

The Clinton Health Plan Covers Abortion-on-Demand

By Rep. Henry Hyde

Henry Hyde has represented the Sixth Congressional District of Illinois since 1975. He is acknowledged to be the most eloquent and effective defender of unborn children in the Congress of the United States. In 1983, the Catholic League bestowed on him its highest honor, The John Paul II Religious Freedom Award. This article first appeared in Human Events, February 18, 1994. It is reprinted here with permission.

Someone once described abortion as a man's answer to a woman's problem. It certainly has become President Clinton's answer to a great many problems. His administration is pioneering new frontiers in the extermination of the most defenseless human beings under the guise of advancing "reproductive rights."

Within recent weeks, his appointees at the Department of Health and Human Services launched a regulatory attempt to force all states to pay for abortions in cases of rape and incest, even when their laws – or their constitutions, as in Colorado and his home state of Arkansas – forbid such funding.

Meanwhile, Clintonites at the State Department have submitted to their allies in Congress legislation that would, for the first time in 20 years, permit the direct expenditure of U.S. dollars for abortions overseas, as part of our foreign aid program. This is a barbaric generosity, indeed.

This extremism should surprise no one, even though it comes from a President who, only a year ago, argued that abortion should be legal, but rare. For since then, Clinton has taken every possible step to make abortion, not only legal, but even more commonplace. He began by greasing the skids for domestic production and use of RU486, in effect launching chemical

warfare against our own population.

Interestingly, “progress” on this front has been slow because the pharmaceutical companies know what Clinton didn’t tell the American people: that RU486 is a terribly dangerous drug for a mother as well as for her unborn child, and that its use requires close medical supervision to guard against complications, including maternal death. Even the most amoral corporate CEO understands what that could mean in terms of litigation and bad publicity.

Federal Funds for Abortion Referrals

Clinton had more success with another initiative, striking down the Reagan-Bush regulations that would have cleaned up the federal family planning program, better known as Title X (of the Public Health Service Act). Thanks to the President, Title X grantees are still free to hand out birth control drugs and devices to minors without parental consent, or even notification, and they can continue to counsel and refer for abortions on the same basis.

Clinton’s drive for “safe but rare” abortions led him to restore U.S. funding for the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), which includes technical assistance for China’s forced abortion program. He also renewed funding for international organizations – principally the International Planned Parenthood Federation – that promote or provide abortions, thereby striking down a major pro-life achievement of recent years.

He had less success, however, in fostering abortion among U.S. military personnel abroad. Congress declined to repeal the Jepsen Amendment of 1984, forbidding the use of Defense Department dollars for abortions. And when the White House changed past policy and allowed the use of Department of Defense facilities for privately financed abortions, virtually no military physician, in either the European or Asian

theaters, would agree to perform them.

Of course, the most important triumph for the abortion lobby under President Clinton was the elevation of Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the Supreme Court. That nomination reflects what the administration boldly admits is a pro-abortion litmus test for judicial selection.

(Remember the accusation that Presidents Reagan and Bush had a pro-life litmus test for choosing judges? They didn't, but were criticized for it. Clinton does, admits it and is applauded by the same people who falsely accused his predecessors.)

All those moves to advance abortion were only preliminaries to the main bout, so to speak. That is the fight over the place of abortion in health care reform. Clinton has dealt with this issue the way he has handled other controversies. Begin with denials, then blur the issue with confusing details and, finally, evade the subject by attacking your accusers.

It remains to be seen how well that play-book will work on other matters, but it's a sure failure in the health care fight. At the outset, last spring and summer, administration officials made vaguely reassuring comments, even suggesting that the administration could live with the Hyde Amendment, barring the use of Medicaid dollars for elective abortions. That need not change under a national health system, we were told; and as for the general public, well, their health insurance coverage would remain the same as before with regard to abortion. If they didn't want it, they wouldn't have to have it.

As Hillary Clinton told CNN Sept. 23, 1993, "We are not increasing the availability or decreasing the availability of abortion. We are really trying to strike a balance so that we provide what is available now." But when President Clinton finally submitted legislation later in the year, the ugly

truth emerged: The Clinton health care plan would use tax dollars and compulsion to interweave abortion into the fabric of American life.

It hijacks health care reform to the cause of abortion fights, employing the full weight of law to make every American acquiesce in the notion that abortion is a positive good, a “basic benefit.”

For starters, the Clinton plan would provide tax-subsidized coverage of abortion-on-demand for the entire Medicaid population, thereby nullifying both the Hyde Amendment and the restrictions on tax-funded abortions in effect in 37 states.

But there’s more. The Clinton bill includes “family planning services and services for pregnant women” in its federally mandated “comprehensive benefits package.” After some initial mumbo-jumbo by administration spokespersons, both the President and the First Lady explicitly acknowledged that this terminology encompasses abortion upon request – an assessment shared by legal experts on both sides of the abortion issue.

Even Runs to Pay for Abortion-on-Demand

This has far-reaching ramifications. It means no health plan could be certified for sale to the public unless it covered abortion without restriction. No one – not even nuns – could obtain health insurance without paying for abortion coverage. Individual doctors or hospitals could refuse to perform abortions, but the health plan of which they are a part must enter into a contract with a local abortion provider – and must pay for all abortions.

It gets worse. No health plan could be sold if it did not provide access to abortion within the local area covered by the plan.

This means that the federal government, through its quasi-governmental Health Alliances, would mandate creation of large

numbers of new abortion mills in communities where none currently exist.

Every employer would be forced to contribute to insurance coverage for abortion-on-demand for all employees – with no exceptions. That includes religious organizations. Under the bill proposed by the President, religious opponents of abortion, like leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Roman Catholic bishops, would be compelled, by force of law, to pay premiums to cover abortion-on-demand for all their employees.

With only a few exceptions – such as undocumented aliens – every working American would have government-mandated “premiums” taken from their paychecks to pay for abortion-on-demand.

Finally – and this is truly scary – the Clinton bill sets up a National Health Board, composed of seven presidential appointees, with sweeping powers to nullify state laws or policy that even slightly limit access to abortion. I’ll cite just one example. Pro-abortion groups have become increasingly critical of the laws in effect in 46 states that allow only licensed physicians to perform abortions. The bill, however, explicitly authorizes the board to nullify state laws governing the qualifications of medical professionals.

This would certainly lead to a federal decree legalizing performance of abortions by nurse practitioners, midwives and physicians’ assistants – a point cited in favor of the bill by groups such as Planned Parenthood.

Other state laws regulating abortion, such as parental consent requirements, waiting periods and so forth, could be struck down by the National Health Board as impediments to a federally guaranteed benefit – i.e., abortion.

When all these horrors in their plan became known, the Clintons, true to form, went on the attack, charging that

their critics wanted to “take away” abortion coverage from the women of America. It was a clever ploy, but based on falsehood.

First, there is a big difference between taking something away and simply not mandating it.

Second, there is ample evidence to suggest that abortion coverage is not the current norm in health insurance. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported Sept. 24, 1993, that “Such coverage was common in health maintenance organizations but unusual in fee-for-service plans and in employers’ self-funded plans. Self-funded plans provide health coverage for 65% of American workers.” The *Omaha World-Herald*, reported Sept. 28, 1993, that Mutual of Omaha, the nation’s largest provider of individual health insurance and one of the largest group health insurance providers, generally does not cover abortions. Abortion clinic operators openly bemoan the fact that most of their insured patients do not have coverage for abortion.

Public Rejects Mandated Abortion Coverage

So the Clinton bill would not preserve the status quo in abortion coverage for most women. On the contrary, it would, for the first time, mandate coverage which most of them do not want. Consider polls conducted by the *New York Times* in March and June of 1993, asking specifically whether abortion should be included in the basic benefit package of a national health bill. American women said no, 72% in the March poll, 65% in the June poll.

The actual numbers may be even higher, as evinced by a November 1992 Wirthlin poll, which asked, “Do you favor or oppose abortion being allowed as a method of birth control?” Eighty-four percent of Americans, and 89% of American women, said they were opposed. That’s something to keep in mind when the administration tries to portray its opponents as anti-

women.

With public opinion so strongly against him on this issue, can President Clinton push an abortion mandate through Congress? I doubt it. A more likely scenario would be the removal of explicitly pro-abortion language from his bill, while leaving in place the awesome, even totalitarian, powers of the National Health Board to define mandated benefits.

That would have exactly the same results. Every problem outlined above would still apply, as indeed they would apply to certain other health care plans, popular among some members of both parties, which have thus far escaped detailed scrutiny.

That's the key element in all aspects of the health care debate: public exposure and education. Once the American people fully understand what Clinton is attempting to do under the guise of reforming health care, they will pull the plug on his misconceived plan. They will reject its government controls, rationing, taxes and, not least of all, its attempt to make abortion a way of life and a way of death for everyone.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION UNDER FIRE

Every now and then an event occurs that makes me feel very proud to be a Catholic. One such event recently happened while I was waiting to testify before the New York City Council on a bill that protects houses of worship.

As readers of *Catalyst* already know, Catholic churches have

come under increasing attack by gay militants, and most especially by the vicious "Act-Up" group. Mass has been interrupted and on some occasions the Host has been desecrated by homosexuals who have spit it on the floor. These Nazi-like tactics never seem to garner the outrage of the press, though there is little doubt that the gentlepersons of the media would be aghast if they learned of similar incidents occurring in a synagogue. Or just consider what the reaction would be if the neo-Storm Troopers interrupted a service by the Reverend Jesse Jackson? It is said that all is fair in love and war. This, rest assured, isn't love.

On the surface, though, it would seem logical that no one would want to oppose a bill that offered protection for the right to worship. After all, even determined atheists can be expected to respect the constitutional rights of others. But unfortunately, logic and fairness are not in abundant quantities these days.

As is true with any bill, reasonable persons might differ with some of the wording of the legislation. However, those who spoke against the bill did not quibble about any provision of the bill. Instead, they focused most of their attention on whether there was any need for such legislation. Two of those who spoke in opposition offered testimony that was truly astounding.

Laura Murray from the ACLU testified that there was no need for the bill because she had checked with the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (ADL) and found that there was no record of people busting into houses of worship. She also maintained that to pass such a bill would offer special protection to religion and would therefore be unconstitutional. Finally, she said that the Founders would never counsel acceptance of such a bill. In particular, Ms. Murray cited Thomas Jefferson as one who would have opposed the bill.

During my brief testimony, I tried to set the record straight. To begin with, no one from the ACLU ever checked with the Catholic League to see if we had any evidence that houses of worship had been crashed. The ADL, good as it is in record keeping, is not exactly the only source in town. Second, there is no special protection afforded houses of worship in the bill. All the bill does is to ensure that the First Amendment be applied locally. As for Jefferson, he not only was not the die-hard church and state separatist that the ACLU would have us believe, he was, as I pointed out, the President who awarded \$300 to the Kaskaskia Indians for the purpose of building a Roman Catholic church. That hardly sounds like the work of an ACLU freak.

So why was I so proud to be a Catholic that day? Because of the testimony of Reverend Beatrice Blair, an Episcopal priest at Calvary St. George church in lower Manhattan. Reverend Blair not only defended the need for a bill to protect women in their quest for an abortion, she said there was no need to pass legislation affording houses of worship protection from church-busters.

Incredibly, she also said that her views represented the mainline Protestant churches and the Reform and Conservative Jewish religions.

The good news is that no Catholic made such embarrassing remarks. None was so inane as to reject a bill that protected freedom of religion. Perhaps that's because Catholics have been the ones victimized by the terrorists. Even so, one might think that a member of the clergy, of any religion, would never want to oppose a bill that simply afforded greater protection for the right to worship. After all, people who have never had any reason to call the fire department support fire departments.

It also says something very sad about those religions that have so collapsed in their moral authority that none of

today's religio-terrorists have any reason to target their houses of worship. The Catholic religion, for all its division, remains steadfast in its insistence that its teachings are not subject to trendy referenda. It is reassuring to know that while other religions are fast caving in to secular demands, the Catholic Church is not selling itself to elitist bidders.

The vote on the houses of worship bill was postponed until more hearings can be scheduled. The Catholic League will be there and will provide the incontrovertible evidence that some pundits claim doesn't exist. We'll keep you posted.

—William A. Donohue

AGENT OF INFLUENCE

By C. Joseph Doyle

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Frances Kissling and her Catholics for Free Choice have been in the news again, though not for the usual reasons. Kissling's specialty is deceptive advertising.

Frances Kissling markets her organization as a legitimate voice of Catholic dissent, a theologically respectable and authentically Catholic alternative to the teachings of the pope and the American hierarchy on issues of public morality.

