relationship

Despite historical evidence of homosexuality in Africa long before the Europeans arrived, most conservative African religious and political leaders now view homosexuality as a Western export, and a form of imperialism and neocolonialism. And of course, U.S. conservatives exploit and encourage this belief. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, whose wife is a close ally of Rick Warren, warned, “It is a danger not only to the believers but to the whole of Africa. It is bad if our children become complacent and think that people who are not in order are alright... These foreigners should go and practice their nonsense elsewhere.”²⁴

Because Africans are sensitive to neocolonialism, the conservative claim that homosexuality is part of a “Western agenda” gives African church leaders ammunition to demand greater influence and power in the affairs of the church.²⁵ Denouncing homosexuality is Africa’s way of claiming power over the western world. In this

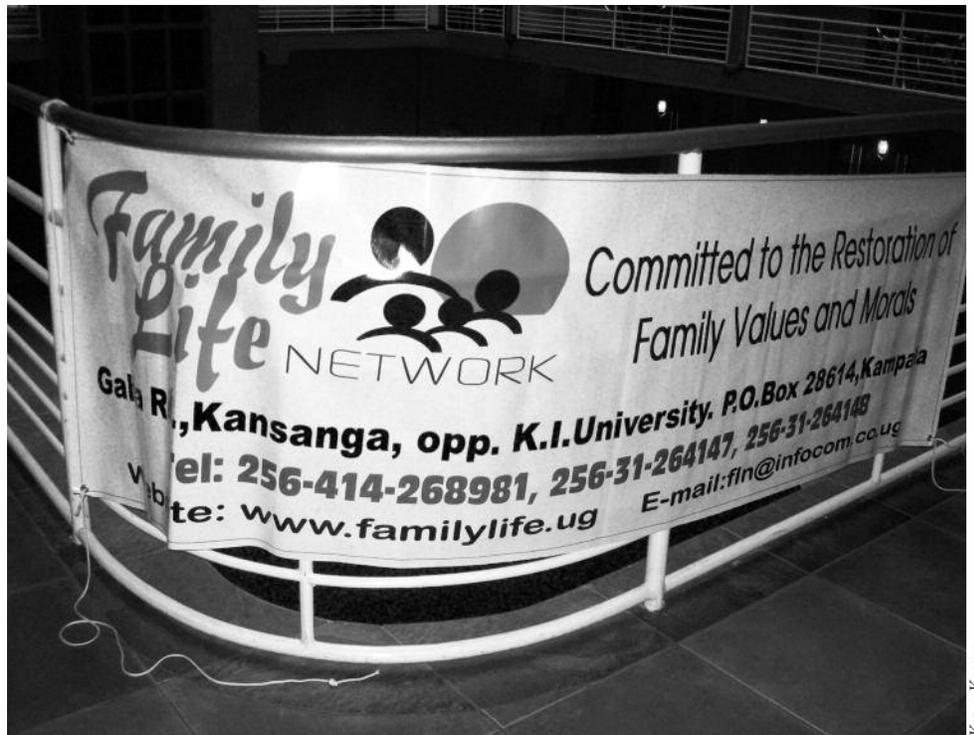
regard, when Africans claim that homosexuality is un-African, they are pointing to a politics of postcolonial identity.²⁶

This history gives the struggle greater depth and tenacity, and for that reason, African involvement in U.S. church issues will continue. Moreover, rejecting what is claimed to be an imposition from the West gives them power both within the African context and with American conservatives of all persuasions.

