



# Christian View of the News



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Norman Pyle, Editor

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## YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT

For the last 50 years or more, the mainline, big time Protestant denominations have been imploding and gradually losing members and money. This was due to their spiritual weakness as a result of decades of apostasy from the truths of Scripture which they once held.

In recent years, this declension from Bible doctrine has led to compromises in the cultural realm such as tolerance of abortion, homosexuality, divorce, etc.

The Southern Baptist Convention was slowly headed the same way until the Conservatives took over more than 25 years ago. It seems to me that the SBC may be starting to drift back. They just chose Dr. Frank Page, pastor of First Baptist Church in Taylors, S. C. as their new president. Dr. John Vaughn, president of Fundamental Baptist Fellowship, Int.. and pastor of Faith Baptist Church, also in Taylors, S.C. said concerning Page, "He is not a conservative."

The man who preceded him was not as conservative as others before him were. The emphasis seems to be shifting back to how much a man supports the Cooperative Program and the denomination rather than his allegiance to the Word of God.

A number of these protestant denominations had their annual meetings this summer. An opinion about some of the results was voiced under the heading: **Liberal Christianity: "Paying For Its Sins?"** by Charlotte Allen, an editor at Beliefnet, in *The Los Angeles Times* for July 9

*You want to have gay sex? Be a female bishop? Change God's name to Sophia? Go ahead. The just-elected Episcopal presiding bishop, Katharine Jefferts Schori, is a one-woman combination of all these things, having voted for Robinson, blessed same-sex couples in her Nevada diocese, prayed to a female Jesus at the Columbus convention and invited former Newark, N.J. bishop John Shelby Spong, famous for denying Christ's divinity, to address her priests.*

*When a church doesn't take itself seriously, neither do its members. It is hard to believe that as recently as 1960, members of mainline churches -- Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, and the like -- accounted for 40% of all American Protestants. Today, it's more like 12% (17 million out of 135 million). Some of the precipitous decline is due to lower birthrates among the generally blue-state mainliners, but it also is clear that millions of mainline adherents (and especially their children) have simply walked out of the pews never to return. According to the Hartford Institute for Religious Research, in 1965, there were 3.4 million Episcopalians; now, there are 2.3 million.*

*When your religion says "whatever" on doctrinal matters, regards Jesus as just another wise teacher, refuses on principle to evangelize and lets you do pretty much what you want, it's a short step to deciding that one of the things you don't want to do is get up on Sunday morning and go to church.*

*It doesn't help matters that the mainline churches were pioneers in ordaining women to the clergy, to the point that 25% of all Episcopal priests these days are female, as are 29% of all Presbyterian pastors, according to the two churches. A casual connection between a critical mass of female clergy and a mass exodus from the churches, especially among men, would be difficult to establish, but is it entirely a coincidence? Sociologist Rodney Stark ("The Rise of Christianity") and historian Philip Jenkins ("The Next Christendom") contend that the more demands, ethical and doctrinal, that a faith places upon its adherents, the deeper the adherents' commitment to that faith. Evangelical and Pentecostal churches, which preach biblical morality, have no trouble saying that Jesus is Lord, and they generally eschew women's ordination. The churches are growing robustly, both in the United States and around the world.*

*So this is the liberal Christianity that was supposed to be the Christianity of the future: disarray, schism, rapidly falling numbers of adherents, a collapse of Christology and national meetings that rival those of the Modern Language Assn. for their potential for cheap laughs. And they keep telling the Catholic Church that it had better get with the liberal program -- ordain women, bless gay unions and so forth -- or die. **Sure.** - AlbertMohler.com, 7/10/06*

### PRESBYTERIAN LESBIAN EVANGELIST

Rev. Janie Spahr, called by her church to serve as a "lesbian evangelist" has been an activist for homosexual rights in the Presbyterian Church (USA) for several years. Recently a church court acquitted her of charges that she violated the denomination's constitution by conducting wedding ceremonies for two lesbian couples. The court ruled six to one that Spahr was exercising her "right of conscience" as a minister in performing the marriages. The court went further and issued a "concluding affirmation." The fundamental message of the Scriptures and Confession is the proclamation of the Good News of God's love for all people. It is a message of inclusiveness, reconciliation, and the breaking down of barriers."

Al Mohler points out that liberal ("mainline") Protestantism is not really arguing over homosexuality; instead they "have been debating issues of scriptural authority." If individual conscience is allowed to invalidate the clear teachings of Scripture," says Mohler, "the denomination faces an unavoidable disaster."

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## STEMMING THE FLOOD OF LEAKS

A recent leak to the New York Times and some other newspapers revealed a previously secret program by the Bush administration to examine foreign banking transactions in its pursuit of terrorists with ties to al-Qaida. The banking transactions mostly involve wire transfers and other methods of moving money overseas. This isn't about examining our canceled checks for items that might embarrass us before prying eyes.

White House Press Secretary Tony Snow came up with a sound bite most people will understand: "The New York Times and other news organizations ought to think long and hard about whether a public's right to know in some cases might override somebody's right to live."

President Bush went further. He said disclosure of the program is "disgraceful," and then he got to the real culprit: "For people to leak that program and for a newspaper to publish it does great harm to the United States of America."