In the media she has been elevated to the status of counter-magisterium, hailed by the *Washington Post* as the "Cardinal of

Choice;" she has become one of the most frequently quoted news sources on the Catholic Church and abortion. During Pope John Paul II's August 1993 pilgrimage to the World Youth Day Congress in Denver, Colorado (where 400,000 enthusiastic young Catholics gathered to hear the pope), Kissling dutifully performed the role assigned to her in the media's production of "Days of Dissent."

"This is not a Church, this is not a pope we should be treating with reverence," she intoned to the *Boston Globe*, adding that the pope was "fixated on genital issues." In another interview, she referred to the Holy Father as being "lost in the pelvic zone."

ON THE DEFENSIVE

After more than a decade of attacking the leadership of the Church, Kissling has lately been engaged in a new and unfamiliar exercise, defending her own credibility and that of her organization. The experience has not been profitable for her.

It began last August 21st on the "Jeanine Graf Show" on WRKO Radio in Boston. In a debate with this author, Kissling – pressed about how many members her organization has – revealed that "Catholics for Free Choice" was a misnomer, blurting out: "We're not a membership organization. We have no membership." The voice of dissent, it turned out, was not a mass movement, but a spokesperson with a fax machine. Kissling also admitted a fact exposed some years ago, that her organization's contributors included Hugh Hefner's Playboy Foundation. The attention these admissions received in the Catholic press was magnified on September 18th, when the president of the Massachusetts State Senate, William M. Bulger, delivered a speech on anti-Catholicism to the Catholic Lawyers Guild in Boston, and cited Kissling as one of the prime offenders. Referring to Catholics for Free Choice as a "fraudulent front," Bulger discussed both Kissling's funding and her lack

of membership in a speech that gained attention in both the Catholic and secular media.

In yet another blow to Kissling's Catholic pretensions, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement on November 4, 1993, denying that CFFC was Catholic. "Many people," the statement read, "may be led to believe that it is an authentic Catholic organization. It is not. It has no affiliation, formal or otherwise, with the Catholic Church."

The bishops went on to point out that CFFC is associated with the pro-abortion lobby in Washington and shares an address and funding sources with the National Abortion Federation, the trade association of the abortion industry. Citing CFFC's support for "the violent destruction of innocent unborn human beings...for all nine months of pregnancy and for any reason," the bishops insisted that CFFC "has rejected unity with the Church," and holds positions that "deliberately contradict essential teachings of the Catholic Faith." They concluded that "Catholics for Free Choice merits no recognition or support as a Catholic organization."

COUNTER-ATTACK THROUGH THE MEDIA

The bishops' forthright rebuke of Kissling produced inevitable media retaliation in the form of an op-ed piece by inveterate Catholic-basher Anna Quindlen, in the *New York Times*. More revealing, however, is the response of Kissling herself to both Senate President Bulger and the bishops.

In an October 17, 1993, op-ed column in the *Boston Globe*, Kissling reiterated that CFFC was not a membership organization, but went on to divulge that it has an annual budget of \$1.5 million, mostly from foundation sources, and boasts offices in Washington, Mexico City, and Uruguay, a 12-member Board of Directors (including dissident theologian Daniel Maguire), 64 spokesmen in 39 states, and a staff of 20.

Using the tactics of a defense lawyer, Kissling sought to

evade Bulger's charge that CFFC had received funding from the contraception industry by asserting that she never accepted donations from contraceptive companies. What Kissling omitted mentioning, however, was the extensive financial support CFFC had received over the years from the Sonnen Foundation. Established on the profits of Erko contraceptive foam, the Sonnen Foundation has contributed over \$800,000 to CFFC in the last decade and is described by feminist author Marian Faux, in her book *Crusaders*, as one of the two major sources of funding for Kissling.

Sonnen was founded by population-control ideologue Joseph Sonnen. It helped pay for the litigation that led to *Roe v. Wade* and partially funded a 1979 newspaper ad that blamed the Church's teaching on contraception for the problems of world hunger. After its denunciation by the Catholic League, a Sonnen director responded by calling the teachings of the Church "detrimental to the world," and warning that the state may force the Church to abandon its teachings, just as Mormons were forced to abandon polygamy. Sonnen has also supported litigation aimed at denying tax-exempt status to the Catholic church.

Kissling also denied receiving financing from Planned Parenthood, again omitting mention of a long relationship of support and cooperation from that organization. CFFC's first office was in Planned Parenthood's headquarters in New York City. Kissling's first major media exposure, her October 1984 *New York Times* ad supporting Catholic dissent on abortion, was designed by and placed through Planned Parenthood's ad agency, free of charge. According to Norman Goluskind, president of the agency Smith/ Greenland, the ad "was a favor to Planned Parenthood."

A FAILED MEMBERSHIP

Even Kissling's assertions that her organization does not have a membership betray signs of inconsistency. The paucity of

membership for Catholics for Free Choice appears to be more a matter of result than intention. CFFC has distributed membership forms with a \$15.00 check-off for "annual dues." In the early 1980's, Kissling claimed CFFC had 5,000 members nationwide. In 1983, however, it was reported that only 3 percent of CFFC's annual income of \$221,900 came from membership dues. At \$15.00 per person, this would have given CFFC not 5,000 but less than 450 members nationwide, or .00076 percent of America's 59 million Roman Catholics, or about 1 per 100,000.

A series of grants were made to CFFC by the Gund Foundation in the period 1983-1985 to help build "a national membership organization dedicated to preserving reproductive freedom and upholding separation of church and state." Claiming "we're not a membership organization," has become Kissling's way of evading embarrassing questions about her organization's failure to attract more than token support in the Catholic community.

In response to her repudiation by the American bishops, Kissling issued a statement asserting that CFFC's board, staff, volunteers, and individual donors are Catholic – a theme she emphasizes continually but unconvincingly. In 1990, she maintained that her constituency "is Roman Catholic and it is growing as more and more Catholics learn of our existence." Besides the glaring inaccuracy in her boast about growing numbers, everything about Kissling's organization – its origins and history, its positions and rhetoric, its alliances and sources of funding, and even the religious status of its leader – point not only to the absence of Catholic belief and loyalty, but to an aggressive agenda of virulent and bigoted anti-Catholicism, conducted on behalf of the enemies of the Church in the abortion industry.

WHO PAYS THE BILLS?

CFFC, despite its failure to attract grass-roots Catholic

support, has witnessed a ten-fold increase in its funding in the last decade. It derives most of its financing from foundation grants. Its roster of supporters comprises a virtual index of major financial sources for the population control movement. Besides the Sunnen Foundation, six-figure contributors to CFFC have included such pro-abortion and pro-contraception philanthropies as the Brush Foundation (established by a eugenics enthusiast and friend of Margaret Sanger), the Gund Foundation, the Packard Foundation, the General Service Foundation, the Educational Foundation of America, the Public Welfare Foundation, the John Merck Fund, the Scherman Foundation, and the MacArthur Foundation, which just donated \$375,000 to CFFC to finance its pro-abortion activities in Latin America. The largest single contributor has been the Ford Foundation, which has funnelled over one million dollars into CFFC's coffers to support such euphemistically described activities as "family planning in developing countries," "reproductive rights in Latin America," and "public education on issues of reproductive choice."

For an organization that pretends to be Catholic, CFFC accepts funding for purposes that are not only at variance with the teaching of the Church, but are quite overtly anti-Catholic. One 1988 grant from the General Service Foundation for \$28,000 was provided to "counter efforts by the Roman Catholic Church to limit legal access to reproductive health care." Another 1988 grant to CFFC, this one from the Coshocton Foundation for \$50,000, was donated for the straightforward purpose of "advocacy of abortion rights. A \$25,000 grant in 1987 from the Gund Foundation was for "advocacy efforts supporting Catholic dissent on the Issue of abortion."

MAJOR FUNDING SOURCES – 1982-1992

The Ford Foundation	\$1,105,000
The Sunnen Foundation	867,000
The MacArthur Foundation	375,000
The Packard Foundation.....	375,000
The Educational Foundation of America.....	362,000
The George Gund Foundation	278,000
The General Service Foundation	232,000
The John Merck Fund	133,000
The Public Welfare Foundation.....	130,000
The Scherman Foundation	125,000
The North Shore Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program	105,000
Leland Fikes Foundation.....	80,000
Prospect Hill Foundation.....	77,500
Wallace Foundation	75,000
Robert Sterling Clark Foundation.....	72,000
Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation	60,000
Coshocton Foundation	50,000
Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation	40,000
Nathan Cummings Foundation	39,500
Ruth Mott Fund	24,600
The Playboy Foundation	20,000
The CS Fund.....	10,000
TOTAL:	\$4,635,600

Sources: Foundation Grants Index, National Catholic Register

Partial listing.

In 1985, CFFC received a \$25,000 grant from the Clark Foundation for a program to “educate American Catholics about the wide diversity of opinion that exists within the Church on the issue of reproductive freedom, and to provide Catholic citizens with a rational alternative to Church doctrine.” A 1991 grant for \$47,000 from the same foundation was for the “research, production, and dissemination of material on the role of the Catholic Church in shaping public policy on family planning services and the availability of contraception.”

Much of the funding to CFFC is directed towards fostering defection from Catholic teaching in the last frontier (besides Ireland) of the population controllers: Latin America. U.S. Hispanics are also targeted for penetration. In the last eight years, grants totaling over one million dollars have been given to CFFC for Hispanic and Latin American activities. The salaries of Frances Kissling and her cohorts are paid by institutions at enmity with the Church, whose interest – political, ideological, and economic – would be served by the

defeat of Catholicism.

A CHECKERED HISTORY

Of Polish ancestry, Frances Kissling, 51, grew up in Flushing, New York, where her mother moved following her divorce from Kissling's father, Thomas Romanski, and her second marriage to a wealthy Protestant, Charles Kissling. After two years at St. John's University, Frances Kissling entered a convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph as a postulant. Six months later she departed, from both the convent and the faith. According to Marian Faux: "She never returned to the Sunday Mass, and never fully returned to the Church."

Kissling describes herself during this period as a "typical person of the sixties. I was single....I protested the war, and I was sexually active." She added, "I saw and see nothing wrong with sexual activity outside of marriage....I don't see it as a profoundly sacred event that requires vows of eternal commitment." Kissling entered in to a nine-year cohabitation with one Carl Chanin, described as a "Jewish hippie accountant." A practitioner of contraception from the time she first became sexually active, Kissling later underwent sterilization.

In 1970, Kissling became one of the first abortion clinic operators in the country, managing two clinics, one in Pelham, New York, the other in Manhattan. According to Kissling, the Pelham clinic averaged 250 abortions per week.

Through a referral from Planned Parenthood, Kissling received funding in 1973 to promote abortion overseas. She established and operated illegal abortion clinics in two Catholic Countries where abortion was still outlawed Mexico and Italy. In Mexico, she arranged for the training of abortionists and illegally smuggled suction equipment, used in abortion, into that country. In Italy, she offered money and assistance to a group of leftist and Communist women to set up an abortion

clinic, proclaiming, "I have no problem helping women get illegal abortions." She went on to establish the first legal abortion clinic in Catholic Austria.

In 1976, Kissling founded and became the first President of the National Abortion Federation, a trade association established to advance the financial and professional interests of abortionists. In 1979, Kissling joined Catholics for Free Choice, and became its executive director in 1982.

IS KISSLING A CATHOLIC?

Except when she is touting Catholic credentials for public relations purposes, Kissling's views and rhetoric demonstrate a venomous hostility towards the authority of the Church, a radical rejection of the doctrines of the faith, and a conscious refusal to participate in the sacramental life of a Catholic. Moreover, her alleged Catholic identity appears to be a matter of tactical convenience to advance a revolutionary purpose.

When she joined CFFC, she told her colleagues, "I no longer considered myself a Catholic," She later claimed: "...if I wanted to be Catholic, if I willed it to be, I could be a Catholic."

In *The Inside Stories*, edited by feminist Annie Lally Milhaven, Kissling is quoted as saying "When I say I came back to the Church, I never came back on the old terms....I came back to the Church as a social change agent; I came back to woman-church." Continuing, Kissling asserts, "I am not talking about coming back to Sunday Mass, confession, and all these things, that are memories of my childhood."

Kissling openly proclaims the need for revolution in the Church, in which women's ordination will be the key. Her attitude towards the hierarchy is one of unconcealed contempt. "They don't deserve our respect....I would like to see women reach the point where they understood that every bishop in

this country should be so embarrassed that he is afraid to show his face in public.”

Kissling believes that the hierarchy of the Church is not divinely ordained, is corrupt, and should be treated “without dignity.” According to Kissling, “Jesus Christ didn’t come here and say, ‘You gotta have a pope, you gotta have cardinals, you gotta have bishops, you gotta have priests.’ ...This system is man-made, and really modeled upon a European feudal system.”