Ironically enough, although American conservatives repeatedly accuse progressives of being imperialist, it is *their* dealings with Africa that are extremely imperialistic. Their flow of funds creates a form of clientelism, with the expectation that the recipients toe an ideological line. They put words into the mouths of their African church allies, even writing or rewriting their anticolonial statements to reflect U.S. conservative concerns. In one of many examples, IRD reworked a statement the Rev. Jerry Kulah of Liberia wrote in preparation for a 2008 Methodist conference to use as a general African statement, adding in its anti-Islamic politics,

*Cognizant of the massive silent invasion of Islam upon global community with its excessive and liberal use of Arab-oil funds to propagate its faith, we are afraid that the current unrestricted embrace of liberalism within the United Methodist Church is endangering the chances of our children of not considering Christianity as a possibility. It creates a breeding ground for the rapid expansion of Islam among our future posterity.*²⁷
[italics indicate IRD changes]²⁷

In contrast, U.S. mainline churches repeatedly demonstrate their opposition to neocolonialism of all sorts, not least by supporting the U.N.'s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to fight poverty in postcolonial Africa. Yet American conservatives succeed in dismissing such efforts as neocolonial attempts to bribe Africans into accepting homosexuality, which they characterize as a purely Western phenomenon.



The Family Life Network is a Ugandan group backed by U.S. evangelicals that promotes antigay laws and sentiments.

Sadly, the sensitivity of mainline church leaders in the United States to charges of colonialism can silence them from speaking out on LGBT issues. The African attacks create a dilemma for them: How can they be relevant to their own global North context, while remaining connected to global mainline Christianity? Unfortunately, the fear of isolation leads many social and theological progressives in the church to ignore social justice issues in their daily proclamations. While Episcopalians risked schism to support gay bishops, U.S. Presbyterian and Methodist churches do not openly ordain LGBT clergy. African clergy directly threatened to cut links with Presbyterians in 2004 if they did. Despite the active role American progressives played and continue to play in Africa, they were out-organized.

The Attack on Islam

Another U.S. conservative ploy is to suggest that mainline churches' acceptance of homosexuality puts African Christian witness at a competitive disadvantage with Islam in winning converts.

Thus U.S. conservatives whip up concerns about Muslims and homosexuals simultaneously in their attacks on mainline churches' social witness. Alan Wisdom, the Director of Presbyterian renewal group Action for Faith and Freedom, observed that the U.S. mainline churches' "desire to dialogue with Islam ignores the plights of the Christian minorities in Islamic nations."²⁸

In November 2008, Jim Tonkovich, then IRD president, announced that his group was "beginning a project to research how the actions of the Episcopal Church promoting homosexuality is negatively impacting Christians in Africa who live within and alongside Muslim cultures."²⁹ In a February 2009 telephone interview, Faith McDonnell, the Director of IRD's Religious Liberty Programs and of the Church Alliance for a New Sudan, explained,

Islam prohibits homosexuality... Radical Muslims would use it as another reason for attacking Christians who would be viewed as infidels... We are competing with Islam in Africa. Muslims are going to use

the argument that Africans are part of the wider communion which accepts homosexuality.

It has happened in the Sudan where one Bishop has already formed the Reformed Episcopal Church by appealing to the argument that he is not part of the Church of homosexuals. Homosexuality hampers the the Christian witness in Africa.

When asked whether IRD and its allied renewal movements had evidence for such claims, McDonnell replied, “We do not have any empirical evidence yet. This is solely what Christians are thinking and it is damaging the witness among Christians.”

However, even African religious conservatives discount this idea and there is no evidence for it in Uganda, Kenya, or Nigeria. One senior clergyman in Kenya told me, “Such an argument does not make sense... Islam has been part of the African heritage in Kenya. My grandfather was Muslim and on his death bed he was baptized by his son who was the Bishop.” Similarly Paul Ssembiro, the Mission Coordinator in Archbishop Orombi’s office observed, “Uganda’s opposition to homosexuality has nothing to do with Islam. I don’t think it has anything to do with the Islamic faith.” The Kenyan Anglican priest Michael Kimindu noted that this argument is intended to “elicit support from U.S. conservatives concerned about radical Islam.”

Indeed, Archbishop Orombi has cooperated with Muslims in attacking LGBT people in Uganda. But in 2007 he told his American allies what they wanted to hear: Muslims are attempting to conquer “not so much by the sword but by the dollar. Muslims also are offering vocal opposition to laws that protect women’s rights because... ‘these are not in the Koran.’”³⁰

Africans do not distinguish between the moderate evangelicals in World Vision and hard-right figures like Scott Lively.