Whatever the culpability of the Times and the other newspapers (more about that in a moment), the first harm was caused by the person, or persons, who leaked the secret information. It probably violated the oath that allowed them to have their jobs and draw their paychecks from our tax dollars. In other wars, such behavior might have resulted in the perpetrator being shot as a traitor. Today, anyone with a political ax to grind can leak classified information in order to undermine an administration with which the person does not agree. The decent thing to do would be to resign in protest, but today's traitors keep their jobs and their paychecks and live to leak another day. They should be hunted down and prosecuted.

As for The New York Times, executive editor Bill Keller issued a condescending statement, possibly in response to an avalanche of critical mail. Keller wraps himself in the words of the Founding Fathers, who, he says, "rejected the idea that it is wise, or patriotic, to always take the President at his word, or to surrender to the government important decisions about what to publish." As a regular reader of The New York Times, I can say that the newspaper rarely, if ever, takes President Bush at his word.

This isn't about the privileges guaranteed by the First Amendment. It is about the agenda practiced by the Times and some other newspapers and media outlets that clearly want the administration to fail in Iraq - and in everything else - so that Democrats will retake the reigns of government. The Times' editorial board fears what one more Republican term could do to the left's judicially imposed cultural realignment and wants to blunt the Bush administration's counteroffensive.

Their agenda was summed up by New York Times publisher Arthur Sulzberger in a commencement address at the State University of New York, New Paltz, on May 21. Sulzberger apologized to the students: "You weren't supposed to be graduating into an America fighting a misbegotten war in a foreign land. You weren't supposed to be graduating into a world where we are still fighting for fundamental human rights, be it the rights of immigrants to start a new life, the rights of gays to marry, or the rights of women to choose."

If a newspaper publisher regards a war as "misbegotten," isn't it likely he will do all he can to bring that war to an immediate end, even if it means publishing secret efforts to defeat the terrorist enemy, not only in Iraq but in the United States?

The conservative National Review magazine recommends the White House pull the credentials of New York Times correspondents. I have a better idea. Let the administration refuse to speak with Times reporters on grounds they cannot be trusted. For too long, the Bush

administration has tried to play cozy with the media elites. It has gained them nothing. Times reporters should be publicly ridiculed and verbally flogged because they richly deserve it for giving aid and comfort to America's terrorist enemies. - Cal Thomas, *townhall.com*, 6/28/06

## THE LEFT HURTS THE BATTLE AGAINST EVIL

When you hear the words, "oppression," "genocide," "racism," or even "torture" or "rape," do you immediately recoil as you always did? I don't. While I hate those evils as much as ever, I no longer assume the term always describes the reality.

For example, the liberal press' unending preoccupation with American abuses of Iraqi detainees had a number of deleterious consequences. One was a further undermining of Arab and Muslim support for America's liberation of Iraq. But the longest-lasting negative effect was probably the cheapening of the word "torture."

It undermined the war against torture to characterize what some Americans did to some Iraqis in the Abu Ghraib prison -- actions that were indeed sick, un-American and shameful to our military -- as "torture." Labeling abuses as "torture" filled me with pity for all the people around the world who had experienced real torture.

I kept thinking about those whose bodies were burned, whose fingernails were torn out, who were hung by their arms in a way that broke their shoulders (a common Chinese communist torture), who were put into human shredders (in Saddam's Iraq) or who had burning hot steel rods shoved into their rectums. How did these poor souls react to seeing the Western media routinely describe humiliating and frightening naked men for the sadistic amusement of guards as "torture?"

A second example is "rape." In the past, when I heard that a woman had been raped, I recoiled in horror. Not any more. Now, my first reaction is, "What happened to her?"

One has to ask that question because the feminist left has redefined the word "rape" to the point where, unless you know the specifics, you don't know if a woman was violently forced into sexual intercourse or had engaged in sex that she regretted the following morning.

For the latter is one of the definitions of "rape" that the feminist movement uses and had disseminated. That is how the figure "one in four" women having been raped was derived. And while the late feminist thinker Andrea Dworkin did not actually make the statement widely attributed to her that "all (heterosexual) sex is rape," it was a sentiment that was earnestly debated in feminist circles.

Individuals and groups on the left have done the same to the word "genocide." The term originally meant an attempt to murder all members of a racial, ethnic, national or religious group. Today, it is used to describe an Israeli attack on Palestinian terrorists that also unintentionally kills some civilians, and to describe what America is doing in Iraq and even what America has done to its black population. So, when one hears "genocide" today, one immediately wants to know who is using the term and against whom.

Even the left in Israel, the nation that arose from the ashes of the most organized genocide in history, misuses the word. For example, professor Israel Charny, director of the Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide in Jerusalem, told the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz: "We (Israelis) have never committed an act of genocide. We have perpetrated a few acts of genocidal massacre against a small number of people."

"Genocide" against a small number of a people? What, then, is not "genocide?"

No term is more often used by the left than "oppressed." American women are routinely described as "oppressed," as are America's

blacks, Hispanics and all poor people. But if American women, the freest women in human history, are oppressed, what term is left to describe the treatment of women in Arab and some other Muslim countries?

And then there is "racism." Being aware of the racism of those who lynched blacks in America and the racism of Nazism, I grew up believing no doctrine was more evil. Yet today, I yawn when I hear a member of the left use the term -- such as when Sen. Harry Reid characterized the Senate's proclamation of English as America's official language as "racist," or when whites and blacks who oppose race-based affirmative action are called racists.