She approvingly notes in a 1986 *Washington Post* interview that the secular media “no longer treats 300 men in dresses as representatives of the Catholic Church.” The representatives of the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, the curial congregation responsible for the disciplining of the dissident nuns who signed Kissling’s 1984 pro-abortion ad in the *New York Times*, should not “be allowed to show their faces in the United States of America.”

Beneath the rhetoric of pluralism and choice, Kissling’s views on abortion are clear. She supports “unimpeded access to abortion at all stages of pregnancy.” As for her own spirituality, Kissling tells Marian Faux, “I still don’t pray. I don’t say the rosary, there are no crucifixes in my house.”

Kissling’s self-proclaimed status as a Catholic does not bear scrutiny. Canon 1398 of the Code of Canon Law states that “A person who procures a successful abortion incurs an automatic (*latae sententiae*) excommunication.” As the founder and operator of multiple (and illegal) abortion clinics, Kissling procured possibly thousands of abortions. Canon 1364 proclaims the same penalty for apostates, schismatics, and heretics. Canon 751 defines apostacy as “the total repudiation of the Christian faith;” defines schism as “refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or communion with the members of the Church subject to him;” and defines heresy as the “obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with

divine and catholic faith.”

Kissling’s abandonment of her faith made her an apostate years before her procuring of abortions made her an excommunicate. Her refusal of submission and community with the pope and the bishops places her in schism, while her rejection of the divine institution of the papacy, the episcopate, and the priesthood – even apart from her denial of objective moral norms – places her in heresy. In purely political terms, Frances Kissling is an anti-Catholic revolutionary paid by the enemies of the Church, to attack it from within.

A FRONT, NOT AN ORGANIZATION

Frances Kissling describes Catholics for Free Choice as “one of the most viable threats to the Catholic Church today.” CFFC was founded in 1970 and became an affiliate in 1973 of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights. Much of its early funding came from the Unitarian Church. Its first president was Father Joseph O’Rourke, a priest expelled from the Society of Jesus in 1974 and since married. During Pope John Paul II’s first visit to the US in 1979, CFFC sponsored an ad in the *Washington Post* contending that the passage of the Human Life Amendment would “establish as the law of the land the religious views of a minority of Americans.”

This was followed by a 1981 press conference in the US Senate protesting the opposition of the American hierarchy to legal abortion. In 1982, CFFC was among the signers of an amicus brief in the *City of Akron v. Akron Center for Reproductive Health* case, then before the Supreme Court. The brief argued that any restriction of abortion was based on “an opposing theological position” and therefore violated the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of religion.

That same year CFFC began holding briefings for members of Congress. They were initially sponsored by then-Congressman and later vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro, who

later wrote the introduction to CFFC's booklet, *The Abortion Issue in the Political Process*.

According to Marian Faux, the briefings would not only include a discussion of abortion by dissident theologian Daniel Maguire, a ex-priest, but practical advice from a media consultant and a pollster, the latter predictably reassuring legislators that a majority of Catholics were pro-choice. In another Senate press conference in 1983, CFFC argued that Catholic social justice principles required Catholic legislators to support public funding of Medicaid abortions. In a second publication, *Abortion: A Guide to making Ethical Choices*, written in 1983 by Marjorie Reiley Maguire and Daniel Maguire, CFFC asserted that the morality of abortion was subjective.

CFFC gained national attention during the 1984 presidential election, which was marked by the controversy between Cardinal John O'Connor and candidate Ferraro. On October 7, 1984, CFFC sponsored, under the title of "The Catholic Committee on Pluralism and Abortion," a full-page ad in the *New York Times*, signed by 97 persons, including a number of feminist nuns and dissident theologian. The ad proclaimed that a diversity of opinion existed among Catholics on abortion; that few Catholics reject abortion in all circumstances; that abortion could be "a moral choice;" and that restricting abortion would both curtail religious freedom and discriminate against poor women. This was followed in 1985 by a second ad entitled a "Declaration of Solidarity" which claimed that the 97 signers of the first ad were being persecuted by the Church.

In 1987, CFFC worked with Planned Parenthood and the National Organization of Women to protest the Pope's visit to the US, calling the Vatican "a major violator of women's rights in the world." In 1990, CFFC began distributing "action kits" urging supporters to wear CFFC stickers to Mass, protest "anti-choice" homilies through financial boycotts, and counter-demonstrate on Pro-Life Sunday. It also asked supporters to

report any parish activity that might violate IRS regulations on political action by churches.

Among the more grotesque publications circulated by CFFC is its 1992 "Liturgy of Affirmation," a New Age ritual for a woman having an abortion. Prayers are recited to "Mother and Father God," while the aborting woman is anointed with oil, blessed, embraced, affirmed, and encouraged to sprinkle flower petals.

THE MEDIA DARLINGS

Perhaps the best example of CFFC's relationship with the media came in August 1992, with the decision of the Knights of Columbus to erect monuments to the unborn slaughtered in abortion. Frances Kissling responded by charging the Knights with polarizing and politicizing the abortion debate and "turning women into pawns." To the media, a tiny, extremist fringe group of a few hundred disaffected ex-Catholics with a radical agenda, was posited as the equal of the Knights of Columbus, America's largest Catholic organization with 1.5 million members.

CFFC has not been without its critics. Richard Doerflinger of the Pro-Life Secretariat of the US Catholic Conference has described Kissling's ideology as "a mixture of lies, innuendo, and misinformation." In 1985, he wrote a groundbreaking article exposing Kissling in *America* magazine, that was subsequently republished by the Catholic League.

Responding to CFFC incursions into Latin America, the Peruvian Episcopal Commission on the Family has called their use of the name Catholic "a deceitful strategy" by those who "reject and even mock" the teaching of the Church. Catholic League President William Donohue recently characterized CFFC as "an explicitly anti-Catholic force with a not-so-hidden agenda," when CFFC, ostensibly an abortion-rights organization, took to the New York airwaves trumpeting sex-abuse charges against

Cardinal Bernardin.

Catholics for Free Choice repudiates fundamental Catholic beliefs, receives virtually all of its funding from non-Catholic sources opposed to the Church; enjoys only marginal support in the Catholic community; and is headed not by a Catholic, but by an ex-Catholic, perpetrating a fraud, for an anti-Catholic objective. CFFC is an anti-Catholic front group financed or supported by such adversaries of the Catholic Church as the contraception industry, the Ford Foundation, the Unitarian Church, Planned Parenthood, and Playboy. Its sole purpose is to attack the Church and discredit and misrepresent Church teachings. A well-funded letterhead, CFFC exploits the name Catholic to sow dissension and confusion among Catholics on behalf of their enemies.

*****Statement regarding Catholics for Free Choice issued by the
National Conference of Catholic Bishops*****

During Pope John Paul II's recent visit to this country, programs about dissent in the Catholic Church often included a spokesperson for a group calling itself "Catholics for Free Choice" (CFFC). Both before and since World Youth Day, because of CFFC's presuming to speak for American Catholics, and because of the attention the media have paid to the group, many people, including Catholics, may be led to believe that it is an authentic Catholic organization. It is not. It has no affiliation, formal or otherwise, with the Catholic Church.

In fact, Catholics for Free Choice is associated with the pro-abortion lobby in Washington, DC. It attracts public attention by its denunciations of basic principles of Catholic morality and teaching – denunciations given enhanced visibility by media outlets that portray CFFC as a reputable voice of Catholic dissent.

CFFC can in no way speak for the Catholic Church and its 59 million members in the United States. Most of CFFC's funding is

from secular foundations supporting legal abortion in this country and abroad. It shares an address and funding sources with the National Abortion Federation, a trade association which seeks to advance the financial and professional interests of abortionists.

Therefore, it is important to educate the public, especially Catholics, about CFFC's insistence on claiming a Catholic label. This group has rejected unity with the Church on important issues of longstanding and unchanging Church teaching. In fact there is no room for dissent by a Catholic from the Church's moral teaching that direct abortion is a grave wrong.

Our Catholic position embraces the truth regarding the sacredness of every human life, before as well as after birth. CFFC endorses the violent destruction of innocent unborn human beings and regularly issues legal briefs and other publications endorsing legalized abortion for all nine months of pregnancy and for any reason. Most Americans do not support its extreme agenda.

Because of its opposition to the human rights of some of the most defenseless members of the human race, and because its purposes and activities deliberately contradict essential teachings of the Catholic faith, we state once again that Catholics for Free Choice merits no recognition or support as a Catholic organization.

What the ACLU thinks about

religion

by William A. Donohue

This month's feature article is an edited excerpt from Catholic League president William A. Donohue's forthcoming book, *Twilight of Liberty: The Legacy of the ACLU* (Transaction Press, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ). It may be obtained from the publisher and will be offered in this newsletter as soon as it is available.

When the Constitution was written, creches were permitted on public property and blasphemy was punishable by death. Now we've banned the creches and provided public funding for blasphemy (via the National Endowment of the Arts). The inversion has much to do with a profound shift in the tastes of the cultural elite and with the tenor of contemporary legal arguments. According to Rev. Richard John Neuhaus, president of the Institute on Religion and Public Life, the single most important change to occur has been the reinterpretation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment; it is quite different from what was originally intended.

The First Amendment begins, "Congress shall pass no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Both of the clauses, Neuhaus contends, "are in service of religious freedom." It might even be said, he adds, that "there is really only one religion clause or provision, made up of two parts, each related to the other as the end is related to the means. The free exercise of religion is the end, and nonestablishment of religion is an important means instrumental to that end." If this is the case, then there is no inherent conflict between free exercise and no-establishment, no need to "balance" one against the other.

Neuhaus' complaint is that the two parts of the religion clause have been inverted by constitutional scholars and, to a

lesser extent, by the courts. He cites Harvard Law professor Laurence Tribe as an example. Tribe holds that there is a “zone which the free exercise clause carves out of the establishment clause for permissible accommodation of religious interests. This carved-out area might be characterized as the zone of permissible accommodation.” Neuhaus calls Tribe’s inversion both “astonishing” and a good illustration of the problem: “Professor Tribe allows – almost reluctantly, it seems – that within carefully prescribed limits, the *means* that is no-establishment might permissibly accommodate the *end* that is free exercise.”

The gravamen of Neuhaus’s charge is this: freedom of religion has been jeopardized by inverting the religion clause to mean that the establishment provision should be given primacy. Why? Increasing statism has weakened the autonomy of religious institutions, as well as other mediating associations, thus creating the perverse condition that “wherever government goes, religion must retreat.” In the minds of many people, Neuhaus instructs, “the religion clause is essentially a protection *against* religion rather than *for* religion.” It is a matter of some concern that there are those who would seize on this idea to deny many expressions of religious freedom, all in the name of servicing the First Amendment.

Perhaps no group exemplifies this negative mindset more than the American Civil Liberties Union. Founded in 1920, the ACLU has from the very beginning been hostile to any public expression of religion. Indeed in its first annual report, it listed its defense of every First Amendment freedom – speech, press and assembly – except freedom of religion. Fixated on church-state issues, the ACLU rarely has much to say about freedom of religion.

Perhaps no church-state issue rankles as many people each year as much as ACLU objections to creches and menorahs on public property. As much as any issue, this one shows just how much First Amendment interpretations have changed. Throughout most

of U.S. history, creches and menorahs were placed on public property without court challenge and were never considered to be in violation of the Bill of Rights. But now not a December passes without the ACLU going into federal district court filing a lawsuit against a municipality for allegedly breaching church-state lines.

Congress has long declared Christmas to be a national holiday, so it was not unusual when the Christians in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, decided to honor the holiday by placing a creche in a public square. Rhode Island, which was founded by Roger Williams in 1636 on the principle of religious freedom, has a long tradition of erecting Nativity scenes and has encountered little, if any, resistance for doing so. But in 1980 a woman phoned Steven Brown, director of the ACLU in Providence, saying she was offended by the placement of a creche – one that had been routinely installed for forty years – on a parkland near the Seekonk River in Pawtucket. Her complaint wound up in the Supreme Court four years later.

The Reagan Administration supported the pro-creche forces by arguing before the Supreme Court that any prohibition on the creche would be tantamount to “cultural censorship.” The ACLU countered by claiming that the creche violated the establishment clause. The Union lost in a 5-4 decision. The ruling, formally known as *Lynch v. Donnelly*, but which has come to be known as “the reindeer decision,” said that the creche passed constitutional muster because it was surrounded by Santa and his reindeer, “a clown, an elephant, and a teddy bear.” Though the pro-creche side one, few were happy with this line of reasoning. But there were other statements made by the majority that did cut to the heart of the issue.

