



# CONSERVATIVE BATTLELINE ONLINE

*The "Bold Colors" Conservative Voice in Washington*

Issue 97 - December 12, 2007

[Religion At Christmas 2007](#)

## From the Battle Line

[Religion At Christmas 2007](#)

*by Donald Devine*

[Dollar Danger](#)

*by Westbury and Stein*

[Whose Iraq Dam Problem?](#)

*by Daniel Pipes*

## Media Pass in Review

[Lions For Lambs](#)

*by Spencer Warren*

[Morning TV Sells Dems](#)

*by Rich Noyes*

[Draft Gore Movie](#)

*by Lisa Fabrizio*

## Government Maneuvers

[Eliminate Gas Tax](#)

*by Alan Caruba*

[Free Government Housing?](#)

*by Paul Weyrich*

[Big Government Book](#)

*by Neil Bradley*

## Culture Wars

[Prosecutors Out of Control](#)

*by Nathan Tabor*

[Arctic Warming, Antarctic Cooling?](#)

*by Dennis Avery*

[Malaria Correctness](#)

*by Paul Driessen*

## Political Front

[Candidates On Health](#)

*by John Goodman*

[Harassing Charity](#)

*by Bob Barr*

[Talking Federalism](#)

*by David Keene*

## Reader Backfire

[Ruinous Sugar Politics](#)

*by Warren Coats*

[Reason and Child Sex Abuse](#)

*by Stephen Ralston*

[Reader Comments](#)

## Religion At Christmas 2007

by Donald Devine

Issue 97 - December 12, 2007

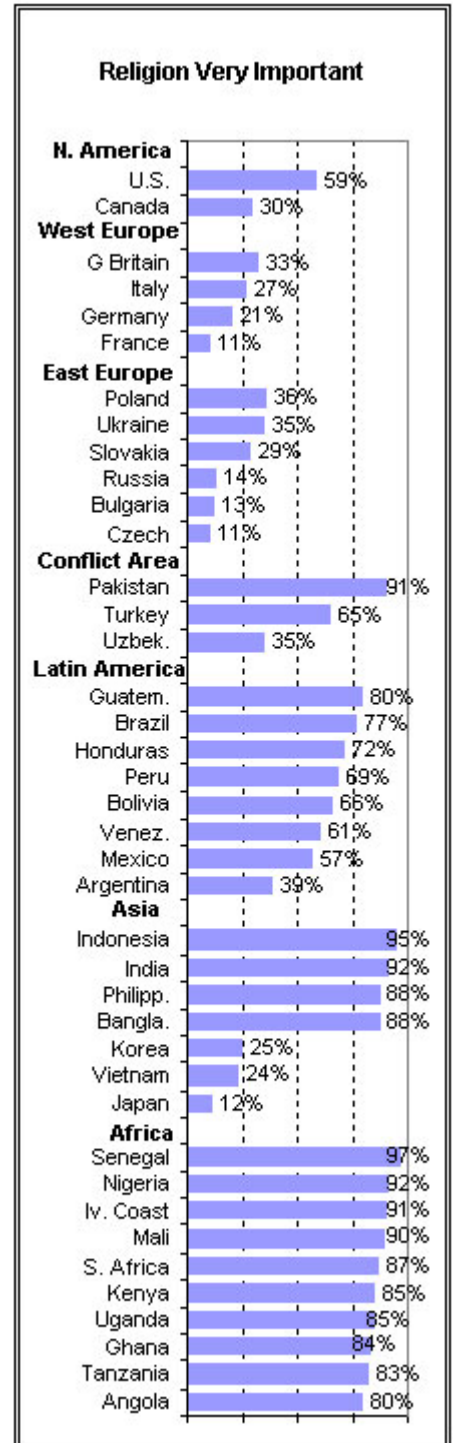
"U.S. Stands Alone in Its Embrace of Religion Among Wealthy Nations." That is the title of a Pew Research Center report on the status of worldwide religion—and no other rich country comes close. While 59 percent of Americans say religion plays an important role in their lives (mostly Christianity, which is adhered to by 80%), only about half that percent say religion is important in the second-most religiously-wealthy nation, Great Britain. As the nearby chart shows, religion is important in many countries in South America, Asia and Africa but only the U.S. is both religious and prosperous.

Rather than fading away as Voltaire and the secular left predicted, this Christmas finds religion vital in the most advanced nation, the U.S. Even the left has partially succumbed. A string of electoral losses led Democratic campaign leaders Rahm Emanuel and Charles Schumer to be more positive towards religion, which revised view at least partially explained their Congressional victory in 2006. Whereas Christmas themes almost disappeared after the left began dominating entertainment in the 1970s, now it is impossible to avoid "It's a Wonderful Life" and "Miracle on 34th Street," much less avowedly religious programs on Jesus, religious services and all-pervasive carols, and even favorable treatment on the role of evangelical religion on National Public Radio! Atheism still sells as several new books prove but it is difficult, with only a few percent supporting it in the U.S. today.