Conclusion

The relationship between U.S. conservatives and African religious leaders is inhibiting the right of LGBT people to live freely and without persecution both in the United States and Africa. In Africa, people’s lives are threatened not only by vigilantism but by government action. If we agree that African churches should be allowed to map their own agenda in the global church, then the conservatives should let go of Africa. Unfortunately, they will not, at least not without a fight.

It is important that progressive activists in mainline churches are now taking the fight to conservatives and putting them on the defensive at home. In the United Methodist Church, progressives managed to expose IRD and renewal movements’ attempt to influence African delegates to the 2008 international church gathering by giving out cellphones.

In the Episcopal Church, progressives exposed the presence of conservative lobbyists at international Anglican confer-

ences. They are also making new inroads with African religious leaders. It is a positive sign that the Archbishop of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan and the Congo as well as bishops from West Africa traveled to the United States to attend the 2009 General Convention of The Episcopal Church USA. Not only did American progressives represent their positions in their own words, the African leaders were able to explore the American church’s intentions in Africa. Most of the African bishops pointed to poverty as one of the biggest challenges Africa faces and sought the church’s support in antipoverty struggles—even though the Episcopal Church lifted the moratorium on blessing of same sex marriages and ordination of gays and lesbians to the office of the bishop. Although not all agreed with the position taken by the Episcopal Church on LGBT issues, African bishops were generally sympathetic with their U.S. colleagues on the matter.

The campaign challenging Rick Warren to denounce the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in Uganda – which he still has not done— is another example of taking the fight to America. Because the U.S. Right is so skillful at twisting the mainline church statements in Africa as colonial interference, these challenges on conservatives’ home territory provide vital support for LGBT Africans under attack. We must make sure that they are not the collateral damage in the U.S. culture wars. ■

End Notes

¹ The Southern Poverty Law Center has classified Scott Lively’s “Abiding Truth Ministries” as a hate group. <http://www.splcenter.org/intel/map/type.jsp?DT=26>

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EDITORIAL *con'd* from page 2

der mainline denominations in the US from pursuing legitimate and overdue social justice goals.

As a retired Unitarian minister, I observe this as an outsider, and I am proud that our denomination, the Unitarian Universalist Association, has moved relatively quickly to embrace and lift up LGBT people at all levels of our religious community.

Many thanks, and congratulations again.

—Ralph Mero, West Chester, Penn.

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

REPORT OF THE MONTH

Making the Undocumented Count

The Next Economic Imperative: Undocumented Immigrants in the 2010 Census

By Afton Branche, Drum Major Institute for Public Policy, New York City, July 2009.

http://drummajorinstitute.org/pdfs/DMI_census_paper_final.pdf

The country has asked whether a resident is native born or foreign born since the first U.S. census in 1790. But the census has never asked whether a resident is here legally or not. As late as October, Republican senators tried to force the census to include that question in 2010, not least because a state's Congressional seats are determined by census counts. In this report, a liberal think tank outlines the economic costs of undercounting the 12 million undocumented immigrants expected to be in the country during the census. If the national headcount is not accurate, the country will underinvest at a time when greater investment is needed to counter the recession.

The study builds on a PricewaterhouseCoopers estimate that the undercount of undocumented people in the 2000 Census meant a loss of \$4 billion in federal funds that should have gone to states and municipalities from 2002 to 2012. Among the services underfunded were healthcare and education as well as infrastructure improvements like federal highways and the Community Development Block Grant Program.

An undercount also distorts commercial decisions since many businesses evaluate potential markets using the census' demographic, income, and residence information. Service industries in particular overlook the consumer power of undocumented populations, possibly leading to underinvestment that could help regional economies.

The report deftly outlines the concrete economic advantages of counting all undocumented persons, but it could have better refuted corrosive arguments presented by the Center for Immigration Studies and Federation for American Immigration Reform. Still, this remains a useful resource as the census battle continues.