Chief Justice Warren Burger, writing for the majority, restated the high court’s position in *Lemon v. Kurtzman* by saying that “total separation [of church and state] is not possible in the absolute sense.” The Chief Justice further noted that the metaphor of a “wall” existing between church

and state, though a useful figure of speech, "[was] not a wholly accurate description of the practical aspects of the relationship that in fact exists between church and state." But it was the majority's full embrace of a social conception of liberty that really defined its position: "No significant segment of our society and no institution within it can exist in a vacuum or in total or absolute isolation from all the other parts, much less from government. Nor does the Constitution require complete separation of church and state; it affirmatively mandates accommodation, not merely tolerance, of all religions, and forbids hostility toward any." ACLU fears that the creche's religious symbols might beckon the day of an established church were labeled as "far-fetched indeed."

In the wake of the Pawtucket decision came more controversy, this time in New York. After two menorahs appeared on city property in December 1984, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights petitioned the city to allow a Nativity scene at the Columbus Circle entrance to Central Park. It was permitted, with the proviso that a display sign designating sponsorship be affixed (the same conditions as the menorah display). Lawyers on both sides agreed that the fate of the menorahs and Nativity scene would turn on a Supreme Court ruling that was soon to be decided regarding the placement of a creche on public property in Scarsdale, New York.

In 1981, the Scarsdale Village Board voted to withdraw permission to allow a private group to erect a Nativity scene in the local park, thus reversing a 25-year-old tradition. The sponsoring Creche Committee sued and lost in district court. It appealed the case and won in the second circuit. In 1985, the Supreme Court, in a 4-4 decision, voted to sustain the appeals court ruling, holding that Scarsdale could not ban the privately owned creche even though it was not surrounded by secular symbols. Why? A tie vote leaves many unanswered questions, and while it affirms the lower court ruling, it does not serve as precedent. Some maintained that the

existence of a disclaimer sign displayed next to the creche, indicating private ownership, was critical. Others saw it as sustaining freedom of expression.

To add to the confusion, in 1986 the Supreme Court denied review to a 2-1 ruling of a federal appeals court that a creche could not be displayed on the front lawn of the city hall in Birmingham, Michigan. The court ruled that the display did not have the redeeming features found in the Pawtucket and Scarsdale situations: neither secular figures nor a disclaimer sign accompanied the Nativity scene.

Pittsburgh was the site of the most controversial ruling on this subject. In 1989, the Supreme Court held that a Nativity scene inside the Allegheny County Courthouse was unconstitutional, but a menorah on display outside the City-County Building was acceptable; the menorah was surrounded by secular figures, but the creche was not. The courthouse Nativity scene was placed on the grand staircase of the building and was adorned with a banner reading "Glory to God in the Highest." The 18-foot-high menorah, however, was placed on the steps of the building, next to a 45-foot-high Christmas tree and a sign saluting liberty. These were the kinds of distinctions the high court found meaningful.

The ACLU, which opposed both displays, found Justice Harry Blackmun's majority decision unpersuasive but was nonetheless "delighted" with a split victory. "The display of the menorah is not an endorsement of religious faith but simply a recognition of cultural diversity," wrote Blackmun, but "the creche in this lawsuit uses words, as well as the picture of the Nativity scene, to make its religious meaning unmistakably clear." Interestingly, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, while conceding the secular context of the menorah, nonetheless called it a "religious symbol," and not an icon of "cultural diversity," thus indicating that we have not heard the last word on this ISSUE.

Columnist George F. Will, adhering to a social conception of liberty, accused Justice Blackmun of wielding a "theological micrometer" and ridiculed the ACLU for rescuing Pittsburgh "from a seasonal menace that must be slain annually." Will then raised the larger issue: "This is the sort of howitzer-against-gnat nonsense that consumes a society that is convinced that every grievance should be cast as a conflict of individual rights and every such conflict should be adjudicated." But that is exactly how the ACLU perceives its mission. It firmly believes that it must intervene to save liberty by extending the reach of the law, interpreted civil libertarian style, into every crevice of society. When Will charges that the ACLU did not act to protect its members from injury but "to force the community into behaving the way the ACLU likes," he affirms the thesis being made here: it is not liberty that really drives the ACLU, it is power – the power to bring mediating institutions under the aegis of the state.

The whole issue of a creche or menorah on public property got a new twist when the ACLU began to see degrees of difference between a religious symbol placed in a city park and one located on or near a city building. In 1989 the ACLU was successful in getting the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit to accept its argument that it would be unconstitutional to allow the display of a menorah in a park in Burlington, Vermont. What was unusual about the ACLU's position was its reasoning. It found the display unconstitutional "mainly because of its position [the menorah's] with City Hall in the background."

The following year in Pittsburgh the local affiliate made the same qualification. Explaining why the ACLU is less tolerant of religious displays in city-owned buildings than in parks, attorney Robert Whitehill offered, "The City-County building is the seat of government. If I want to pay my taxes, I go there." Parks, he held, were public forums. While the ACLU may find merit in such distinctions, it is less than certain that

the courts – never mind the Founders – would. Moreover, the ACLU's ability to draw distinctions between city-owned buildings and public parks is demonstrative of its custom of seeing the world through the lens of power. In the end, however, the debate is all but academic: the ACLU sues no matter what public property a religious symbol is placed on.

Even when a city displays religious ornaments made by senior citizens, the ACLU gets enraged. In 1990, in the Capitol rotunda in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, a Christmas tree was put on display, adorned with about 1,000 ornaments made by senior citizens. Three of the ornaments were made in the shape of a cross, and that was enough to send the ACLU into federal district court. It lost in its bid for a temporary restraining order, as the presiding judge found no basis for the Union's complaint. Now had the senior citizens decided to immerse their crosses in a jar of their own urine – much the way the celebrated artist Andres Serrano did – perhaps the ACLU would have defended their action as freedom of expression (they might even have qualified for a federal grant) . Apparently the ACLU feels that the only religious symbols that should be allowed on public property are ones that have been sufficiently defaced and blasphemed.

On occasion, ACLU activists rush to judgment in ways that prove embarrassing. This happened in 1991 when ACLU attorneys in Pittsburgh hurried to protest the display of a 40-foot-tall figure of Jesus Christ in the same City-County building involved in the earlier Supreme Court case. "The statue was so enormous, so unbelievably big, I concluded it wasn't possible the city would put it up," commented Union attorney Robert Whitehill. He was right. The statue of Christ was displayed as part of a Hollywood movie filmed in Pittsburgh, "Lorenzo's Oil." City officials agreed to put the matter to rest by erecting a sign informing citizens of this fact.

It is because the ACLU has assumed the role as First Amendment police that it is drawn to answering false alarms. Its overall

record suggests an organization far more concerned about erecting an impregnable wall between church and state than anything else, and that is why there are virtually no instances where the ACLU has responded to false alarms regarding freedom of religion. The following are indicative of its freedom-from-religion approach to the First Amendment; it views all of them as unconstitutional.

- the right of churches and synagogues to be tax-exempt
- prayer, including voluntary prayer, in the schools
- release time, the practice whereby public school children are released early so that they may attend religious instruction
- shared time, the practice whereby parochial school children in need of remedial instruction (most are poor and non-white) are afforded remedial work by public school teachers in the parochial schools
- religious invocation at graduation ceremonies
- the right of religious-based foster care institutions that receive municipal funding to select and teach the children according to their own precepts
- the right of religious day care institutions to receive federal funding even when the institutions agree neither to teach about religion or to display any religious symbol
- a public school performance of the play "Jesus Christ Superstar"
- the distribution of Gideon Bibles on public school grounds
- the right of Congress to maintain its chaplains
- the right of prisons to employ chaplains
- the right of the armed services to employ chaplains
- a city employees' Christmas pageant at the local zoo
- the right of private schools to have access to publicly funded counselor
- all blue law statutes

- the singing of "Silent Night" in the classroom
- the right of Christian anti-drug groups to cite their belief in Jesus before public school students
- public expenditures for bus transportation for parochial students
- all voucher plans and tuition tax credits
- the inscription "In God We Trust" on coins and postage
- the words "under God" in the pledge of allegiance
- the words "In God We Trust" on the city seal of Zion, Illinois
- a commemorative Christmas postmark, offered by the community of Nazareth, Texas, with an inscription depicting a Nativity scene
- government census questions on religious affiliations
- the building of a wooden platform by the city of Philadelphia for an address by Pope John Paul II
- formal diplomatic relations with the Vatican
- kosher inspectors on the payroll of Miami Beach
- a nine-foot underwater statue of Jesus Christ placed three miles off the coast of Key Largo
- a custom in Milwaukee County whereby delinquent tenants could not be evicted during the two weeks around Christmas
- a "Motorists Prayer" printed on the back of a state highway map in North Carolina
- the word "Christianity" in the town seal of Milledgeville, Georgia
- a plaque with the Ten Commandments in the courthouse in Cobb County, Georgia
- the right of a state district judge in North Carolina to open his court session each morning with a prayer
- the right of public school coaches to lead their teams in a prayer before a game
- the right of the *Christian Science Monitor* to fire a lesbian
- the right of the sheriff in Pierce County, Washington, to hire volunteer chaplains to provide crisis

intervention services

- legislation that would criminalize damage to religious buildings and artifacts
- the right of two campus singing groups from Washington State University to perform in area churches
- the right of a nun to wear a habit while teaching in a public school
- the right of a school board to prohibit an Islamic public school teacher from wearing her turban while teaching
- the right of the armed services to prohibit the wearing of a yarmulke while in uniform
- the right of Catholic schools not to hire homosexuals
- the right of the Salvation Army not to hire homosexuals
- the right of a judge to order a person found guilty of drunk driving to attend meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous

In short, there is hardly a public expression of religion that the ACLU has not sought to censor, and in the few cases where it has risen to the defense of religious liberty (for example, the Jewish soldier and the Islamic teacher), it has shown itself to be considerably inconsistent (for example, the nun schoolteacher).

Why is the ACLU so nervous about religion? Largely because of its atomistic vision of liberty. It sees freedom emanating from the state, in the form of individual rights, finding it difficult to conceive of an alternative conception of liberty. Religion, to the ACLU, is seen quite rightly as an obstacle to the reach of government. And by casting government as the basis of freedom, religion must surely be seen as a problem. This is an impoverished view, and it is one that serves neither religion nor the process of liberty.

Abortion and the Legislation of Morality

By Damian P. Fedoryka, Ph.D.

Our country seems to be in the grip of a curious consensus. At a time when pluralism is the inevitable consequence of radical differences of opinion, one “slogan” seems to have a unifying power: it is the supposed principle that *not all of morality can be legislated*.

A famous, one might even say, notorious “Catholic” Senator was quoted at one time by the *New York Times* to the effect that not all of morality can be legislated. Subsequently, another public figure, a “Catholic” governor, also proclaimed that not all moral laws can be incorporated into civil law. He did this even as he chided Catholics for asking the state to legislate against a sin that they themselves could not refrain from doing.

In parentheses I have to note that I put the term “Catholic” into quotation marks in both cases, not because I question their Catholicity or inner condition of soul, but because I simply do not know what the term “Catholic” can mean when applied to or claimed by individuals in positions of public authority who use that authority to defend and sanction a “right to abortion.” Common sense indicates that when a man deliberately and with sober calculation kills or helps kill an innocent human person, he separates himself from the human community. One would think that anyone who on this account separates himself from the human community would also separate himself from the ecclesial community of the Catholic Church. This is an area where the faithful stand in desperate need of help from the hierarchical authorities, lest common sense and the loss of the true meaning of the word dictate that the term “Catholic” be permanently marked by the quotation marks.

The interesting and significant thing is that the two above shared their position with a Catholic Cardinal and a Catholic Archbishop. Both the Cardinal and the Archbishop stated that not all of the moral law could be translated into civil law. They were joined by a Catholic political theorist who invoked the authority of St. Thomas, who also maintained that not all of the moral law could be legislated by civil authority.

Each of the individuals above were, each in his own way, addressing the pro-life movement and the demand for a legal protection for all abortions. And each, in his own way contributed to the support of a "compromise" on abortion legislation by helping shape and articulate what appears to be a "Catholic" position.

A curious "consensus" begins to emerge and to exert a powerful political influence. On the one hand we have the pro-choice, in fact, the pro-abortion position which claims that morality cannot be legislated. Whatever the disagreement about the morality that one thinks could be legislated, the pro-abortion side and the "Catholic" side seem to come together at least in their rejection of "restrictive" abortion laws. The pro-abortion position and the "Catholic" position may differ in many respects, but they intersect on common ground.

When this happens, the "Catholics" have lost all ground. Why?

If the "Catholics" concede that in some cases there are serious enough reasons for the state to protect a woman's decision to abort, they have conceded that an innocent human person does not have an unconditional right to life. If any woman has the right to have an abortion in the "serious" cases, who is to decide what is "serious" and what is "frivolous" if not the woman herself?