Interestingly, it is on the right where Christmas is less merry this year. The once-dominant thinking of William F. Buckley, Frank Meyer and Ronald Reagan that "fused" limited government libertarianism and religious value traditionalism to create modern conservatism is getting hit on both sides. While Pew reports 59 percent of Americans think liberals are too secular, 49 percent also think conservatives are too assertive on religion--so the more libertarian argue that political survival now requires muting or eliminating religion from the right's appeal.

Former George Bush speechwriter Michael Gerson, in his new book "Heroic Conservatism" and his Washington Post column, argues the opposite. He says that modern "anti-government conservatism"/libertarianism must become "morally driven" and is in fact immoral for not supporting programs to help the poor. In the future, conservatism must be based wholly on "the social teachings of the Jewish and Christian traditions," especially Catholic social thought (although Gerson himself is proudly evangelical), fighting for "economic and social justice." The Council on Foreign Relations senior fellow insists:

The difference between these visions is considerable. Various forms of libertarianism and anti-government conservatism share a belief that justice is defined by the imposition of impartial rules--free markets and the rule of law. If everyone is treated fairly and equally, the state has done its job. But Catholic social thought takes a large step beyond that view. While it affirms the principle of

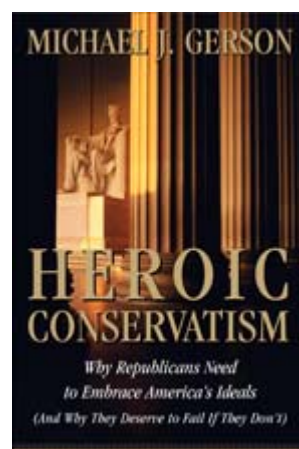


limited government--asserting the existence of a world of families, congregations and community institutions where government should rarely tread-- it also asserts that the justice of society is measured by its treatment of the helpless and poor. And this creates a positive obligation to order society in a way that protects and benefits the powerless and suffering.

America's Christian tradition demands compassion for the poor and disadvantaged but "anti-government conservatives" like Ronald Reagan and Barry Goldwater will not allow government to do this. What must a "compassionate conservatism" do according to Gerson? "Bold, effective public policy" requires:

welfare reform with time limits and work requirements; zero-tolerance approaches to crime; education reform that tests and requires basic skills; and comprehensive anti-drug efforts, including enforcement, treatment and education. In all these cases, good government and rational incentives have made a tremendous difference.

How does fusionist conservatism respond? It is easy for the pure libertarians. With Americans so religious, even the Democrats understand that being purely secular is suicidal. The Gerson moralist position is more difficult because it is more confused. Even libertarian conservatives have supported most of the reforms Gerson listed, certainly at the state or local level. He apparently means the national government when he says conservatives will not help the poor, especially the "massive" interventions during the Bush Administration. Yet "national greatness" in education is under fire from both left and right and the "No Child Left Behind" law may not even be reauthorized. The "comprehensive" anti-drug program has hardly been effective. On the other hand, zero-tolerance for violent crime could be accepted by the most extreme libertarians since, not being anarchists, they support government control of coercion. Indeed, welfare reform with time limits and work requirements (letting the states decide) have been the cry of limited government types since the New Deal so are hardly bold, and progressives deny the requirements are even compassionate.



Gerson's new "creative proposals" are for national health-care system reform, "affordable" college education, encouragement of "savings, ownership and financial literacy," and for "the recovery of economic mobility." But do these consider Gerson's other requirement to rely on "families, congregations and community institutions where government should rarely tread"? Most of the examples he offers of national government successes merely repealed earlier national government intrusions on the family, private associations and local government, especially welfare, replacing diversity and choice with a single bureaucratic solution.

Gerson calls the Medicare prescription drug bill a "good example" of a "contribution to the justice and fairness of American society." He does not consider the inequity that seniors are the wealthiest class in the U.S. and that poorer younger citizens are forced to subsidize them, to say nothing about the fact that the program added an unfunded liability 150 percent the size of already troubled Social Security's, to be paid for by far fewer of these same less wealthy future generations.



While giving lip service to "families, congregations and community institutions"--the institutions real limited government conservatives say solve social problems better than government does--the essence of the Gerson "compassionate conservatism" program is to use national government to solve all of society's problems. He does not credit that his "bold use of government to serve human rights and dignity" can lead to overriding the rights of private institutions to support the bureaucratic goals he simply claims will be avoided. He does not consider that his "millennial goal" for foreign policy can lead to stretched resources and abuses of power. He does not consider that becoming

“the party of idealism, action and risk” and “eager purity” is precisely the error that led to the decline of the welfare state in stagflation in the seventies and its inability to pay for its entitlement promises today.