One more example will have to suffice. The left regularly charges America's conservative Christians with wanting to make America a "theocracy," being "fascists" and/or being "anti-Semites." They are none of those things, and as a result, the battle against real theocrats (Muslim fundamentalists), real fascists and real anti-Semites is compromised.

The tragedy of all this is that when evils are defined down, good people are left verbally unarmed when the real evils present themselves. It is yet another way in which the left, intentionally or not, undermines the battle against evil - Dennis Prager, *townhall.com*, 6/27/06

## **BUILD A COMPREHENSIVE MISSILE DEFENSE**

North Korean dictator Kim Jong II's July 4th fireworks show may have fizzled when his Taepodong-2 missile -- designed to reach targets in the United States -- fizzled out after 42 seconds of flight and fell into the Sea of Japan.

But the test of this North Korean missile (along with others) this week should be a wake-up call to Congress: this nation must deploy a reliable missile defense capable of protecting all U.S. territory.

Currently, a fledgling U.S. missile defense system has deployed 11 interceptor missiles in Alaska and California. Its reliability has been questioned, however. Between October 1999 and October 2002, five tests of the interceptor were conducted. One failed. The other four shot down space-borne reentry vehicles of the kind that would carry an enemy warhead into the United States. Since then, the interceptor has failed three straight tests.

It is no wonder the U.S. is behind where it ought to be in the development of a reliable missile defense. After President Reagan announced the Strategic Defense Initiative in 1983, liberal Democrats in Congress did everything they could to thwart it. Reagan was resolute in maintaining the program, however, and was able to push it far enough to convince Soviet dictator Mikhail Gorbachev that the Soviets could never compete with it -- thus helping to end the Cold War.

But when President Clinton took office in 1993, he downgraded the program and sustained the Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, which forbade the deployment of a nationwide missile defense.

In 1998, Senate Democrats went so far as to filibuster a Republican bill calling for deployment of a missile defense as soon as possible. The Democrats prevailed by one vote.

When President George W. Bush took office, he wisely abrogated the ABM Treaty and promoted the program that has now deployed 11 antiballistic missiles of questionable reliability.

With Iran moving forward with a nuclear program and North Korea manifestly intent on perfecting a missile that can reach the United States, this nation can no longer dither on missile defense.

The Defense Department's Missile Defense Agency eventually aims at deploying systems that can stop enemy missiles in all phases of flight -- boost, midcourse and terminal. Patriot missiles deployed by the U.S. overseas can stop short-range missiles in their terminal phase.

The interceptors deployed in Alaska and California are supposed to be able to stop long range missiles in midcourse. And missiles that will be launched from 3 U.S. Navy cruisers and 15 destroyers are designed to stop mid-range missiles in midcourse. (Phased deployment of these ships will start this fall.)

Laser and kinetic kill weapons designed to stop missiles in the boost phase, however, still need to be developed.

Congress should make certain the Defense Department focuses on completing and perfecting these programs in the swiftest time possible and that they are deployed in sufficient number to defend all U.S. territory. - *From Human Events*, 7/7/06

## **HYMN SINGING IN CRISIS**

"There is a distinct relationship between a knowledge of our heritage in hymnody and better singing in our churches." This statement was made in the preface of the 1957 edition of the *Worship and Service Hymnal* produced by the Hope Publishing Company. These hymn editors of yesteryear recognized then what has been forgotten by so many now. Our hymn heritage enhances congregational singing. In my opinion, the tripe that is being offered today is destroying congregational hymn singing because there is no connection to the past. This disconnect is vividly evident because solid Biblical doctrine is being watered down in the new church music of today. . . .

### **Presentation of Biblical Truth in Song**

One hymn editor of the past wrote, "God gave us His holy Word in the form of our Bible. Man has compiled a book to be a companion to the holy Word, namely the hymnbook. The Bible is God's expression to man, while the hymnbook is man's expression to God. The Bible presents truths and doctrines, and the hymnbook helps translate them to the masses. Good church music is not an end in itself. It is a means to the end that the lost may be saved and the redeemed may be brought closer to God. . . .

This writing was found in the flyleaf of the 1953 edition of the *Tabernacle Hymns Number Five*:

"Next to the Bible, I should be your most treasured book.

Hold me in your hand on Sunday when you prepare to sing.

Let your heart listen to what has been enshrined within me. Hear the songs and the triumphant words of the martyrs dying for a faith the same as yours. Give heed to the prayers of devout men who have found the heart of God. Follow the missionaries of the Cross on their way to the ends of the earth. Listen to the great minds of the Church as they share with you the deep mysteries of the plan and purpose of the eternal God. Sit at the feet of the musicians and the poets, of the saints and the redeemed in all lands and times, of all those who have seen the hunger in the heart unsatisfied except through song. All these I have treasured. . . for you.