Let us consider the alternatives. If the State decides which abortions will be allowed and which will not, it obviously can't do this on the basis of the child's right. It can be

only on the basis of *the child's usefulness to the state or the community*. But if the child's usefulness decides whether it is to live or to die, the woman's pregnancy must also be only a matter of usefulness. And the feminists win. For they refuse to be used for the benefit of any state, community or man whatsoever. The power of their position rests on an implicit moral principle, namely, no human person should be used as a means. It remains implicit because if it were stated clearly it would open the feminist to the charge of legislating morality. And if it were stated clearly, it would open the question about using unborn human persons.

But let us return to the "Catholic" position which rejects exceptionless abortion restriction on the grounds that we cannot expect all of the moral law to be translated into civil law. If the position demands any restrictions at all, short of an absolute prohibition of abortions, it cannot do so on the grounds of the child's right to life. Because if the child has a right to life, it has it unconditionally, that is, without exception. Restriction of abortions would have to be done on other grounds, not for the sake of the child. Thus, some have invoked abortion legislation in the name of "public order." Others have asked, "What next, euthanasia?" In other words, they have invoked the *consequences* of abortion other than the consequences for the innocent child. Typical is the "argument" that suggests that the discoverer of the cure for AIDS already was or might be the victim of abortion.

In this "Catholic" position the operative "principle" is that not all of the moral law can, or even should be legislated. Is this a valid principle? The answer is, Yes. Indeed, the answer must be formulated in an even more radical way: we must say that *morality as such cannot and should not be legislated*, not simply that only some morality can't be legislated.

We appear to be saying the same thing as the pro-abortionists. Lest I be ranged with the liberals, the abortionists and the theological dissidents, let me hasten to note that it *does not*

follow from the above that one cannot demand exceptionless legislation against abortion. Let me explain.

The *pro-abortion position* is this: "No legislative restriction on abortion." They claim, against the Catholic opponents, that this position follows from the principle that morality cannot be legislated, even if one holds that abortion is immoral. They will then point out, "Your own people, Catholics, agree that not all of morality can be legislated. Even St. Thomas."

The opposite, and the true "pro-life," or more correctly, the *right to life position* is this: "No legislative sanction for any abortion whatsoever." This position does not follow from the immorality of abortion. It *follows from the injustice of abortion*. In other words, *the right to life position demands the legislation of justice, not the legislation of morality*.

To see this clearly, let us consider a traffic law. The requirement to stop at a red traffic signal does not include the injunction to love, have compassion for or to "want" the child that is crossing the street under the protection of the red light. Imagine a driver running a red light, killing a child and then saying, "I don't love children. I hate them." Obviously, the intent of the law was not to stop hatred and other similar immoral acts. Its only interest is to protect the child.

This example illustrates two things. First, civil authority cannot do anything, it is helpless when it comes to immorality and morality. No amount of force or threats can bring a person to become morally good. In this sense, the state cannot deal with the *sinner*. And it cannot legislate morality. The state, if it is interested in the sinner, can do nothing but leave him to God and the Church, who has the authority to deal with him in the confessional. The state, for its part, cannot absolve the sinner before the act, allowing him to abort. The reason for this is the second point: the state's "interest"

is, or should be, the protection of the rights of the child. It's mission is justice. It must protect the *victim* against the sinner. And in protecting the child against an aggressor, the *state or its representatives do not first have to change the opinion of the aggressor; they do not have to convert him.*

It should be clear that the demand for exceptionless prohibitions of abortion follows not from some demand of morality. Rather, it is a demand of justice. The legislative protection, without exception, of the innocent unborn is a legislation of justice. It falls within the scope of the state's mission of justice. When a *state* formally and officially abdicates from its duty of justice with regard to the foundation of all other rights, it *loses its legitimacy* and sovereignty, even if retains power. But this is another topic. Let us return to the legislation of morality and to St. Thomas, who is so frequently invoked in this matter.

No civil authority can legislate anything dealing with the inner moral condition of the soul. It would be impotent, even if it tried to do so. Yet one frequently talks of some of the moral law being legislated. St. Thomas is invoked as saying that a part of the moral sphere cannot be legislated, and a part can. But it is important to note that when St. Thomas talks of that part of the "moral Law" that *can* be legislated he talks about those "immoral" acts which hurt others.

In other words, St. Thomas means the exact opposite of what some would have him say. When *they* say that not all moral law can be legislated, they want to *leave out of legislation* precisely those actions which hurt the unborn child. But *St. Thomas* selects *for legislation* not all the moral law, but precisely that part of it which forbids us to hurt others and to steal from them. Although St. Thomas does not use the term "justice" at that point, he is in fact referring to that part of morality which deals with justice.

The liberals should understand this. Not everything that is

immoral is also unjust. For example, fornication between mutually consenting adults is immoral, but there is no direct violation of rights. This is what the liberals meant when they pushed for the decriminalization of “victimless crimes.” The Catholic should understand this all the more. In the case of abortion we also have an immorality, but abortion is immoral because it involves an innocent victim. Abortion is immoral because it is unjust. But in the public order, we and the state should be concerned with its injustice, namely, with the victim.

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A Message from Denver

All of us learned as children the simple but profound words that Abraham Lincoln spoke at Gettysburg. He reminded his listeners that our forefathers had created “a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”

And much of what he said on that November day in 1863 is particularly meaningful in this September of 1993: For today we are again “engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation, so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.”

Today’s struggle is at least as dangerous as a war of shot and shell. It is a war of ideas and values. It is a clash of two cultures. And it will certainly decide whether the nation, as created by our forefathers, will survive.

On the one side are those who hold with the traditional values of Western civilization and with the transcendental efficacy of revealed moral truths. On the other side are the secular humanists – the moral nihilists – who deny the validity of any objective standards of good and evil.

On the one side are those who agree with Washington that “It is impossible to govern rightly without God”- who agree with Jefferson that the liberties of a people – their inalienable rights – are the gifts of a divine Providence. On the other side are the counter culturists who insist that separation of church and state means separation of God and state.

On the one side are those who, like the prescient commentator Alex de Toqueville, foresee the destruction of a democracy that abandons its moral moorings. On the other side are the fiery evangelists of the Age of Aquarius, who would have us “do our thing” – whatever it might be.

They tell us that Judea-Christian precepts of conduct are irrelevant, that family values are anachronistic, that everyone is entitled to establish his or her own moral code.

The views of those who would preserve Western civilization were personified and celebrated last month in Denver by the outpouring of affection and support for the message of His Holiness, Pope John Paul.

The views of secular humanism – that spread like drug-induced hallucinations during the 1960’s- were personified and celebrated by the pitiful self-abuse and the spiritual squalor of the spectacle known as Woodstock. From Woodstock to Denver the cultural conflict has raged. It is appropriate – it is essential – that we ask ourselves: How goes that battle? How, we may ask first do the mores of today compare with those of earlier decades? Have we become safer? More stable? Brighter?

William Bennett, the former Secretary of Education, provided some answers when he noted recently that since 1960 –

approximately one generation – there has been:

- an almost 600 percent increase in violent crime in the United States;
- an increase of more than 200 percent in teenage suicides;
- a quadrupling of the divorce rate;
- and our public education system, preoccupied with political correctness and remote social goals, has become an international scandal with a drop of 80 points in the SAT scores of its best students.

Next we may well ask: Are all Americans deemed equal today – including, for example, Catholics? We all remember the conduct at Holy Cross Cathedral by a rowdy organization that subjected newly ordained priests and their families to verbal and physical abuse. We recall an invasion during a Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral with members of the same organization screaming "bigot" and "murderer" at Cardinal O'Connor and spitting the Communion wafer on the floor.

What of the action of assistant attorneys general in Massachusetts who sought injunctions to prevent priests who had been arrested for protesting abortion from wearing their clerical garb in court? Have you ever heard of a similar effort directed against clergymen of other faiths?

The apparent license for Catholic bashing, however crude and offensive, leads us to ask: Do we still have a free press, or has it largely become the captive and servant of the counter culture? There is no suggestion here that the media are participants in a secret combination dedicated to promoting secular humanism at the expense of truth.

The explanation of media conduct, I submit, is simply that journalists – despite a posture of intellectual sophistication – tend to share a conditioned gullibility. The attitudes of

journalists concerning religion have been researched. A glance at those attitudes would cause one to ask: Is it any wonder that the seeds of secular humanism flourish in such fallow ground?

It helps us understand, for example, why the *Boston Globe* in its report of the disorder at Holy Cross Cathedral did not tell its readers of the obscene parody of the Communion rite in which condoms were substituted for the host ... It did not tell that the Sermon on the Mount was mocked as an endorsement of sodomy ... It did not report the assaults or the simulated sex acts. Instead it described the event as a "colorful, loud and peaceful" demonstration.

The outrage at St. Patrick's Cathedral was celebrated in the film called "Stop the Church" which was aired by many public broadcasting stations from New York to Los Angeles.

A catalog for a painting exhibit financed by the National Endowment for the Arts described St. Patrick's as "that house of walking swastikas on Fifth Avenue." It referred to Cardinal O'Connor as a "fat cannibal" and a "creep in black skirts." The *New York Times* defended that as mere "critical opinion."

A week ago the press reported that Viacom had just completed an eight-billion dollar transaction that would make it the fifth largest media conglomerate in the world ... There was no mention of the fact that a TV station owned by Viacom in St. Louis recently hired a male prostitute and set him up in a luxury hotel suite... His assignment was to seek encounters with priests and identify any who might be interested in his services ... The room was wired for sound and there were taping facilities. The scheme was exposed, but the mere fact of its existence is evidential of the media's savagery toward the Church.

Personalities on a talk show on radio station WLUP-AM in Chicago suggested the Church should substitute slices of

sausage for the Host and serve a “spicy body of Christ.” They also proposed blackening the wafer and calling it “Cajun Jesus.”

What would have been the reaction of the media if such acts and abuse had been directed against the religious leaders and places of worship of Baptists or Episcopalians or Jews or Muslims or the orthodox Greek Church? There would – and quite properly – have been a storm of protest. But where Catholics are concerned the reaction is, in substance, that we are getting what we deserve. . because our clergy persist in commenting on morality.

Certainly Catholics are not alone in defense of objective standards. Devout members of other faiths are keepers of that flame. But the media are generally wary of frontal assaults on groups that have shown a propensity to fight back. Lay Catholics tend to remain incomprehensibly silent, which encourages the boldness of our detractors.

Thus:

- *Boston Globe* columnist Ellen Goodman writes that it is “the Catholic hierarchy” that has “opened the can of worms marked religion.”
- The *Boston Globe* deplores the fact that the Catholic Church urges Christians to boycott films that blaspheme Christ and the Mother of Jesus. The *Globe* proclaims, at least with respect to Catholics, that the First Amendment protects freedom to blaspheme apparently in preference to freedom of worship.
- *The Philadelphia Inquirer* issues a grim warning to Catholic Bishops who speak out against the thousands of daily abortions in our country. According to the *Inquirer* they risk “reawakening all the old religious fears and prejudices that once inflamed American politics” by “giving them substance” . . . in other words, by proving them to be well-founded!

Catholics are admonished to silence their opposition to sexual promiscuity – even though more Americans are dying of ordinary venereal diseases than from AIDS.

We are told to stop being “up tight” about sex education for third graders, the latter being a particular pet project of the new Surgeon General, Joycelyn Elders, a practiced Catholic basher. Dr. Elders, speaking of our children, has said: “We taught them what to do in the front seat. Now it’s time to teach them what to do in the back seat.” And the message is that we had best get with that program.

The undeniable fact that parochial schools have spectacularly out-performed public schools is treated as a fault rather than a virtue. Jack Grier, a leader of the public school teachers lobby in Pennsylvania, speaking in opposition to school choice, proclaimed: “If the Catholic Church were to cease to exist and disappear today, it would be better for all of us.”

The illustrations are endless – sad, shoddy, at times scatological, not infrequently sinister. The teachings of our Church are ridiculed in every form of communication ... in newspapers ... on radio and television ... and from magazines, motion pictures and stage shows – on and off Broadway – to the costumes worn by the woman who calls herself Madonna.

There is no point in continuing the litany. I think the point is made.

And certainly there is nothing new about Catholic bashing. It runs like an ugly stain through the fabric of our history. But in the past it was aimed at closing Catholic Churches and burning down nunneries. That is not the case now .

What is new – what is particularly sinister – about current anti-Catholic bigotry is that it is stunningly different today in both substance and purpose. It is no longer aimed at coercing Catholics to abandon their Church – the purpose now is to force the Church to abandon Catholicism.

The Church is told it must change its doctrine on abortion. It must relax its teachings on sexual behavior. It must redefine its concepts of sin. It must restructure its clergy. It must even make substantive changes in its prayers.

Above all, we are told, Pope John Paul must stop repeating the millennia-old teachings of the Church and must reshape them to appeal to alleged demographics – like the script of a television soap opera. But even the silence that the secular humanists and their allies would impose on Catholics is selective:

Note that those who describe themselves as Catholics – but who look to manipulated opinion polls or noisy activists for their position on faith and morals – are quoted prominently and with respect.