While Gerson recognizes the law of unintended consequences that makes traditional conservatives reluctant to give too much power to national government, at the end he merely considers this an excuse not to act. At the end, only national laws and regulations count as moral. In other words, Gerson is a modern welfare state progressive, not a conservative at all in its modern usage. The only difference from a Gunnar Myrdal is his religious rationale and Woodrow Wilson even used similar religious symbolism. Gerson’s description of compassionate conservatism as “restless reform and idealism and moral conviction” could come right from Wilson, the father of American progressivism, whom Gerson even cites favorably.

It is fine if Gerson wants to promote progressivism but why bring conservatism and Catholic theory into it? His “national greatness conservatism” not only differs from all earlier conceptions of conservatism it does not take seriously the very Catholic social thought Gerson uses as justification for his neo-conservatism. Back in 1931, Pope Pius XI put actual Catholic social thought on this matter quite clearly:



It is wrong to withdraw from the individual and commit to the community at large what private enterprise and industry can accomplish; so too, it is an injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of right order for a larger and higher organization to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies. This is a fundamental principle of social philosophy, unshaken and unchangeable. (Quadragesimo Anno, sec 79, Paulist Press translation, 1939)

In 1991 this doctrine of “subsidiarity” was even strengthened with a direct condemnation of the abuses of the bureaucratic national welfare state by Pope John Paul II (in Centesimus Annus), tracing his logic back to Pope Leo XIII in 1891.

True compassion recognizes the individual comes first morally (under God) and he and the family are most in need of protection from potential abuse by powerful national government. America’s Federalist founders taught that “first object of government” is to protect “the diversity in the facilities of men.” From this natural freedom, “the rights of property originate” and so the private sector, with its independent companies and associations logically comes next. Only if these cannot do the job does one go to local community and then government, then to regional state governments, and finally to the national government when all else has failed.



Gerson’s “compassionate conservatism” looks to the national government first. Big government conservatism, however, undermines a “fundamental principle of social philosophy” and, thus, is not moral at all. What is moral is protecting the innocent from the Herods of the world, supporting the warmth of the family and encouraging the voluntary moral strength of poor shepherds and rich Magi and the whole community that create truly compassionate societies, as they did for the Christmas family until the Son was able to go forth to redeem the world.

What America needs is neither half-baked bureaucratic compassion nor abandoning religion but

a return to true morality by restoring the balance between libertarian subsidiarity means and traditional Judeo-Christian ends that created modern conservatism and, indeed all of Western civilization that has emanated from the Incarnation we celebrate today. That would be a wonderful Christmas gift for us all.

*Donald Devine, the editor of Conservative Battleline Online, was the director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management from 1981 to 1985 and is the director of the [Federalist Leadership Center](#) at Bellevue University.*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Dollar Danger

by Brian S. Wesbury and Robert Stein

Issue 97 - December 10, 2007

Every discussion about the global economy must address the sharp decline in the US dollar – it's a huge story. Since its peak in 2001, the US dollar has lost roughly 40% of its value versus the Euro and the Canadian Loonie and about one-third of its value versus the UK Pound. The dollar is even down 45% against the Albanian Lec – which is like Michigan losing to Appalachian State every Saturday for six years.



No matter how many times US Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson or his predecessors have said the US is committed to a strong dollar policy, the foreign exchange markets have ignored them. Some are suggesting the Treasury should say it louder and more frequently and possibly even intervene by buying the dollar on foreign exchange markets.

But none of this will help because the value of the dollar is determined just like other commodity prices – by supply and demand. When the price of pork bellies changes, everyone knows the reasons must be related to either supply or demand. But for some reason when it comes to the dollar, people seem to forget this fact.

Some blame the decline in the value of the dollar on the trade deficit or the budget deficit, while others blame it on a lack of confidence in President Bush. Linking these issues to dollar **demand** may be theoretically possible, but these links are very tenuous.

The U.S. still imports substantially more than it exports, but the trade deficit is falling fast and most forecasts suggest it will continue to do so. Yet the dollar's decline has accelerated in recent months.

The federal government still has a budget deficit but, at 1.2% of GDP in Fiscal Year 2007, it's low versus historical averages and lower than at a similar point in the 1990s business cycle, when the dollar was strengthening. True, due to prescription drug legislation, President Bush has presided over the largest expansion in entitlements in a generation, but that law was enacted a few years ago. Lately, government spending has been growing slower than GDP.

Finally, the theory that global dissatisfaction with President Bush is a catalyst for dollar decline is pretty much ridiculous. The drop in the dollar has accelerated since the 2006 election, which handed control of Congress to the Democrats. Moreover, it is widely believed that a Democrat will win the White House in 2008. As a result, if one is worried about **demand** for the dollar, a more credible explanation for recent dollar weakness is the possibility of tax increases starting in 2009, particularly on income from capital. This would make the US less attractive to foreign investment.