**I am your hymn book.**" - Pastor Tod Brainard, *The Projector*, Winter 2006

## **R.C. OFFICIAL SAYS INQUISITION JUSTIFIED**

According to a high Vatican official, the torture and burning of "heretics" during the Roman Catholic Inquisition were "mistakes" but they were also legal and are understandable in light of the times. Dominican priest Joseph Augustine Di Noia, undersecretary of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (formerly called the Office of the Inquisition), is interviewed in a documentary that examines the Inquisition in light of research gleaned from Vatican files opened to scrutiny in 1998. "The Secret Files of the Inquisition," a four-part documentary, begin airing on Monday, Jan. 30, on the UKTV History channel. Di Noia says: "It was a mistake to torture people. How-

ever, torture was regarded as a perfectly justified, legitimate way of producing evidence and it was therefore legally justified." He also argues that torture and burning were explicable in the context of the times. In fact, neither "legality" nor the context of the times is justification for a so-called "church" to torment and murder those who do not agree with its doctrine. Those that persecute and kill are the devil's wolves and not the Lord's sheep. The current Pope, Benedict XVI, is the former head of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. - *O Timothy*, 3/06

### PREVENTING TEEN SEX IS NO MYSTERY

While so-called sex education "experts" are always quick to tout condoms as the solution to problems like teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, one pro-family advocate says the solution is to prevent sexual activity in the first place.

Just how to do that is not as difficult as many people seem to make it, according to Dr. Janice Shaw Crouse, senior fellow of Concerned Women for America's Beverly LaHaye Institute.

"We know what works in delaying teen sexual activity and preventing promiscuity," Crouse said, "but researchers are hesitant to keep repeating the same simple recipe: parental involvement, good friends, strong faith, participation in church activities."

Crouse cited a recent report released by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. The report surveyed the scientific research on the subject.

According to the report, teens are less likely to have sex before age 18 if:

- their parents hold strong religious beliefs;
- their parents attend religious services frequently;
- the teens frequently participate in religious activities with their families, such as going to religious services, praying, or reading the Scripture;
- their peers attend religious services regularly;
- their parents have strong religious beliefs *and* there exists a strong mother-teen relationship. - *AFA Journal*, 3/06

### SCIENTISTS SKEPTICAL OF DARWIN

The following is an excerpt from "500 Doctoral Scientists Skeptical of Darwin," WorldNetDaily, Feb. 21: "More than 500 scientists with doctoral degrees have signed a statement expressing skepticism about Darwin's theory of evolution. The statement, which includes endorsement by members of the prestigious U.S. National Academy of Sciences and Russian Academy of Sciences, was first published by the Seattle-based Discovery Institute in 2001 to challenge statements about Darwinian evolution made in promoting PBS's 'Evolution' series. The PBS promotion claimed 'virtually every scientist in the world believes the theory to be true' ... The institute is the leading promoter of the theory of Intelligent Design, which has been at the center of challenges in federal court over the teaching of evolution in public school classes ... The statement, signed by 514 scientists, reads: 'We are skeptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life. Careful examination of the evidence for Darwinian theory should be encouraged.' David Berlinski, a signatory and mathematician and philosopher of science with Discovery Institute's Center for Science and Culture said: 'Darwin's theory of evolution is the great white elephant of contemporary thought. It is large, almost completely useless, and the object of superstitious awe.' - David Cloud, *Christian News*, 3/13/06

### SCIENTISTS FIND ARCTIC ONCE TROPICAL

New core samples dug up from beneath the Arctic Ocean floor show that the North Pole was once a tropical paradise ("Scientists Say Arctic Once Was Tropical," Associated Press, May 31). The study, which was produced by the Arctic Coring Expedition and published in the May 31 issue of *Nature* magazine, says the Arctic once had palm trees and alligators and a mean temperature at a balmy 74 degrees. The evolutionary scientists doing the research think this occurred 55 million years ago, but if they would calibrate their dating methods properly they would find that in reality it was about 55 hundred years ago. The world was entirely different before the flood and the climate would have been universally pleasant because God created the world as man's fair habitat. It was man's sin that resulted in the Flood and brought about dramatic changes to the earth's climate. "In the Six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights" (Gen. 7:11-12). - *Christian News*, 6/19/06

### ISRAEL TAKES CHARGE

It's good to see Israel not just talking the talk but walking the walk.

Time and time again, Israel has tried to compromise with terrorist-laden entities, like the Palestinian Liberation Organization, only to be greeted with even more violence and bloodshed.

When Hezbollah crossed the Israel/Lebanon border and brazenly kidnapped some Israeli soldiers this week, Israel decided that it was time to take the gloves off. Bombs flew, airport runways were destroyed and sadly, some citizens in Lebanon were killed.

Rather than a condemnation of Hezbollah's actions which led to Israel's military response, the words that came from the Secretary-General of the United Nations were almost breathtaking. Kofi Annan said, "I condemn without reservations the attack in southern Lebanon." He went on to describe Israel's military response as "terrorism."

And the mainstream American press, consistently sympathetic to terrorists who feel that blowing up buses full of children is a legitimate strategy to get their way, has focused on Israel's response to Hezbollah's actions rather than the actual kidnapping of the Israeli soldiers itself.

Now, more than ever, the world needs to support this tiny sliver of land known as Israel. For years and years, Israel has been surrounded (literally and figuratively) by an angry Arab world that doesn't believe in Israel's right to exist. It has endured countless suicide bombings and acts of violence and bloodshed towards the Israeli people that should shock most Americans.

And lately, it seems, Israel has made an effort to compromise with its enemies. When over 8 thousand Israeli settlers in Gaza were ripped from their homes, the holy synagogues there were mercilessly burned to the ground. There is a common misperception that many Arabs want peace. If that's true, having governments actually pay the families of suicide bombers sure is a funny way to show it.