Note that the media – including specifically the *Boston Globe* – actually welcome the statements of our Bishops when they are supportive of the views of the media ... such as when they oppose the death penalty or call for a nuclear freeze or criticize certain economic programs.

Only when our Bishops criticize secular humanism, only when they dare trespass into sacrosanct precincts such as abortion or socially engineered education, are they told to stop trying to impose their views on society.

To support this assault on the fundamentals of Catholic faith, the media exploit the myth of Catholic rebellion. Never was this fantasy more garishly proclaimed than in the fortnight preceding the Pope's arrival in Denver: The media reported that American Catholics were rising against their Church. They were rejecting its authority. They considered the Pope hopelessly out of touch with the real world. The campaign was even given a name – "Days of Dissent."- The fiction was based on manipulated polls where the shape of the question evoked answers that could be, and were, used to distort.

It was based on renegade priests and so-called escaped nuns who were trotted out by the media to bear false witness to the alleged schism.

It was based on the testimony of so-called dissidents such as Frances Kissling, President of something called Catholics for a Free Choice. She has since admitted – under questioning – that she is the only member of her organization. But that was after she had been presented as the voice for a substantial flock of disenchanted Catholics.

It has also been revealed that the fraudulent front – “Catholics for a Free Choice” – is financed by the likes of Hugh Hefner, publisher of Playboy, and such organizations as Planned Parenthood and the contraceptive industry.

In the week prior to the Pope’s arrival a sparse collection of publicity seekers – perhaps 100 in all – appeared in Denver. They were identified as the vanguard of aroused Catholics who were headed in huge numbers for that mile-high city to turn the occasion into the “Days of Dissent.” There were some interesting views expressed:

One speaker told the cameras she belonged to a group of Catholic women who worshipped nature and pagan gods as well as the Church’s more conventional objects of veneration.

One man said he loved the Church – loved its music, candles and stained-glass windows – and that it was only its dogma that he rejected.

The media, giving respectful prominence to such views, predicted the Pope would arrive with messages of compromise in the position of the Church to placate the battalions of irate American Catholics converging on Denver.

But we know that rebel army never appeared. Instead, the handful of self-styled dissidents simply vanished. We saw them replaced by hundreds of thousands of devout Catholics, most of

whom were teenagers who had driven, flown and even hitchhiked . . . to see and hear their Pope – to express their love for him and their fealty to his message.

The *Denver Post*, which had joined in the “Days of Dissent” forecast, estimated, in an apparent state of shock, that the faithful outnumbered dissidents 4000 to one. But when it assigned a reporter to collect critical quotes from the young people in attendance, he reported he had been unable to find even that one.

Who among us can ever forget that visitation of Pope John Paul? From the moment he arrived at the airport – when he stood in the rain, and urged everyone to choose life and aspire to morality – it was evident to the stunned media that he was undaunted. The immediate reaction of the press was, at least implicitly, to rebuke him for not moderating his remarks to avoid embarrassing any of the political figures who were on hand for the photo opportunity.

But that was the dying whimper of the “Days of Dissent” nonsense. That myth was totally exposed by the adoring half-million who attended his Mass and the estimated three billion who watched it on television around the world.

His powerful presence and his reaffirmation of the teachings of the Church brought joy to American Catholics, but did not really surprise any of us.

Mighty empires, those of Rome, of the Nazis, of the Soviets – with all their power, all their instruments of torture and coercion – had sought desperately to crush that faith . . . and had failed. They are gone. All of them are gone. But the faith remains, powerful and strong as truth itself.

Which brings me to where I began: It is not our faith that can be destroyed by the anti-Catholicism of secular humanists. It is our nation, as it was conceived and dedicated by our forefathers, that is at risk.

That, I suggest, was what Pope John Paul was telling us.

Let us hope the message was heard.

Let us hope that Americans, of whatever faith, recognized in Denver the epitaph of Woodstock. And let us hope those unforgettable seventy-two hours will bring a reawakening to standards of decency ... self-discipline ... conscience – to the objective morality for which our society hungers.

I thank you.

CROSSING THE LINE

From My Viewpoint

by Cardinal John O'Connor

According to Ray Kerrison of the *New York Post* (Sept. 27, 1993), Mr. Bill Donohue has written a letter to Mayor Dinkins about the almost unbelievable ad plastered on the sides of city buses, public property. The ad presents Madonna, whom Mr. Kerrison calls “the pop freak who peddles blasphemy and lewdness with her muse,” side by side with Mary and the Infant Jesus. The caption runs vertically between the two: “VH-1, The Difference Between You and Your Parents.” VH-1, I’m told, is a sister network of MTV .

Who is Mr. Bill Donohue? He is the President of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights. The *Post* column says that his letter to the mayor demands “that the offensive work be removed from public property and those responsible for its distribution be disciplined.” The letter reads, in part:

“This is especially egregious, A bus is government property.

No one is permitted to put any religious symbol on government property. If we tried to put a picture of Our Blessed Mother and Jesus on the side of a bus, it would be rejected because it would be endorsing a religion. But if it is used with Madonna in a form of blasphemy, it is acceptable. Suddenly, it becomes freedom of speech. The double standard is an outrage."

Now that's a clever argument. It turns the argument about separation of Church and State upside down, right on its head. Is there anyone who can not hear the scream all over town should the MTA carry a poster of Mary and the Infant Jesus alone, saying something like: "Here are the woman and child your parents reverence. Why don't you? "

Mr. Donohue is quite within his rights, as well, to ask if the MTA would accept similar advertising if it ridiculed religious faiths other than Catholic, or individuals of color, or persons with AIDS. Huge numbers of fair-minded and decent people of every religious persuasion ride MTA buses. I can not imagine that they will not deluge MTA officials and/or the mayor's office with letters of outrage. Christians and Muslims alike share reverence of Mary and the Infant, and the Anti-Defamation League has a fine record of protesting outrage against religious beliefs, in general, Jewish or other. Surely the New York Civil Liberties Union will see and protest the violation of the principle of separation of Church and State, one of the union's consistent concerns.

Indeed, I can speak from experience. During the summer, the rightfully revered Rabbi Morris Sherer, president, Agudath Israel of America, nationwide Orthodox Jewish movement, took serious exception to MTA's indecent commercial advertising policy. I was not surprised. Rabbi Sherer and I have consistently shared the same moral values. If anything, he has been even more watchful than I, and unfailingly courageous. Mr. David Zweibel is in-house general counsel to Agudath Israel. I have never seen clearer or more persuasive briefs, particularly on Church-State constitutional issues, than those

written by Mr. Zweibel. In my judgment Mr. Zweibel's analysis of the MTA policy leaves that policy without a leg to stand on. In short, MTA officials can argue all they want that the right of free speech requires them to accept indecent commercial advertising. I agree with Mr. Zweibel: it categorically does not. It's a smoke-screen to claim that it does.

Sometimes we Catholics think we're alone when we wage these battles. Frequently I find Rabbi Sherer way ahead of me. And there are many more on the same side.

So I feel quite confident that fair people will insist that fairness be exercised by the MTA.

Now having said all this, and despite the gravity of the offense on the part of VH-1 and the MTA, I have to recognize at the same time the highly favorable publicity being given to Mary and the Infant Jesus!

Can the real Madonna and Child lose when compared with the *ersatz*? Surely a number of young people will view the ad, not as showing the difference between themselves and their parents, but the difference between falsehood and truth. And surely a number of the young, middle-aged and elderly will thank God for the wisdom of their parents! Even more: lots and lots of people I know, young and old, and many more whom I don't know, will undoubtedly be infuriated by an ad that suggests that their values are those of the *ersatz* Madonna. And who knows what standing next to the *real* Madonna, if only in an ad, may do for Madonna herself! It's the risk you run when you post an ad on the side of a bus. Sometimes buses backfire.

Incidentally, those who may know or discover that the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights rents space in our Archdiocesan Catholic Center, 1011 First Avenue, New York, NY 10022, may wonder why I have to read in the *Post* a letter to

the mayor from the League's president. Why didn't I just go down a couple of flights to his office and ask to see the letter? One good reason: I didn't know about it. Contrary to the myth of the cynics, lots of Catholics do lots of things without asking my permission (thank the good Lord). An even more important reason: I wouldn't want anyone to be able to accuse me of violating the separation of Church and State by trying to influence a letter a Catholic agency wanted to write to a public official! We Catholics have to be awfully careful not to cross the line, you know.

This column by Cardinal O'Connor was published in the September 30, 1993 issue of Catholic New York, the Archdiocesan weekly. It is reprinted here with permission.

League supports Massachusetts pair in “rental discrimination” suit

The Catholic League has filed a friend of the court brief with the Massachusetts Supreme Court in support of Catholic brothers who were sued for discrimination because they refused to rent an apartment to a unmarried heterosexual couple.

The brothers, Paul and Ronald Desilets, declined to rent their apartment to a cohabiting couple because they believed that to do so would be facilitating sin.

The Catholic League decided to speak out in this case because it involves the critical issue of weighing the rights of conscience against the mandates of anti-discrimination law. This is the first time the state's high court has examined the

question, and the court's decision will have wide ranging consequences for the people of Massachusetts.

The brief argues that the Desilets are protected in their decision by the strong language in the Massachusetts constitution supporting the right of religious conscience. The Supreme Court of Massachusetts has interpreted the free exercise provision of the state constitution to mean that the "people of Massachusetts have absolute freedom in their religious practices subject only to preservation of public peace, the worship rights of others and the general obligation of good citizenship."

In a balancing of interests, the brief states, the constitutional right to free exercise of religious conscience takes precedence over the right of unmarried cohabiting couples to be free from marital status discrimination. Although marital status is a protected class under Massachusetts housing anti-discrimination law, unmarried cohabitation is not accorded the same weight as marriage in Massachusetts domestic relations and property law. There is, therefore, no justification for giving unmarried cohabitation equal status in anti-discrimination law.

Other groups signing the brief include the Christian Legal Society, Seventh-day Adventists, Concerned Women for America, Massachusetts Catholic Conference and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Can We Be Good without God?

by Dennis Prager

The following article is the edited text of the opening

statement in a debate at Oxford University on March 3, 1993. Under the auspices of Oxford's Chabad Rabbi Shmuel Boteach, Dennis Prager debated Jonathan Glover, a lecturer in moral philosophy at Oxford. The full text of the entire debate appeared in Ultimate Issues (Vol. 9, No. 1, copyright 1993) a scholarly quarterly journal published by Prager. It is reprinted here with permission. For further information write Ultimate Issues, 10573 Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90064.

If the question is, "Can we be good without God?" the answer is, of course, yes.

Of course there could be people who could be good without God. There could be people who could be good who believe that extraterrestrials visit them nightly. You can be good if you think that the earth stands on the back of a turtle. There were good pagans. There were good people who worshipped animals. In theory, you can be good and believe in anything. So if the question is to be answered literally, the debate is over.

"Can a human being be good without reference to God?" is therefore obviously not the question. There are two bigger questions.

One is, are people *likely* to be good without God? That's the question, I think, intelligent people have to ask. The question, "Is it possible for one person to be good without God?" is no question – just as, incidentally, it is very possible to be evil with God. I am religious, and I am defending the argument on behalf of God's necessity for ethics. But I am the first to acknowledge that there are quite a number of religious people who are disgusting. Indeed, any religious person who doesn't acknowledge this is a fool, and does God and religion a disservice. It is a source of deep embarrassment, deep unhappiness for me, but it is a fact of life. Different times have shown different groups doing this. Right now, unfortunately, the most internationally known

example is the Iranian *religious fatwah* to murder a human being for what he wrote – to murder in the name of God. It's as simple as that. I acknowledge it. That people can misuse God and religion is hardly new, but it hardly argues against the necessity of God.

My analogy would be to medicine. Those of you who know of Auschwitz certainly must know of Dr. Mengele, the Nazi doctor who performed grotesque, torturous experiments on human beings; he would inject children's eyeballs with dye to see if he could make them into "Aryan" blue eyeballs, would X-ray women's ovaries to see if he could sterilize them, and he did the same to male genitalia. I won't go through the litany, but the fact of the German Medical Association accepting his experiments and that he was a medical doctor only reveals that medical doctors can do absolute evil. It doesn't reveal that medicine is unnecessary.

To argue that religion and God are unnecessary to morality because there are evil people in religion is to me tantamount to saying that because Dr. Mengele and the German Medical Association did what they did, we don't need medicine.

God is necessary for morality to survive, and I will explain why. But I want it clear at the outset that I will not defend an absurdity, and it would be absurd to argue that there are no good people who are atheists, since my worthy debater is a good man who is an atheist.

Now, having said that, there are two separate questions here.

The first, which I have just discussed, is a very real, practical question: Are we more likely to make good people with or without God? The second is: Do good and evil exist if there is no God?