However, we believe the main reason for the dollar's weakness is due to **supply**, in this case the over-supply of dollars by the Federal Reserve, the entity that has ultimate control of the printing presses. The Fed was too loose for far too long early in the current business cycle, raised interest rates too slowly, stopped too soon, and now it has cut rates multiple times before it ever got tight enough to bring down inflation. The dollar has lost 5% of its value versus the Euro since the Fed reversed course in September.

In the weeks and months ahead, expect more public pronouncements from prominent officials – both US and foreign – that attempt to bolster the dollar. It could be that there is even some intervention. But none of this will have any long-term impact on the dollar. Its fate is ultimately in the hands of the Fed. Without a change in policy by the Fed, any intervention gets mopped up immediately. In the end, if the Fed gives in to markets and cuts rates again, the dollar will keep falling. If it stands its ground and eventually retracts recent "emergency" rate cuts, the dollar will rebound.

*Brian S. Wesbury is Chief Economist and Robert Stein, CFA, is Senior Economist at First Trust Advisors*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

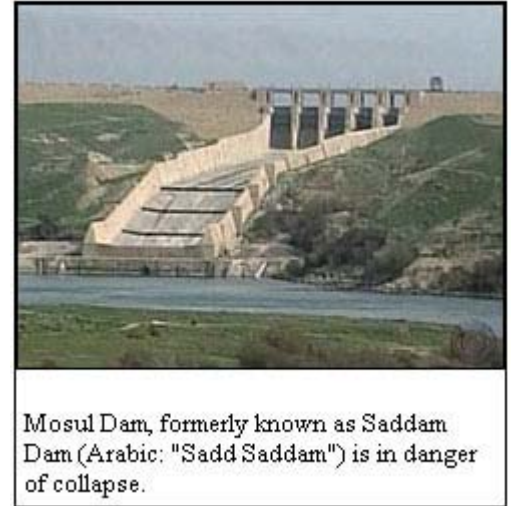
## Whose Iraq Dam Problem?

by Daniel Pipes

Issue 97 - December 12, 2007

The surge of U.S. troops in Baghdad is [succeeding](#) but deeper structural problems continue to plague the American presence in Iraq. The country's largest dam, [40 kilometers northwest of Mosul](#), near the Turkish border, spectacularly symbolizes this predicament.

Just after occupying Iraq in [April 2003](#), a report found that Mosul Dam's foundation was "leaking like a sieve and ready to collapse." A more recent, still-classified report from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers concludes that "The dam is judged to have an unacceptable annual failure probability." More explicitly, the corps finds the [current probability of failure](#) to be "exceptionally high." A senior aid worker calls the dam "a [time bomb](#) waiting to go off."



That's because the dam was built on unstable bedrock of gypsum that requires a constant infusion of grout to prevent the foundation from eroding and the giant earthen wall from collapsing. Over the years, engineers have pumped into the foundation more than 50,000 tons of a bentonite, cement, water, and air mixture. As the *Washington Post* explains, "Twenty-four [clanging machines](#) churn 24 hours a day to pump grout deep into the dam's base. And sinkholes form periodically as the gypsum dissolves beneath the structure."

Despite these efforts, the dam's condition continues to deteriorate, raising the prospect of its complete collapse. Were this to happen with a [reservoir full of water](#), predicts *Engineering News-Record*, "as much as 12.5 billion cubic meters of water pooled behind the 3.2-km-long earth-filled impoundment [would go] thundering down the Tigris River Valley toward Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq. The wave behind the 110-meter-high crest would take about two hours to reach the city of 1.7 million." In addition, parts of Baghdad (population 7 million) would come under 5 meters of water.

The Army Corps estimates the flood would kill a half-million people immediately, while the aftershocks, such as power outage and drought, would kill many more. (Not coincidentally, Iraq was the site of Noah's Ark.) It would likely be the largest human-induced single loss of life in history.

Many [Iraqi officials](#), unfortunately, exhibit a cavalier attitude toward these dangers, further exacerbating the problem. They reject as unnecessary, for example, the Army Corps recommendation to build a second dam downstream as a back-up.

Yet, were a catastrophic failure to take place, who would be [blamed](#) for the unprecedented loss of life? Americans, of course. And understandably so, for the Bush administration took upon itself the overhauling of Iraqi life, including the Mosul Dam. Specifically, the U.S. taxpayer funded attempts to shore it up by [with improved grouting](#), at a cost of US\$27 million. The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction has, however, judged these efforts [mismanaged and ineffective](#).