And while Israel stands tall in refusing to offer any prisoner exchanges and continues to heap its military might on Lebanon, we should finally stand up to the United Nations and tell Kofi Annan and his toadies what we think of his refusal to support Israel.

It is positively shameless to witness the United Nations reluctance to wholeheartedly support the state of Israel. All Israel wants to do is survive. To do so, it has to be able to defend itself, and that includes taking military action when necessary. If Canada started lob-

bing bombs at us, if Mexico came across our border and abducted our soldiers, would we not respond?

The United States has been saddled with the U.N. for long enough. New York City has long suffered the pomposity and lawlessness of U.N. diplomats. The stories of diplomats parking their vehicles wherever they want, ignoring thousands of dollars of parking tickets, are legion. More and more news reports expose the United Nations as an agency that is filled with corruption and incompetence.

I think there's a way we could demonstrate our country's support of Israel. Let's turn that big building on Manhattan's east side into condominiums. If Kofi Annan thinks that Israel is guilty of terrorism, perhaps he could move the U.N. to the Gaza Strip as a show of support for the Arab world.

Americans are getting disgusted with the quagmire that is the U.N. Let's pull out of the United Nations and be rid of it once and for all.

Like Israel, we could walk the walk, too. - Mike Gallagher, *townhall.com*, 7/14/06

## THE BUSH IMPEACHMENT SHOW, 2007

Just when it seemed that the stakes for this fall's mid-term elections couldn't get any higher, John Conyers opened his mouth. . . again. Conyers, a liberal congressman from Detroit, once again uttered the "I" word -- impeachment.

Normally, such rhetoric might be dismissed as political grandstanding or as the misguided hopes of a fringe left-wing politician. But there are two reasons why Conyers' obsession with a Bush impeachment cannot be so easily set aside.

**First**, over the last several months, muted speculation over the possibility of Democrats winning control of Congress has turned into expectation on the part of many. At this writing, in fact, top political prognosticators are forecasting a 50-50 chance that Democrats will retake both the U.S. House and U.S. Senate.

**Second, John Conyers** is no run-of-the-mill congressman. If Democrats win control of the U.S. House, Conyers **will become chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, which is where impeachment proceedings would begin.**

And Conyers is hardly along in clamoring for impeachment. At last count, 30 Democratic congressmen had signed on to a Conyers resolution calling for impeachment. With the backing of the usual cadre of left-wing organizations, it's not hard to imagine a Democrat-controlled House proffering articles of impeachment against the President.

Fearing an electoral backlash against the growing impeachment movement, House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi tried to squelch such talk by telling *Meet the Press* in early May that there were no plans to impeach in the event of a Democrat takeover. But just a week later, there was Conyers again, pledging that if Democrats capture the House, he would immediately launch an investigation on whether the President committed impeachable crimes.

If the Democrats do take power, only time will tell whether they make impeachment a priority. But this much is clear; a Democratic win this fall would signal the start of "investigation season" on the President -- and lots of associated TV face time for the new sheriffs in town: Reid, Pelosi and yes, Conyers.

But if the Congress goes blue, impeachment is just the tip of the iceberg. The sea change that would take place on issues can perhaps best be illustrated by the all-important changes in committee chairmanships.

For example, do you remember **George Miller**? If you were

home schooling in the mid-'90s, you probably do. That's because the **California Democrat** was the **sponsor of the infamous amendment** that turned H.R. 6 into a measure **that would have ended home schooling** as we know it. Yet, if the Democrats take the House, **George Miller becomes chairman of the House Education and Workforce Committee.**

Similarly, **taxes, welfare programs and much more** would fall **under the power of Charles Rangel**, the **ultra-liberal Manhattan Democrat** who would take over as **chairman of the powerful Ways and Means Committee.**

Meanwhile, in the Senate, conservatives who have often been frustrated by the Senate's inaction are likely to face a very different frustration under Democratic leadership. Nowhere is that better illustrated than in the battle over judges. For despite all of the legitimate disappointments that conservatives have had, the fact remains that the **Republican-controlled Senate has delivered in the one area that matters most: court appointments. Without the 55-45 GOP majority**, it is highly **doubtful** that conservative justices like **John Roberts and Samuel Alito would have been confirmed** -- if even nominated. And under **Patrick Leahy, the Democrat** who would become **chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee**, the nomination of a **strict constructionist like Roberts or Alito would be dead on arrival.** -*FOF Citizen*, 8/06

## A SUBSTITUTE FOR VICTORY

When General Douglas MacArthur delivered his farewell address to Congress in April of 1951, after President Truman had fired the general during the Korean War, he gave advice that yet can be of value both to President Bush's Democratic Party war critics, and to President Bush and his generals: "[In war], there is no alternative than to apply every available means to bring it to a swift end. War's very object is victory, not prolonged indecision. In war there is no substitute for victory."

At the time, MacArthur was criticizing Truman's decision not to seek victory in what was technically called a United Nations "police action" in Korea. While playing "what if" games with history is destined to be mere speculation, it is worth noting that if victory had been gained over North Korea in the early 1950s, we probably would not be facing a nuclear standoff with North Korea in 2006. Of course, we will never know what price we would have paid in blood and lost life for such a victory back then. And unless and until the nuclear day with North Korea (or the terrorists it sells its nukes to) comes, we will not know the price of not gaining victory in the 1950s. The river of historical consequence runs deep and long.