Let me deal first with this question – can good and evil exist if there is no God?

Here the answer to me is as evident as my first points were, that there are bad people who believe in God and good people who don't. It is clear that if there is no God, there is no good and evil; there are only *opinions* about good and evil. Good and evil without God are purely subjective: I think that torturing children is bad; Mengele thought that torturing children is good.

If there is no God who makes a declaration about the torture of children, then it's Prager's opinion against Mengele's opinion. If there isn't a moral source that transcends Mengele and Prager, there is no way to say that Mengele is wrong – capital W. You can only say, "I, personally, think that what he did is wrong." But so what? You may say, "I personally, think that a BMW is a better car than a Mercedes," but nobody argues that this is an objective statement. That's taste. Without God, good and evil are taste. Like I think this painting is beautiful and this one is ugly. I think this act is beautiful and this act is ugly.

Just as an honest religious person must confront the reality of religious people who do evil, an honest atheist must confront the fact that with all his or her desire for there to be good in this world, for us to be able to declare Auschwitz evil or the Gulag evil or racism evil, they are purely terms of taste if there is no God. That is all that we have.

If there is no God, you and I are purely the culmination of chance, pure random chance. And whether I kick your face in, or I support you charitably, the universe is as indifferent to that as to whether a star in another galaxy blows up tonight. You are, after all, as I am, just stellar matter, if there is no God. We happen to be self-conscious stellar matter, but so what? Whether you're kicked or a stone is kicked is only an atomic difference – it's a molecular question, not a moral question, if there's no moral universe.

What atheists who speak in terms of good and evil have done is

appropriated religious dialogue for themselves. They have kidnapped our way of speaking and said what was rooted in God doesn't need God any longer.

Which now brings me to the second and perhaps in some way more fundamental question because good and evil are ultimately a question of how we behave, not a question of theory: Are we likely to produce people who are good with or without God? Which is the greater likelihood?

Let me begin by asking a question that I have posed on my radio show in Los Angeles numerous times to atheist callers who tell me that religion is irrelevant to goodness. I ask them the following question. Imagine you are walking in a bad Los Angeles neighborhood at midnight. You are alone, and you notice ten men walking toward you in a dark alley. Would you or would you not be relieved to know that they had just attended a Bible class?

Your laughter is identical to their laughter though usually they don't laugh because they feel that they are trapped. Why did most of you laugh?

Because you, too, even if you are a member of Atheists United, if you are a member of Down With God, Inc., you, too, would breathe a major sigh of relief if you were walking in a dark alley and you knew they had just been studying Genesis. Because while it is possible they will mug or rape you, deep in your gut you know that the likelihood is that they won't. If you could only know one thing, that would be a good thing to know about the ten men who are walking toward you.

I will go further. I interviewed Pearl and Sam Oliner, two professors of sociology at California State University at Humboldt, the authors of the most highly regarded work on altruism, *The Altruistic Personality*. The book is a lifetime of study of non-Jewish rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust. If there was any time where moral clarity prevailed, that was

certainly such a time.

The Oliners are not religious people. That is very important. They had a sociological agenda, not a religious agenda. They arrived at many conclusions, but I asked them the following question: "Professor Oliner"- it was to him in this case – "knowing all you now know about who rescued Jews during the Holocaust, if you had to return as a Jew to Poland where the greatest amount of massacring took place, and you could knock on the door of only one person in the hope that they would rescue you, would you knock on the door of a Polish lawyer, a Polish doctor, a Polish artist,"- I tried to pick the best possible professions – "a Polish farmer, or a Polish priest?" Without hesitation, he said, "a Polish priest." And his wife added, "I would prefer a Polish nun" because, she said, they had a better record than the priests did.

I thought that this was a pretty devastating response. Over a doctor, over a lawyer, over an artist they would have picked a Polish priest – and these are Jews speaking who know that the Catholic Church's record in World War II was not a great one. It was a mixed bag, but this is not the time for that issue. But when push came to shove, that's where they would knock.

My friends, when push comes to shove, that's where we would knock, just as you would be relieved to know that ten people had just walked out of a Bible class. That's reality. At Oxford or Harvard or wherever, in the highest realms of ethereal theory, you can work out brilliant philosophical schemes for morality, but in real life, in actual real life, that's the door you knock on – where somebody actually believes there's a God who said, "Thou shalt not murder."

Sure, there are a lot of people who claim to be religious or even are religious and don't live by it. I have no excuse for them. I'm merely talking about the likelihood on planet earth that it is the door that you, too, would knock on, even if you were a member of Atheists United.

To see what secularism induces, it is very important to look at campuses. In the Western world, the secular temple is the university. There are some religious people at universities, but by and large it is a place that is based upon secularism.

In the secular university in the United States there is a massive movement toward what is called multiculturalism. In theory, it means the celebration of many cultures, which obviously, I am for, since I'm a member of a minority culture. I obviously want people to celebrate their cultures . But that's not what multiculturalism is about. Multiculturalism is, at its essence, an onslaught against the belief that any culture's values are better than any other culture's values.

It is ultimately an argument against the Judea-Christian tradition, which held that its values were superior. To those who hold this Judea-Christian view, however, as either (a) purely arrogant, or (b) pointless, I have a question that the late Professor Allen Bloom used to ask his students at the University of Chicago.

Bloom writes that he would enter the sophomore class where he taught, and he knew at the outset exactly what they believed – that culture determines morality. Remember, if there is no God, morality is a matter of what a culture says it is. So he would ask them the following question: Imagine that you were in the British Imperial Government in India in the 19th Century. You had complete control as Governor over the area of your jurisdiction and you were informed that the Hindus in your area were about to engage in Satee. Satee is the Hindu practice of burning a widow with her husband's corpse. Would you or would you not stop it?

Why does he ask the question? It should be obvious. If you say that you would not stop it, then you are implicitly admitting that culture entirely determines morality. Though *you* think widow burning is wrong, many Hindus thought it was right, and who are you to say it's wrong and stop it? But if you *would*

stop it, then you don't hold that all cultural values are morally equal; you really do believe in a universal morality, and that morality is not merely a matter of culture, and you would therefore impose your morality on those Hindus.

So, what did the students answer, having been given this great cognitive dissonance? "The British didn't belong in India," which is somewhat of a non-sequitur.

I would stop Satee because I believe in a God who says, "Thou shalt not murder," and it doesn't have an asterisk denoting "except for widows." Therefore, I would, with great respect to Hindu tradition, say, "You are wrong. So long as I have power here, you will not burn widows."

I'll give you a second example, which took place in France two weeks ago. An African woman was sentenced to prison for performing clitoridectomies on her daughters – the removal of a girl's clitoris. This has been performed on between 70 and 100 million women in Africa, in Muslim states primarily.

Given my value system, that is the mutilation of a human being. It is an evil. To the French, heirs of the Judea-Christian and Western traditions, this is an evil. To this woman, it was a good. I would have loved to have asked the French, on what grounds they could arrest this woman, if they don't have a religious basis. They could say, "This is French law. you can't do it in France." But this argument is certainly against multiculturalism. It certainly argues that our idea is better; we say it's mutilation, we should stop it.

The Nuremberg Trials were predicated on the belief that there is a universal law. But where does universal law come from? The universe? Neptune? Does Neptune form the Ten Commandments? Does human reason? Give me a break. Human reason can argue for anything. People use reason any way they want. It's very reasonable in that culture to have clitoridectomies, just as it was reasonable to support Stalin – which brings me to one

of the reasons I became religious.

I looked at what secularism produced. May I tell every one of you who wants to point out the atrocities done in the name of God, you don't have a leg to stand on compared to the atrocities committed by secular ideologies. Nazism and Communism make religious evil-doers look like Boy Scouts.

Communism and Nazism are secular ideologies. They were onslaughts against the Judea-Christian tradition and they did a very effective job obliterating that tradition. Their Fuhrer was God. You swore fidelity to Hitler. There was no God above Hitler who could say Hitler was wrong. Hitler was the source of morality. In the Soviet Union, Stalin and the Party were the source of morality.

What made me religious? Seeing how many secular intellectuals backed Stalin. The only place in the Western world – and this is my field, Communist affairs – where you could find organized support for Communism was among secular intellectuals. Organized labor was anti-Communist, but from Cambridge to Harvard to Stanford, you would find professor after professor who had studied dialectal materialism and therefore could somehow find reason to support Stalin and the Gulag.

The people who supported it were in the secular temple, the university. It was the moral chaos of the university that made me realize that what the Psalms said – “Wisdom begins with the fear of God” was true.

Ultimately, yes, one individual here, another individual there could be really sweet and fine without God, but a system that obliterates the religious basis of morality will ultimately consume itself. I look at the Netherlands today and I see the latest law they passed on behalf of euthanasia, even liberalizing it further so that we have now quantum leaps in the amount of killing doctors can do in the Netherlands, where

the doctor has been gradually transformed from the person who saves you to the person who can easily kill you. This is all done by secular humanists for very compassionate and rational reasons.

Obviously, reason alone does not bring you to morality. It was reasonable to do what the Greeks did – leaving deformed and ugly children on mountaintops to die. Greek writers said the Jews were barbarians for keeping all their children alive. The Greeks only kept esthetically pleasing ones alive. Who was right? The ones who followed Greek reason? It is, after all, much more rational to keep only healthy, good looking babies alive.

But every one of you thinks it's wrong because you're the heir to the Jewish and then Christian tradition that said human beings are created in God's image. You get rid of that tradition and then you start treating people as they were treated in a place like Auschwitz, where you make a person into a lamp shade. Why not? If there is no God, all you've done is rearrange molecules.

“Family Values, Moral Values”

by Kenneth D. Whitehead

What about the real situation of family values or moral values in America today? Is there any kind of social or moral crisis or anything resembling one out there?

The truth of the matter is that quite an impressive amount of data has now been accumulated, and quite a number of studies

have now been completed, which more than justify the alarm expressed by some of the leaders of our society concerning the condition of the national morals and the condition of the family today. Even if some of those who have raised the cry can be suspected of having ulterior motives, political or otherwise, surely we cannot exclude questions about the social or moral health of our society *because* they happen to get raised in the course of the political process. It is always possible, after all, that even politicians may be sometimes telling the truth.

It is also possible that the media are sometimes not telling the truth. If you think the Murphy Brown show, for example, is really telling it like it is, you may have some difficulty taking in and understanding the import of some of the data and arguments I am going to be presenting. In the light of what follows, I think a better case can be made that the media are very seriously distorting the reality of many sectors of American life today .

In fact, the very 'first problem we encounter in trying to approach the problem of family values is the problem of even knowing where to begin – in view of the sheer massiveness of the body of hard evidence that things are *not* at all that well currently with American families, especially with the children members of American families. The truth is that the American family in general is in the midst of suffering the most serious and unprecedented crisis in its entire history; it is more than a family crisis; it is a cultural crisis, and, ultimately, a morality crisis.

Now since I keep mentioning those unpopular words “moral” and “morality” and “moral values,” and since I am going to be mentioning them again – indeed one of my major contentions is going to be that we have to bring our traditional moral code back to America if we are really going to be able to deal with some of the social problems that beset us today – I believe I should explain up front what I mean by “our traditional moral

code" lest anyone imagine that I might be in favor of suspending the First Amendment or of "imposing" unwelcome personal moral or religious beliefs on unwilling fellow Americans, or possibly setting up a theocracy or something of the sort.

What I mean by our traditional moral code that I believe has to be substantially brought back is simply the following, and really no more than the following, namely, that people who claim rights assume obligations; that people who assume obligations are bound to carry them out to the degree that they are able to do so; that people are morally responsible for their freely willed actions; that people who make promises are obliged to keep them to the extent that it is within their power; that people are obliged to refrain from actions which are harmful to others and to the common good; and, finally, that the common ideal towards which the moral human person and the free citizen should be expected by society to strive was expressed by the ancient philosopher Socrates when he observed that it is morally preferable to suffer injustice oneself rather than to inflict it on others.

We could argue and debate about details, of course, but that, in my opinion, is pretty much it. If you agree that these few simple moral principles make sense, then it is likely that we will be able to reach at least some broad agreement, even if we continue to disagree on some details, concerning the very difficult and thorny and troublesome social and moral issues we are going to be discussing. If, on the other hand, you disagree with me completely about these simple basic principles, I suspect you are not going to like this talk very much.