Massive Iraqi deaths would surely spawn [conspiracy theories](#) about American malevolence, inspiring epic rage against the U.S. government and creating a deep sense of guilt among Americans themselves. Yet, this blame and remorse would be entirely misplaced.

Saudi and other Arab aid – not U.S. monies – funded what was originally called the "Saddam Dam." A [German-Italian consortium](#) headed by Hochtief Aktiengesellschaft built the US\$1.5 billion structure in 1981-84. It had a primarily political goal, to bolster Saddam Hussein's regime during the Iran-Iraq

war. The dam, in other words, had nothing to do with the United States – not in funding, construction, or purpose. Nonetheless, misbegotten American policy has made it an American headache.

Mosul's dam replicates a myriad of lesser problems in Iraqi life that have landed in the lap of Americans (and, to a much lesser extent, their coalition partners), such as provisioning fuel and electricity, working schools and hospitals, a fair political and legal system, and an environment secure from terrorism.

Since April 2003, [I have argued](#) that this shouldering of responsibility for Iraq's domestic life has harmed both Americans and Iraqis. It yokes Americans with unwanted and unnecessary loss of life, financial obligations, and political burdens. For Iraqis, as the dam example suggests, it encourages an irresponsibility with potentially ruinous consequences.

A change of course is needed, and quickly. The Bush administration needs to hand back responsibility for Iraq's ills, including and especially the Mosul Dam. More broadly, it should abandon the deeply flawed and upside-down approach of "[war as social work](#)," whereby U.S. military efforts are judged primarily by the benefits they bring to the defeated enemy, rather than to Americans.

*Mr. Pipes ([www.DanielPipes.org](http://www.DanielPipes.org)) is director of the Middle East Forum.*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Lions For Lambs

by Spencer Warren

Issue 97 - December 12, 2007

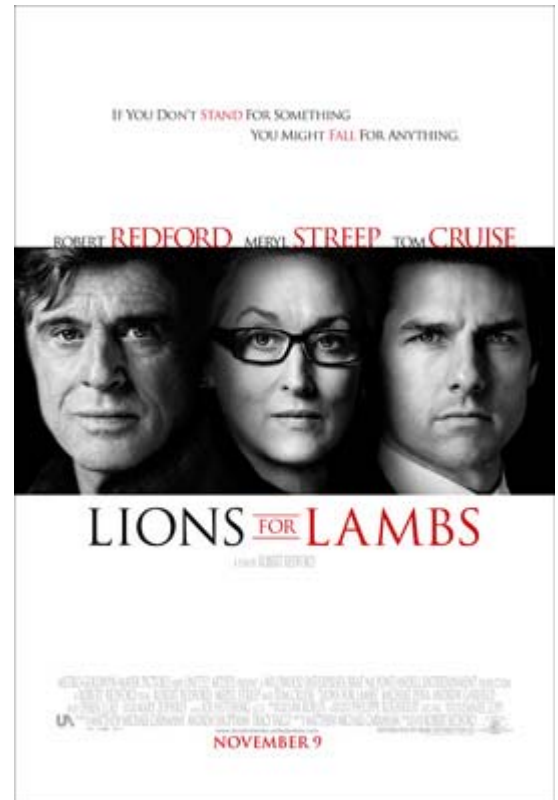
What would you expect of a film directed by Robert Redford and stars himself, Tom Cruise and Meryl Streep? *Lions for Lambs* is one of a number of left-wing movies highly critical of the military and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that have premiered in recent months, joining *In the Valley of Elah* and the now infamous *Redacted*, which features U.S. troops raping and murdering an Iraqi girl and then slaughtering her family. Each has – pardon the metaphor – bombed at the box office, although whether the public’s repudiation will change the attitudes of the hate-America Hollywood left-wingers responsible for the films, or affect their careers, is doubtful. They have a lot of cachet in Hollywood.

*Lions for Lambs* is what a Bill Moyers movie would be if he ever made one. Or, put another way, Redford should have booked himself on the Moyers program for a thirty minute interview instead. There he could have made his points more cogently, at much less expense (the taxpayers would have picked up part of the bill for Moyers’s PBS program), and perhaps to more people than will see his film, which also is proving a box office flop. In the movie – it really can hardly be called a *motion* picture – Redford and the screenwriter set up three parallel scenes between which they intercut for virtually the entire film. Two of the scenes are all talk. In the first, Miss Streep plays a veteran TV journalist, Janine Roth, interviewing in his office the young hot-shot Republican Senator Jasper Irving, played by Tom Cruise. Only in movies do senators have such names. Also only in ludicrous movies like these is a Harvard graduate also a West Point man.