Today, we are faced with another so far inconclusive war effort, this time in Iraq. On Monday, President Bush continued to articulate the MacArthurian objective in the following language regarding troop levels: "That decision will be made by General Casey, as well as the sovereign government of Iraq, based upon conditions on the ground. And one of the things that General Casey assured me of is that, whatever recommendation he makes, it will be aimed toward achieving victory. And what's what we want."

But note that the president's statement was in response to press reports that General Casey is recommending up to two brigades being withdrawn within six months and perhaps 30,000 more by the end of next year. While all of these Pentagon plans for troop reductions are publicly conditioned on Iraqi forces being able to pick up the slack, nonetheless the generals are giving the strong urge to draw down troops. They don't manifest nearly as strong an urge to obtain that for which there is no substitute. (Note that our fighting troops very much do

manifest a powerful will to gain victory -- even at the price of their own blood and lives -- God bless them.)

While many conservatives and military historians have long questioned President Truman's decision not to seek victory in Korea, Old Harry surely got one thing right: The buck stops in the Oval Office. It is the president -- not his generals -- who is ultimately and actually responsible for all war decisions.

President Bush's repeated assertion -- that he will make all troop-level decisions based on whatever his commanding generals say -- is a serious misreading of his responsibility. Notwithstanding the history of Lyndon Johnson micromanaging the Vietnam War by personally picking bombing targets, the real lesson of Vietnam was that President Johnson never sufficiently grilled his generals on how their plans would lead to victory.

Abraham Lincoln had to fire several generals before he found his fighting victory generals Grant and Sherman. (And FDR and General Marshall had to advance Colonel Eisenhower quickly to four stars to find their victory general in Europe.)

There is always an awful lot of politics in the upper levels of the military, and every general with three or four stars on the shoulder is not necessarily Grant, Sherman, Eisenhower or Patton. It is precisely the president's job to find and put in place the generals with the unquenchable will and capacity to win the war. (And with the courage to ask for more troops.)

President Bush should read and re-read MacArthur's first two sentences: "apply every available means to bring [war] to a swift end. War's very object is victory, not prolonged indecision."

If President Bush should read those first two sentences, his Democratic Party war critics should read the third sentence: "There is no substitute for victory."

With some honorable exceptions, most congressional Democrats are not seized with the will to victory. Rather, as I observed on television last weekend, the "timetable" Democrats sound like the bladder control advertisement on TV: "Gotta go, gotta go, gotta go." That is an urge, not a policy. And it is an ignoble urge at that. Even if it is sincerely held (and not merely a search for a partisan advantage), it is a disqualifying instinct for an American political party.

Whatever the shortcomings of the governing party in executing policy, a majority of American voters are unlikely to vote for a party with an instinct for retreat in the face of the enemy. Pray the American people never develop a taste for retreat and defeat. It would lie exceedingly bitter on the palate. - Tony Blankley, *townhall.com*, 6/28/06

## THE DELUSION OF SPACE TRAVEL

The following is excerpted from "Cosmos and Creator" by Dave Hunt, the Berean Call, June 2006: "President Bush has said, 'We are proud of our space program ... We have undertaken space travel because the desire to explore and understand is part of our character ... human beings are headed into the cosmos!' It was an inspiring speech cheered by NASA. But a little honest reflection reveals the simple truth: the vast distances in the cosmos present an impassable barrier to our grandest ambitions. The Voyager I 'space probe' travels about 335 million miles per year. If it survived, it would take it about 162,000 years to reach Alpha Centauri, the nearest star system in our galaxy where there might be some planets. It would take our space craft about 1.3 billion years to reach the closest galaxy outside our Milky Way, the Sagittarius Dwarf Elliptical Galaxy, and more than three billion years to reach the next closest galaxy, the Large Magellanic Cloud Galaxy ... 'Headed into the cosmos?' Bold words, but utterly ridiculous! ... Why continue to delude ourselves? ... Evolutionists reason that if life

could happen by chance on earth, it could have happened on millions and perhaps billions of other planets - and the challenge is to find it. But life could never happen by chance. This fact is backed by overwhelming scientific proof, although most scientists ignore it in their desire to escape accountability to the Creator. This scientific evidence demands an inescapable conclusion: the earth is uniquely fitted for life, and the universe is designed to sustain it. During the first-ever manned orbiting of the moon, William Anders ... followed by Jim Lovell and Frank Borman, broadcast back to earth the first ten verses of Genesis ... After their return to earth, a reporter asked Borman whether he had seen God out there. He replied, 'No...but I saw His evidence.' Wernher von Braun, German World War II rocket scientist, who became the father of America's space program and first director of NASA, put it like this: 'One cannot be exposed to the law and order of the universe without concluding that there must be design and purpose behind it all.' - *Christian News*, 6/19/06

## PRO-FAMILY GROUPS FOR CABLE CHOICE

If the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), pro-family groups and consumers get their way, cable television customers may soon receive and pay for only the channels they want. The change could be mandated through legislation or come about as cable companies voluntarily offer the channels a la carte.

Presently, the majority of cable companies and program producers are unfavorable to such a change, claiming that in the end consumers will have fewer programming choices and pay more each month. .