Other Reports in Review

Economic Crisis Changes Women's Reproductive Decisions

A Real-Time Look at the Impact of the Recession on Women's Family Planning and Pregnancy Decisions

Guttmacher Institute, New York, N.Y., September 2009.

<http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/RecessionFP.pdf>

Women's financial status and sexual health are tightly linked, this study shows, and the current recession is changing women's attitudes and behaviors. The study sample consisted of 947 women, aged 18-34, for whom pregnancy was a possibility and with an annual household income of less than \$75,000. Those defined as "worse off" reported the greatest shift in attitudes and behaviors.

Effective birth control is a greater priority for women now that the economy is so weak; 44 percent want to reduce or delay child-bearing and 64 percent said that they could not currently afford a child. Women also reported considering changing methods of birth control; 46 percent are thinking more about sterilization because of the economy.

Although 29 percent reported being more careful about using contraception because of the economy, 18 percent of women on the pill cited inconsistent use as a way to save money. Furthermore, eight percent of women reported not using contraception at all in order to save money. Guttmacher also found that women are more likely to delay visits to the gynecologist and forgo contraception to cut costs. These statistics show that while financial insecurity leads women to strive to avoid getting pregnant, efforts to save money may actually undermine pregnancy prevention, creating even greater economic stress.

Abortion Access Drops in Massachusetts

Access to Abortion Care in Massachusetts

In Focus, NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts, Boston, Mass., September 2009.

<http://www.prochoicemass.org/assets/files/abortionaccess2009.pdf>

Those assuming "liberal" states like Massachusetts afford full abortion rights will be sobered by this report, which found that women's access to abortion in the state

declined from 2002 to 2008. Not only has the number of clinics offering abortion services dropped but they are increasingly clustered in the Metro-Boston area. Furthermore, state-funded healthcare restricts options to lower income women who need it most.

Forty-three percent of the state's counties have no accessible providers. The large western part of the state has the highest rate of unintended pregnancies (34 percent), and only two providers. Since 2002, the southeast part of the state lost two providers and the central region lost one.

Among providers, NARAL evaluates the differences between hospitals and clinics that affect abortion access for low income women. One third of clinics don't accept MassHealth insurance, and the average hospital may charge four times the amount of a clinic for an abortion. Providers that do accept MassHealth may take a long time doing paperwork, delaying the procedure, and even pushing it the second trimester when options are more limited.

Gender Profiling as Anti-Terrorist Tactic

Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms While Countering Terrorism

By Martin Scheinin, *Special Rapporteur to the United Nations' Human Rights Council (UNHRC), Geneva, Switzerland, August 3, 2009.* <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4aae4eea0.pdf>

An Algerian woman is arrested and detained as a potential terrorist after reporting sexual violence by armed Islamists. A transgendered person is pulled aside at an airport, harassed, and beaten because she is “suspected” of passing as a woman and thus passing as a terrorist.

These and others incidents, says Special Rapporteur Martin Scheinin in his UNHRC-commissioned report, are the severely underreported gendered impacts of counterterrorism tactics.

He named gender targeting, profiling, and discrimination; restrictive immigration and asylum controls; overly broad counterterrorism laws; and suppression of freedom of expression and household security as key human rights violations caused in the name of fighting terrorism.

“Those subject to gender-based abuse are often caught between targeting by terrorist groups and the State’s counter-terrorism measures that may fail to prevent, investigate, prosecute or punish these acts and perpetrate new human rights violations with impunity,” he said in the report.

The report, however, is drawing controversy on other fronts. First, phrases found in the first pages of the report describing gender as “not static” and “as a social and shifting construct rather than a biological and fixed category,” and its subsequent advocacy for various gender identities and sexual orientations have caused uproar among right-wing and religious groups.

Similarly, the report’s recommendations to cut down on abuses by repealing counterterrorism measures that, for instance, profile and harass pregnant women and transgendered individuals as terrorist-bombers-in-disguise at airports, were attacked by organizations such as the Heritage Foundation, the Hudson Institute and Fox News.