In the film’s first blatant contrivance, the Senator, evidently with official sanction, is giving Janine an exclusive on the great new forward base strategy our forces are executing in Afghanistan even as he speaks. Of course, such a disclosure would come from the executive branch, not the Congress. This gives Redford and his screenwriter the opportunity to frame a very long debate between the hawk Senator and the skeptical journalist. She felt snookered on the Iraq war in 2003 (or maybe she thinks she was lied to about Afghanistan and 9-11 as well – Redford makes this vague, perhaps deliberately) but now is asking the questions she regrets not asking before. They talk and talk, back and forth, on and on.

The second scene takes us to Afghanistan, where a helicopter is transporting U.S. special forces to the first such special base. This so-called “strategy” is the second contrivance; it makes no sense and is designed to depict two of the soldiers, a Hispanic and a Black, getting the shaft by the Senator and all the civilian higher-ups: the helicopter is shot down and they are the sole survivors, trapped in a snow-filled mountain-pass, surrounded by Taliban fighters. They are the “lions” of the title, who pay with their young lives for the hubris of the white establishment personified by Senator Irving, who, we learn, served in the military only in intelligence, not in a combat unit. The Senator represents the “lambs” of the title.

Afghanistan is the only sequence in the film that has any movement. In the third scene, Redford is a political science professor sitting in his office debating a wise-guy student (are students today really so very full of themselves and disrespectful toward their teachers?) about the meaning of life and the special responsibility of the young educated elite in our morally corrupted country. Redford



finally lets us out of his tiny office in a flashback, where we learn two of his other students were the Hispanic and the Black; they were good students who had risen from their oppressed backgrounds and, rejecting Professor Redford's wise guidance, decided to join the Army rather than go to graduate school and embark directly on careers of making a "difference."

The rationale the screenwriter places in the mouths of these two young men is especially convoluted. The film presents them in the most pathetic cliché terms as victims, but ironically the two actually are made victims of the filmmakers' liberal identity, grievance politics. I am not using their character names because their role is only as the Hispanic and the Black – the oppressed, suckered minorities in a didactic, heavy-handed lecture pretending to be a motion picture. Also, their place in this film suggests Redford and his screenwriter, Matthew Michael Carnahan, are confusing the current war with the Vietnam War, where drafted poor minorities did comprise a relatively high percentage of the troops; judging from what I see on television, the volunteer troops in Afghanistan and Iraq have a much lower minority representation. But why let facts get in the way of their liberal race victim narrative? And cannot our non-minority troops suffer the consequences of official ineptitude as well?

The two young victims are shot to death in the freezing mountain-pass before the rescue helicopter arrives. Here director Redford has a moving, distant shot of the two bodies lying in the snow, but, as we usually see in films today, he can't resist a couple of closer shots in a misguided desire to drill his point into the viewer's head. A director who understands his craft, like John Ford and King Vidor (see my review at <http://acuf.org/issues/issue96/071117med.asp>) would allow his more distant, understated, poetic image to inspire the viewer's imagination, which can comprehend the director's point on the deepest emotional level. Like most directors today, Redford thus shows a lack of trust or disrespect for the audience, or perhaps, like the screenwriter, he doesn't understand the art of filmmaking, despite more than forty years in the business.

Near the end, Redford permits Janine the journalist to escape the Senator's office so she can hurry to her network TV producer. This allows Redford to film a scene where the producer insists on presenting the story straight, rejecting her wishes to present it skeptically – thus making the media establishment complicit in the deaths of the Hispanic and Black victims. Redford also finally allows his wise-guy student to escape his professorial inquisition, so he can come out and tell us he has learned that smart kids like him have to become involved in public affairs in order to prevent there being more victims of the white establishment.

This is Redford's idea of a motion picture.

The film does raise some legitimate issues, but they are not presented intelligently, much less in the dramatic form a motion picture requires. Why does the film choose the war in Afghanistan, the origins and conduct of which are not open to the serious questions posed by the Iraq war? The two soldiers who are killed are doing a necessary job in Afghanistan, the place where bin Laden planned 9-11. Perhaps, as noted above, the film is implying the government lied about 9-11 as well as Iraq. But assuming that the film just intends Afghanistan to stand in for Iraq, we must note that many of our troops have apparently died or been wounded in Iraq due to the incompetent "go light" strategy evidently forced on the military by Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz, the latter a typical "policy wonk" without military experience. These civilians overturned years of pre-war planning that called for a much larger invading force. President Bush retained Rumsfeld, in my opinion one of the two worst defense secretaries in history (with Robert McNamara), for far too long, to the point where, unless General Petraeus's surge is allowed by domestic politics all the time it needs to succeed fully, the war may be lost. According to reports, Rumsfeld (and thus Bush) also bear responsibility for inadequate protective equipment, such as the Humvees that lacked armor protection against the enemy's road mines and explosive devices. Further, President Bush to this day has failed to ask the American people to share in the sacrifices of our troops, who have had to endure repeated tours of duty because he inexplicably has failed to expand the size of the Army to shoulder the many extra tasks he has placed in its shoulders.