The American Family Association (AFA) and a coalition of pro-family groups who support a la carte pricing see the changes as a tool for families to protect themselves against offensive programming content. - *Sword of the Lord*, 6/16/06

## POCKET-SIZED PORN PROVES PROFITABLE

Another facet of the pornography industry may well become booming business in the United States due to emerging technological innovations such as the new video iPod and similar pocket-sized gadgets.

From cell phones to digital music players to portable game players, pornography is going from the desktop to the small screen due to a push from new alternative culture sites as well as old skin traders such as *Playboy* and *Penthouse*. These businesses, among others, are planning to offer pornographic movies for viewing on portable devices.

The *Washington Post* reports that the sale of adult-entertainment as downloads to cell phones is already a multimillion-dollar business in Europe. - *Sword of the Lord*, 6/30/06

## THE MODERN NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

The May issue of *National Geographic* was an especially tendentious installment of a magazine that has, alas, migrated from Middle American icon into increasingly politicized participant in the culture wars. The cover story was a badly skewed look at the ANWR oil-drilling debate, illustrated with romanticized nature shots. There are fuzzy birds in the grass up there!

Then there was a gratuitous little editorial that quoted journalist Bill McKibben as if he was a scientific authority instead of an environmental radical, in the process of suggesting that only idiots could doubt that global warming requires clamping down on human activities. Next came a hagiography of Darwinist E.O. Wilson, including extended swipes at religion and "the Iron Age desert kingdom scribes who wrote the Bible."

Speaking of Iron Age scribes, there was a pathetically hyped story on the "Gospel of Judas," packaged for rubes as if there was something fresh and authoritative in finding a deviant manuscript written by Gnostics -- who have long been known to have fed parasitically on Christianity (and other religions as well), distorting and mixing and rewriting at will, centuries after the original events described. What was found in this case was basically a very old New Age novel written by a fourth-century Egyptian equivalent of a cross between Marianne Williamson and Ward Churchill. Yet *National Geo* essentially announced on the basis of this single chunk of papyrus that moldy old Christianity is going to have to overturn much of what it believes to be true. This betrays either cluelessness on the complexities of religious scholarship, or shamelessness in preferring splashy subversion to accuracy. - *The American Enterprise*, 6/06

## MONITOR THE MOSQUES

On June 2 and 3, Canadian law enforcement in Toronto arrested 17 Muslim men for planning terrorist attacks on Canadian targets. The leader of the group, Qayyum Abdul Jamal, 43, recruited young Muslim males by speaking at Al-Rahman Islamic Center for Islamic Education, a storefront mosque in Mississauga. Law enforcement officials, across the globe are searching for suspects connected to the Toronto 17; American law enforcement has already discovered at least two terrorism suspects who spoke with members of the Canadian terrorist cell.

In May 2004, London authorities arrested hook-handed, one-eyed imam Abu Hamza al-Masri. The United States immediately filed charges against al-Masri and asked that Britain expedite him for trial. Among other terrorist acts, the indictment charged al-Masri with attempting to set up a terrorist cell in Oregon. Al Masri was also linked to terrorists Zacarias Moussaoui, who was involved in the Sept. 11 plot, and Richard Reid (a.k.a. Tariq Raja and Abdul Rhaim), the shoe bomber. Al Masri was the imam of the Finsbury Park Mosque in London, where he used his pulpit to recruit terrorists and preach hate.

In September 2002, American law enforcement arrested six members of a larger terrorist cell in Buffalo, New York. All six were young Muslim men, and all six had attended terrorist training in Afghanistan. The leader of the group, Kamal Derwish, had recruited all six arrested members by speaking at his local mosque in Lackawanna. All six men pled guilty to terrorism charges.

Mohammed Atta, one of the Sept. 11 hijackers, used a mosque in Hamburg, Germany to network with potential recruits, including Ramzi Binalshibh, who would act as a coordinator for the attacks. Two of the potential Sept. 11 terrorists, Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Midhar, hooked up with an imam at Rabat Mosque. Anwar Aulaqi; Aulaqi would later aid al-Hazmi and Mihdhar's replacement, Hani Hanjour, in relocating east as Sept. 11 approached.

Mosques across the globe have provided material aid to terrorist groups ranging from al-Qaeda to Islamic Jihad to Hezbollah to Hamas. Muslim terrorists use mosques as networking sites and often as recruitment centers for future terrorist comrades. There is no doubt that law enforcement should be heavily scrutinizing the membership and administration of mosques. Doing so before Sept. 11 could have prevented that catastrophe, just as scrutiny of a small, seemingly insignificant storefront mosque may have prevented major terrorist attacks in Canada. Muslim terrorists are, above all, religious. They will attend mosques, even if only to pray. Forget racial profiling -- monitoring mosques is simple common sense.

Leaders in the Muslim community don't seem to get it. "People are suspicious and there's anger," complains Aly Hindy, imam at the

Toronto-based Salaheddin Islamic Center in Scarborough. "We are being targeted not because of what we've done but because of who we are and what we believe in."

No doubt this is true to some extent. But that is the difference between prevention of crime and after-the-fact investigation of crime. For attempts to remain attempts, suspects must be stopped in the inchoate processes leading up to attacks. Prevention is undoubtedly the only option if civilized nations wish to preserve their citizenries from the sadistic barbarism of our enemies. Monitoring mosques is the simplest and most effective way of preventing terrorist attacks. Many imams are trustworthy; many mosques are clean. Nonetheless, law enforcement must pursue a strategy of "trust, but verify." Lives depend on it. - Ben Shapiro, townhall.com, 6/8/06

## HOSPITALS: HEAL THYSELVES

Is there anyone in America who doesn't know that our hospitals are in trouble, along with the rest of the health care system?