“I would be surprised and disturbed if the U.S. took any of these recommendations

seriously,” Stephen Groves, a fellow at the Heritage Foundation, told Fox News. “It seems an inescapable conclusion that their desire is to greatly weaken any effective counterterrorism measure that is made by the U.S. or its allies.”

LGBT Progress in a Recession?

Corporate Equality Index 2010: A Report Card on Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equality in Corporate America

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation, Washington, D.C., September 14, 2009. http://www.hrc.org/documents/HRC_Corporate_Equality_Index_2010.pdf

Despite the tough economic times in 2009, this year’s Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index (CEI) shows that a record number of businesses have progressed and adopted LGBT-friendly policies and benefits in the workplace.

The CEI, which ranks 590 of the top businesses in the United States, grades the companies on a scale based on five main criteria: nondiscrimination policies that include sexual orientation and gender expression, domestic partner benefits, LGBT resource groups, and public commitment to LGBT efforts. The HRC also deducts points from a company if “employers were found engaging in activities that would undermine LGBT equality.”

The number of businesses that received a perfect rating based on these criteria reached a record 305 this year—a whopping 20 percent increase from last year—and represented more than 9 million full-time workers. The number is also a striking increase from the 13 businesses that received perfect scores when the CEI started in 2002.

Although the HRC generally lauded the positive findings in this year’s CEI, HRC President Solmonese said there is still progress to be made.

“The forthcoming results will show that the majority of LGBT employees—including the newest generation of workers—still fear professional backlash from being open in the workplace,” wrote Solmonese. “At a time when holding onto a job is so critical for so many of us, we must be on guard to ensure that we are judged on the quality of our work and not our sexual orientation or gender identity.”

The Right Is Misinformed

The Perseverance of Discrimination: Unequal Opportunity Lenders? Analyzing Racial Disparities in Big Banks’ Higher-Priced Lending

By Andrew Jakobovics and Jeff Chapman, *The Center for American Progress, Washington, D.C., September 2009.* http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/08/tarp_lending.html

In January 2009, the media watchdog magazine *Extra!* pointed out that accusations that loans to minorities were the main culprit in the subprime mortgage crisis only added “insult to injury, since predatory lending and the foreclosure crisis have already and will continue to wipe out billions of dollars of wealth in communities of color.” Since then, additional evidence shows that nonwhite mortgage seekers were repeatedly the victims of potentially discriminatory lending practices and not the catalysts of economic collapse that the Right makes them out to be.

While borrowers of all ethnic backgrounds were often subject to more expensive loans, this report finds that among the 14 major banking institutions examined, African American and Hispanics faced rates dramatically higher than their White or Asian equivalents. For example, while 17.8 percent of White and 11.5 percent of Asian “borrowers were given higher-priced mortgages when borrowing from large banks in 2006,” the report says “30.9 percent of Hispanics and a staggering 41.5 percent of African Americans got higher-priced mortgages.” It is also found that the sort of underwriting criteria that one would primarily expect to apply only to riskier borrowers were also used for “nearly one in seven high-income applicants.”

The authors are careful to point out that, given pre-existing disparities in wealth and financial security across racial lines, there is some reason to expect to find differences in lending practices. Yet researchers found upper income African Americans and Latinos faced the same inequities. The report challenges the adequacy of consumer protection and regulatory agencies, and taxpayer subsidies, through TARP, to institutions with biased lending practices. An oversight committee must investigate discriminatory practices. Further repayments of TARP funds should also be suspended until an institution’s discriminatory practices have been evaluated and changed.

Eyes RIGHT

THE WAR AGAINST SNOOPY

Not only is President Obama a closet Muslim, but he also hates Charlie Brown and his friends in the “Peanuts” franchise. So said Russell Wiseman, the mayor of Arlington, Tennessee, in a posting on his Facebook page charging that Obama purposely timed his primetime speech about the Afghan war to pre-empt the broadcast of the Peanuts Christmas special.