A good film that did effectively dramatize the plight of soldiers suffering due to incompetence at the top is the 1957 Kirk Douglas World War I drama, directed by Stanley Kubrick, *Paths of Glory*. The issues presented today are more complex, but in any event Redford and company do not have the talent to pull off an effective motion picture dramatizing such issues. Their film is completely misconceived and is simply a product of their left-wing political agenda.

*Spencer Warren is ConservativeBattleline.com's media critic.*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Morning TV Sells Dems

by Rich Noyes

*Issue 97 - December 12, 2007*

A Pew Research Center [poll](#) released late last month found that while four out of five American adults (81%) could name one of the Democratic presidential candidates, far fewer (just 59%) could recall any of the GOP candidates. Even among self-described Republican voters, Pew found "Clinton and Obama are much more visible than Giuliani or any other GOP presidential candidate."

One reason may be that the big broadcast networks have treated the Democratic frontrunners like celebrities worthy of intense coverage, while the Republican candidates have received far less TV time. A new Media Research Center study of the ABC, CBS and NBC morning news shows has found that in the first 10 months of 2007, the networks spent more time covering the Democratic race and spent far more time interviewing the Democratic candidates than the Republicans. And those interviews were much friendlier to the Democrats, with the morning show anchors emphasizing a predominantly liberal agenda.



**Rich Noyes**

These results echo those presented back in August in MRC's Special Report, "[Rise and Shine on Democrats](#)," in which the MRC's Geoff Dickens, Scott Whitlock, Justin McCarthy and I examined how TV's morning shows covered the presidential campaign from January 1 through July 31. For this new report, we studied all 797 campaign stories that aired on NBC's Today, ABC's Good Morning America and CBS's The Early Show from January 1 through October 31.

Once again, we found that all three networks have spent more time covering the Democrats' nomination race than the contest for the GOP nomination. Overall, 431 out of the total 797 campaign segments (54%) focused on the Democrats, compared to 247 (31%) devoted to the Republicans. The remaining 119 stories (15%) either dealt with both parties about equally, or dealt with a nonpartisan campaign topic, such as the growing use of YouTube by all candidates.

Of the three morning shows, ABC's Good Morning America was the most tilted, airing 167 Democratic stories (59%), vs. 83 about the Republicans (29%). CBS's Early Show and NBC's Today were nearly identical in emphasizing Democrats in just over half of all campaign stories (51% on NBC, 52% on CBS), with the GOP featured in less than one-third of stories (32% on each show).

The reason for the disparity: ABC, CBS and NBC have chosen to cover the top Democrats as celebrities, elevating them above the ranks of ordinary candidates. Back in January, the networks excitedly jumped on Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama's official announcements with heavier coverage than any Republican received. Since then, the morning shows have covered the Democratic duo as "rock stars," providing national TV coverage for otherwise trivial campaign events.

In August, for example, NBC's Lee Cowan chronicled the day Obama spent posing as a home health care worker as demanded by the SEIU labor union. "Mr. Mom, he's not. But on a day after some big rallies and high-priced fundraisers, Barack Obama seemed genuinely at home," Cowan warmly reported. A few weeks later, NBC's Andrea Mitchell similarly touted Clinton's day spent shadowing a nurse. Back at the nurse's home for dinner, Mitchell recounted, "[Hillary] pitched right in. She was clearing the table, washing the dishes....She got her hands wet."

In October, all three networks covered Clinton's 60th birthday fundraiser, with ABC's Kate Snow swooning the hardest: "On the eve of this birthday, Hillary is trumpeting the strength of their marriage....Clinton says she never doubted her decision to stay in her marriage, and she says Bill is

romantic, buying impromptu gifts like a gift of a wooden giraffe from this shop in Africa over the summer."

Beyond the day-to-day coverage, TV's morning shows offer candidates a generally friendly forum to speak to millions of viewers. Once again, the networks have given the Democrats an advantage. Since January 1, MRC analysts counted 102 morning show appearances by an announced or prospective presidential candidate or one of their representatives. Of these, nearly two-thirds (64) featured Democrats, compared to just 36 for the Republicans and two for potential independent candidate Michael Bloomberg.

When it came to airtime, the Democratic advantage was even more pronounced. Interviews with the various Democratic campaigns totalled 6 hours 24 minutes, compared to just over three hours (184 minutes) for the GOP, a greater than two-to-one disparity. Top Democrats Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama and John Edwards all received more interview airtime than any Republican candidate. For the GOP, John McCain was granted the most airtime, but his 62 minutes amounted to less than half of the 2 hours 12 minutes received by Clinton's campaign

In addition to tallying the airtime each campaign received, MRC analysts also analyzed the questions posed by the network hosts. While most of the questions were about campaign strategy or the candidates' personal attributes, 191 were policy-oriented questions that could be categorized as reflecting a liberal or conservative view.