Three reports released last week by the Institute of Medicine confirm that. As the Washington Post summarized it, "Emergency medical care in the United State is on the verge of collapse." Dangerous overcrowding and an inability to provide necessary expertise to treat patients in a safe, timely and efficient manner are the main reasons.

The report recommends that Congress should create a new federal agency and spend billions of dollars to fix the problem.

That is the worst possible recommendation, because it is not a solution. Another federal agency is precisely what is not needed. What we need is "Systems thinking."

What is "systems thinking?" As described by veteran reporter Lloyd Dobyns in a new documentary for Public Television that has received some airings, but needs to be viewed more widely, "systems thinking" is "basically how you see things. Instead of seeing a huge mess with one problem piled on top of another, you see differently. You see with what people call 'new eyes.' You see how you and your work fit into the system, and how you and your work connect to other people in the system."

This is not a theory. It is being tried at several hospitals throughout the country, reducing patient waiting time, dramatically cutting costs and delivering quality care to patients, making them happier and healthier. It has also resulted in doctors, nurses and other hospital workers enjoying their jobs more instead of worrying about other things. With systems thinking, the patient comes first and when that happens, other concerns take care of themselves.

This is what is known as the "Toyota model." When one focuses on the person or customer and his or her satisfaction, profits and efficiency result.

The PBS documentary, titled "Good News: How Hospitals Heal Themselves," shows how St. Joseph's hospital in St. Charles, Mo., adopted "systems thinking," dramatically improving its emergency care. Simple things like moving the X-ray room closer to the emergency room, allowing doctors to get their X-rays faster; or coordinating with housekeeping so that a room is clean when a patient needs it, thus reducing waiting time, has substantially reduced costs, increased efficiency and contributed to patient satisfaction.

St. Joseph's set a time limit of 30 seconds for an emergency room patient with life- or limb-threatening symptoms to be seen by a health care professional. All others would be under active care within 30 minutes of arrival. At the time of the filming, St. Joseph's performance record for these goals was 90 percent. They even hired a "hospitality person" who keeps patients informed as to what is happening,

again contributing to patient contentment.

Lloyd Dobyns says, "You have to see the whole hospital system. You have to see how blaming people does not help. You have to see how to practice continual improvement." At St Joseph's and at 40 hospitals in the Pittsburgh area, which the producers also examined, everything is focused on the patients. "It is not focused on reducing staff, reducing costs, or improving profits," says Dobyns. "But as you focus on the patients, all the other things occur naturally. You want to help the hospital? Help the patients." In hospitals where "systems thinking" is used, health care costs have been reduced by as much as half.

This proven system does not require more staff or expensive consultants and it certainly does not need another bureaucratic, costly and inefficient government agency, which can only make things worse. Improvements can be made, says Dobyns, starting today and in every hospital in the country. Costs will decline. "So the question now becomes, can we afford not to heal our hospitals?" We can, if we want, not to do anything. But if we decide not to do anything, we have to accept that every day -- every day -- 500 people will die in hospitals in the United States who did not have to. You and I might be among them."

Co-producer Clare Crawford-Mason (the late former NBC News president Reuven Frank was the other co-producer) tells me systems thinking also works with schools if students become the focus and not cost, buildings or even teachers. It works anywhere and can liberate us from big government. In fact, says Crawford-Mason, some government agencies that have adopted this Toyota model are already showing dramatic improvements. If ever there was an idea whose time has

come, this is the idea and this is the time. - Cal Thomas, townhall.com, 6/20/06

## THE PUZZLE OF LIFE

"The Bible is not a puzzle to be interpreted in hundreds of different ways, according to the preconceived interests of the interpreter. This is how many theologians treat the Bible, allowing them to get around what the Bible teaches about sexual morality or the claims of Christ.

"In contrast, the Reformers taught the important but now little-known doctrine of the 'perspicuity of Scripture.' That is, the Word of God is essentially clear. We may not understand it all, but the Bible is not that hard. Yes, there are differences of interpretation, but we are called not so much to interpret as to accept God's words." "Contrary to 'The Da vinci Code,' Christianity is not a puzzle. It is the solution." - Gene Edward Veith, *Washington Times Weekly*, 6/12-18/06

## EVANGELICALS AND LIBERALS

"The inner dynamic of the main stream of the evangelical intelligentsia has from its beginnings in the forties rested upon the desire, both rabid and unadmitted, to prove to the liberal establishment, to the Menckens and Fosdicks and their progeny, that it is *not* fundamentalist -- that it is, by the criteria that establishment establishes, bright, learned, and urbane. The upper portion of evangelicalism has a permanent crick in its collective neck from looking over its shoulder to see if the liberals approve, exulting over every bone thrown from the table." - S. M. Hutchens, *Touchstone, What In The World*, Vol. 41, #1



Christian  
View of the News

**Bible Baptist Church**  
**2780 Mt. Carmel Road**  
**Hampton, GA 30228**  
**Brad Blanton, Pastor**  
**[www.biblebaptistministries.com](http://www.biblebaptistministries.com)**

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