Ok, so, this is total crap, we sit the kids down to watch ‘The Charlie Brown Christmas Special’ and our muslim president is there, what a load.....try to convince me that wasn’t done on purpose. Ask the man if he believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and he will give you a 10 minute dissertation about it....when the answer should simply be ‘yes’....”

More alarming than Wiseman’s conspiratorial rant may be the 6272 people who told *The Commercial Appeal* newspaper of Memphis in an online poll that “Mayor Wiseman speaks for a lot of Americans who are frustrated with the President.” That’s 42 percent of those who responded as of December 7, 2009. Forty nine percent (7405 people) answered, “His comments are inappropriate and embarrassing.” One more sign of a divided America.

Source: Matthew Woo, “Arlington mayor fires at Obama online: Tags president as a Muslim on Facebook,” *The Commercial Appeal (Memphis, Tennessee)*, December 4th, 2009.
<http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2009/dec/04/mayor-fires-at-obama-online/?cid=Facebook> ;
Poll results found at: <http://www.commercialappeal.com/polls/2009/dec/5wisemanpoll/results/>

HOLOCAUST POLITICS

Rick Warren got some heat for describing abortion as a holocaust when he appeared on *Meet the Press* in December. While Warren did not specifically refer to the Holocaust of World War II, other activists are not so shy about directly connecting Nazis and abortion providers. A Canadian anti-abortion activist gave a talk at Columbia on November 16 entitled, “Echoes of the Holocaust,” in which she claimed concentration camps are akin to abortion clinics. The Christian anti-abortion organization, Survivors, features photos from the Nazi concentration camps on its homepage. Not only does this increasingly common rhetoric denigrate the plight of those slaughtered in Nazi death camps, it makes the lives of fetuses and people equivalent, precisely the goal of the personhood movement.

Sources: Jacob M. Appel, “Auschwitz Revisited: Are Aborted Fetuses Really Like Dead Jews?” *Asia News Network*, December 6, 2009.
<http://www.asianews.com.pk/2009/12/jacob-m-appel-auschwitz-revisited-are-aborted-fetuses-really-like-dead-jews/> ; <http://www.survivors.la/>

SO EASY A CAVE MAN CAN DO IT?

Congressman Thaddeus McCotter, the Michigan Republican who chairs his party’s policy committee in the House, recently told Fox News why he does not believe that climate change is caused by human activity. Already dubbed by environmentalists as a “caveman” for his stances on global warming, McCotter drew on his critics’ imagery in his explanation for why humans do not contribute to it.

“Imagine if you were in a peninsula around 1,000 BC or so or earlier and your name was Tor and you’re out huntin’ mastodon. And you didn’t notice that the glaciers were melting and leaving the devastating flooding in its wake that became the Great Lakes in the state of Michigan. So I think what we have to do is go back in history and look at this and realize that the Earth has been here a

long time and they’ve selected periods of time and say somehow this proves there’s a manmade global warming occurring is absolutely wrong.”

Of course beyond the factually questionable assumptions about global warming, McCotter is incorrect about the time frame for the glaciers melting (it was actually between 10,000 and 15,000 B.C.) and when people were hunting mastodons in what became North America. McCotter may need to review some history books along with research on climate change.

Source: Lee Fang, “Congressman ‘Caveman’ McCotter Cites The Experience Of Cavemen To Deny Manmade Global Warming.” *Think Progress*, December 1, 2009.
<http://thinkprogress.org/2009/12/01/caveman-mccotter/>

Eye LASHES

“The culture war is up for grabs. The good news is that religious conservatives continue to breed like rabbits, while secular saboteurs have shut down: they’re too busy walking their dogs, going to bathhouses and aborting their kids. Time, it seems, is on the side of the angels.”

–Bill Donohue,
President of the Catholic League
http://newsweek.washingtonpost.com/onfaith/guestvoices/2009/10/secular_saboteurs.html

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