So let's look at the overall situation of "family values" and "moral values" in America today. Looking at this situation, former U.S. Education Secretary and Drug Czar William Bennett, for example, has recently come up with a list of what he calls Leading Cultural Indicators. Since the 1960s the Census Bureau

has been publishing the Index of Leading Economic Indicators, on which we regularly base many of our economic, business, and even political decisions. Comes now William Bennett with his Leading Cultural Indicators related to social and family life. What they indicate, according to him, is that, in the third of a century – approximately one generation – that has passed since the year 1960 in America, *there has been a 560% increase in violent crime; a 419% increase in illegitimate births; a quadrupling of divorce rates, a tripling of the percentage of children living in single-parent homes; more than 200% increase in the teenage suicide rate; and a drop of almost 80 points in the SAT scores.*¹

Earlier, the same William Bennett had attracted a certain amount of attention to a related set of problems when in some of his speeches he alluded to a list of problems that America's school teachers have had with their students: in 1940 they complained of "gumchewing, making noise, running in halls, dress code infractions, and littering"; in 1990 the list included "assault, rape, robbery, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, pregnancy, and suicide."²

Speaking of schools, we find that in California in the 1980s, public schools spent twice as much to restore vandalized school property as they spent on text books. This kind of statistic is surely related to another statistic, namely, that in the fifty years between 1933 and 1983 the frequency of arrest of juveniles increased by no less than 8000%!³ Or consider yet another one: 70% of all juveniles currently in state reform institutions came from fatherless homes.⁴

Looking more closely at one of those Leading Cultural Indicators compiled by William Bennett, namely, illegitimate births, we find that births to unwed mothers reached a record high of 1,165,384 in 1990, the latest year for which figures are available. This represents a 75% jump from a decade earlier, 1980. 28% of all the births in this country – that is, over a quarter of them – were to unmarried women in 1990,

compared to 18.4% ten years earlier in 1980, and only 11% a decade earlier than that in 1970.⁵ Clearly something very significant has been happening out there during these years.

Looking further, we find that of all births to women under age 20, 68% were to unmarried girls⁶ – an especially discouraging statistic when we consider the dismal prospects for children growing up in a single-parent family, usually in poverty, now well established by a fair number of current studies and surveys. And, by the way, other such studies show that daughters of unwed teen mothers strongly tend to become unwed teen mothers themselves.⁷

When speaking of this veritable explosion of births to unwed mothers, we cannot help being reminded of another major element in our current social pathology. I am referring to the children who do not manage to get born at all, in or out of wedlock: of the 1.6 million abortions performed in the U.S. in 1988, the last year for which final figures are available, a whopping 83% were performed on unmarried women.⁸ Approximately one quarter of all these abortions were performed on teenagers.⁹ Legal abortion is patently not the recourse of the worn-out mother of a too-large family.

Illegal in all 50 states prior to 1966 except to save a mother's life, or, in some states, for very serious health reasons, total legal abortions since 1973, when the Supreme Court legalized the practice, have now mounted up to more than 26 million – 4,400 every day, 1.6 million every year. Of all these abortions, fewer than 7% were related to any woman's medical problem whatsoever, and fewer than 1% involved pregnancies which had resulted from rape or incest.¹⁰ By whatever standard of judgment employed, resort to abortions purely for convenience on such a gigantic scale as this over the past twenty years surely represents another totally unprecedented new social and moral reality for America today.

Legal abortion has often been justified as a "necessary evil"

required to deal with some of the very problems of unwed mothers, single parenting, child abuse, feminization of poverty, and the like with which we are otherwise concerned in this discussion; yet what we find is that all these same problems have seen huge, exponential increases in the very same years that legal abortion has been available on demand.

Or consider yet another virulent symptom of our current social pathology related to the decline of traditional family values: what used to be called venereal diseases, and are now called sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), are once again at epidemic proportions in America, particularly among young people, a half century after the discovery of penicillin and other anti-biotic drugs. You would have to have been living on Mars not to have heard about the current AIDS epidemic, of course; but whereas AIDS took the lives of some 54,000 Americans between the years 1981 and 1989, some 80,000 Americans died as a result of other, non-AIDS STDs during those same years, according to U.S. Center for Disease Control statistics. Despite modern medicine, it appears that diseases such as syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, hepatitis B, genital herpes, and genital warts continue to afflict increasing numbers of people; teenagers have more STDs than any other group in the United States; ten million cases of non-AIDS STDs, half the national total, affected people under 25 in 1989.¹¹

These figures on STDs among American young people are inevitably related to the vastly increased rates of engaging in premarital sex registered in the very same years we are dealing with. Sexual activity is apparently now believed by more and more people at a younger and younger age to have no necessary relationship to marriage. For example, the National Center for Health Statistics found that 52% of adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 reported having had pre-marital intercourse in 1988, compared to "only" 29% in 1970; I this is yet another one of those phenomenal increases in

irresponsible and destructive personal behavior. Moreover, these same teenagers are typically engaging in sexual intercourse with more partners than before: 75% of this group reported two or more partners, and nearly half of them reported four or more partners.¹² Clearly something has been going on out there.

Of all the Leading Cultural Indicators identified by William Bennett indicating the low estate into which social and family life in the United States have fallen, though, perhaps the most serious one is the one which strikes most directly at the heart of the marriage relationship and the integrity of the family itself. I refer to divorce. William Bennett noted that divorce in America has quadrupled since 1960. Psychologist William K. Kilpatrick notes that divorce has risen by 700% in the course of the present century; and that, among many of its major consequences, divorce compounds the difficulty of the moral and character formation of the next generation and thus perpetuates the socially and personally destructive behavior of the young. Kilpatrick has found that "divorce seems to shake the child's confidence in the existence of a morally ordered, meaningful world," and thus jeopardizes the child's own later chances of entering into a stable enduring marriage.¹³ Divorce is thus handed down from generation to generation, in other words – unless the child is specifically taught a new, more hopeful vision of the future.

Other studies confirm these pessimistic conclusions. The increasing negative and destructive behavior we are seeing among the young generally is often and increasingly – and inescapably – related to the broken families *they* come from.

However we look at the situation, then, today's figures on divorce (or failure to marry in the first place) are pretty grim. To mention just a few: in 1960 the number of marriages in the U.S. outnumbered divorces by nearly four to one; by 1970 it was three to one; and by 1980 only two to one.¹⁴ During the 1980s approximately one of two marriages was ending

in divorce,¹⁵ while two out of three remarriages have been failing. ¹⁶ The overall divorce rate did slacken somewhat through the 1980s, after having risen phenomenally through the 1970s; in 1988, the latest year for which figures are available, it stood at 18.5 per 1000 married women; still, over a million children saw their parents divorce in 1988, double that of 25 years earlier in 1963.¹⁷

Less than 60% of American children live with both biological parents today. The number of children living with their mothers alone grew from 5.1 million in 1960 to 13.7 million in 1989, and the poverty rate for these same children stood at 55% in 1989 – five times greater than the poverty rate for children living with two parents.¹⁸ It has been estimated that half the children born in America in the 1990s will live in a broken family before they turn eighteen. ¹⁹

When considering such statistics as these, we must also remind ourselves of the current situation with regard to divorce laws in the United States. Ever since California in 1970 pioneered the idea of so-called “no-fault divorce” – essentially because the legal profession was tired of having to come up with evidence for such legally accepted “grounds” for divorce as adultery, mental cruelty, or whatever – all fifty states proceeded in fairly rapid fashion to enact some version of a no-fault divorce law. ²⁰

Now whatever might be said about the defects of the laws which formerly regulated divorce in this country – and there is probably no doubt that a certain amount of dishonesty and hypocrisy often figured in divorce cases – the fact remains that eliminating any consideration of “fault,” as the present laws do, sends a very powerful message of irresponsibility. Under these laws divorce is now nearly everywhere available virtually on demand; anybody who wants to get out of a marriage can fairly quickly and easily do so, often without even any waiting period. Nor does a husband or a wife not wanting to break up the marriage have any real recourse, once

one partner has determined upon the break; the only questions to be litigated are generally the property settlement and the custody of the children. In the short space of little more than twenty years, marriage has thus assumed such a state of legal impermanence in this country – there just isn't all that much "lock" left in "wedlock" any longer! – that perhaps it is no wonder that the social science research is showing that fewer and fewer people are even interested in entering into marriage.

The number of couples now co-habiting without marriage, for example, rose from around 500,000 in 1970 to over 3 million in 1989. In case anyone imagines that the lack of any permanent individual commitment or legally binding tie inherent in the co-habiting relationship somehow represents an improvement on marriage, it should be reported that a recent research study finds that 40% of these co-habiting unions "will disrupt before marriage, and marriages that are preceded by living together have 50% higher disruption rates than marriages without pre-marital cohabitation."²¹

And so on. We could go on. I could cite many, many more studies and figures and statistics documenting what can only be described as a massive, unexampled breakdown of marriage and the family in the United States in our day. And I have not even mentioned such matters as the well-documented deleterious effect of today's fragmented family situation on *men*, for example; or how the same situation has significantly increased child abuse. I have not gone into the manifold and very serious – and again, very well documented – problems faced by the children of divorce generally, and those faced by children in mixed or step-parent families. I have not gotten into the problems posed for families and children by working mothers, or the problems of the physical and mental health of children in day care and the problems day-care children later encounter in school and social situations.

While I was writing this speech, a friend I had not heard from

in thirty years – following her divorce!- happened to call and re-establish contact. She was proud of how well all of her four now grown children had done on the whole, though two of them, she remarked, had dropped out of high school in the post-divorce years and did not finish until years later. Her testimony: it took all of her children around ten years to recover from the divorce.

However we may view all of these things, then, I would think that at this point we would have to admit that, at the very least, there is a very real problem out there. Family values manifestly do represent something which the American people and their leadership, political and otherwise, have surely got to address in a more serious way than has been the case up to now, if we are not to suffer even more serious troubles and dislocations than we have seen up to now.

Could it just possibly even be, for example, that the huge sympathetic outpouring of public moral support for Murphy Brown was just a bit misplaced? So often we Americans claim to listen to the experts; we claim to make our decisions and base our policies on expertise, particularly scientific expertise. Yet long before Murphy Brown's giving birth became the best-known lying-in in America, the sober, scientific conclusion on the Murphy Brown type of behavior had already long since come in – and it hardly favored Murphy's choice of a lifestyle.

One example will suffice. Addressing the view advanced by some feminists that "women should not have to marry men to have babies," sociologist Christopher Jencks wrote in a major study that "if our concern is with children rather than parents ... this position is hard to defend. Raising a child is difficult under any circumstances, and it is even more difficult when you try to do it alone than when you share the responsibility. Single mothers have less money than two-parent families, and they also have less time for their children than a couple does..."²²

Ignoring this kind of social indicator is surely as foolish as it would have been to ignore economic indicators about unemployment in the Great Depression of the 1930s!

For any who still need to be convinced, though – or who are just interested in going more seriously into these family issues in general – I recommend two periodical publications which both sponsor and publish serious, in-depth studies on the family and related issues and also call attention to important studies on the family appearing in the professional social science journals and other publications. These periodical publications are *The Family in America*, published by the Rockford Institute,²³ and *Family Policy*, published by the Family Research Council.²⁴

To everyone who is alive and sentient and literate in America today, I recommend an excellent article which appeared in *The Atlantic* magazine for this very month, April, 1993, by writer and researcher Barbara Dafoe Whitehead (no relation). Her article concentrates on and very lucidly summarizes the great body of current social science research which by now has pretty irrefutably established, in the words of *The Atlantic's* own summary, that “children in single-parent or step-parent families are more likely than children in intact families to be poor, to drop out of school, to have trouble with the law – to do worse, in short, by most definitions of well-being.” The article demonstrates overwhelmingly that the consequences of our loosening the ties that were formerly supposed to bind in the marriage relationship have been especially devastating for America's children.

Barbara Dafoe Whitehead's article is entitled nothing else but “Dan Quayle Was Right.” Yes. Who would have believed it after the Murphy Brown episode? But her conclusion is all the more compelling for being understated in terms of the vast amount of thought and data she has assimilated and summarizes. She concludes: “After decades of public dispute about so-called family diversity, the evidence of social-science research is

coming in: the dissolution of two-parent families, though it may benefit the adults involved, is harmful to many children, and dramatically undermines our society.”²⁵

Dan Quayle was right, and unless and until we can manage a successful restoration of “family values” in our country, increasing numbers are going to go on suffering acutely throughout all the major sectors of our national life; ultimately this is a moral issue that America has got to face, and let us hope we have the courage to do it sooner rather than later.

Kenneth D. Whitehead, a member of the Catholic League’s board of directors, is author of five books and translator of another 16. He served as Assistant Secretary for Post secondary Education in the Reagan administration. As a foreign service officer he served in Rome, Beirut and Tripoli, and as Chief of the Arabic Service of the Voice of America. This feature article is part of a longer paper delivered at the prestigious Lawrenceville School earlier this year.

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- 10 *Loc. cit.*, Note #7 above.
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- 16 Cited in "New Research," *The Family in America*, December, 1992.
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24 Family Policy, a bi-monthly publication of the Family Research Council, 700 Thirteenth Street, NW , Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005. \$15.00 per year.

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