An even-handed approach would be to confront candidates of both parties with the best arguments of their opponents. But regardless of whether their guests were Democrats or Republicans, network reporters proposed questions reflecting largely liberal agenda. Of the 137 agenda questions posed to Democrats, 72 percent reflected liberal priorities, as were 80 percent of the 54 agenda questions posed to Republicans.

For example, NBC's Matt Lauer interviewed Hillary Clinton on September 18 and hit her from the left, suggesting her health care plan was too pro-industry and not aggressive enough. "Critics are saying that this in some ways is the kind of plan you would have rejected back in 1993," Lauer scolded. "Have you watered down reform?"

Ten days later, ABC's Good Morning America framed a segment on government-mandated family leave in liberal terms. "There are paid leave proposals in Congress right now. So, what's stopping the government from making the law truly family friendly?" co-host Robin Roberts urged. She cued up Democratic candidate Chris Dodd. "I know you have been very passionate about this in recent years," Roberts told Dodd. "So why isn't Congress moving a little faster on this issue?"

While such liberal questions were a frequent gift to Democratic candidates, Republican candidates were seldom treated to friendly conservative questions. On September 25, after liberal PBS host Tavis Smiley claimed that GOP candidates who skipped his debate were insensitive, ABC's Robin Roberts adopted Smiley's outrage as her premise. "Why are Republicans so reluctant to talk to minorities?" she demanded of Newt Gingrich. On October 15, ABC's Diane Sawyer confronted Iraq war supporter John McCain with the criticisms of retired General Ricardo Sanchez: "America is living in a nightmare with no end in sight."

As for the rare conservative-oriented questions, back on August 13 NBC's Meredith Vieira hit Mitt Romney with the charge that Romney's pro-life position was inauthentic. And as Clinton made the rounds to tout her health care plan on September 18, ABC's Diane Sawyer confronted her with the notion that her plan could be far more expensive than advertised. "Medicare is already \$16 trillion over what has been funded," Sawyer told Clinton, asking of her new program, "can you realistically keep it at \$110 billion?"

The broadcast networks have a responsibility to cover both parties in a fair and even-handed manner. These early returns suggest that ABC, CBS and NBC are instead using their airwaves to boost the Democrats in 2008.

*Rich Noyes is editor of NewsBusters.*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

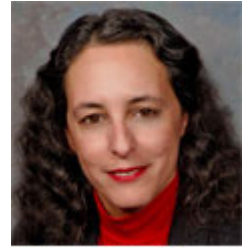
## Draft Gore Movie

by Lisa Fabrizio

Issue 97 - December 12, 2007

I'll admit it. As a huge fan of 1930's music and movies, I've always dreamed of being a lyricist, ala Ira Gershwin or Dorothy Fields. These folks produced songs that were incorporated by Hollywood into what are often referred to as 'screwball comedies'; essentially plotless vehicles for great tunes and snappy repartee.

What passed for plots often featured mistaken identities and usually included parodies of the rich as clueless and helpless, unable to navigate life without the help of the common everyman: see "It Happened One Night" or almost any Astaire and Rogers musical.



Lisa Fabrizio

Recent reports that the 'draft Al Gore' movement is [gaining steam](#), filled me with nostalgia for a winsome time gone by; a harkening back to the days when class envy was the stuff of Hollywood inanity and not the tactical weapon of a political party. I thought that maybe this was worthy of its own holiday song.

I picture the setting as a kind of "Holiday Inn" thing; with liberal pundits--who, like Bing Crosby's character, shun any real work except for a few days a year--sitting around a fireplace and each taking a verse or chorus. The song would start out with a romantic, tinkling-piano intro sung sweetly by say, Donna Brazile, then segue into a rousing blockbuster. Kinda like this:

Autumn leaves are falling and the Yule log's on the fire;

The air is filled with whiffs of potpourri;

Yet the holiday attire only fills me with desire,

For the not-so-favorite son of Tennessee...Gee!

Oh, come on back big Albert, to the folks who adore you;

The greenies and the Deanies are the ones who implore you!

The only thing to set our hearts aflutter will be:

Oh! Re-store, Al Gore to me!

The way your former party-mates are underperforming;

We need a shot of ultra-hot political warming;

You needn't be an alpha male-type genius to see:

Oh! Re-store, Al Gore to me!

*Without you by our side our days are full of hand wringing;*

*And speaking truth to power is no more;*

*If you would just declare, the netroots gang would start pinging:*

*"The happy singing, that you'd be bringing!"*

If you don't join the race our only hope is Ralph Nader;

From Hillary to Johnnie E. there's no one to cater;

They're not enough to fool the rank and file bourgeoisie:

Oh! Re-store, Al Gore to me!

Your campaign might be lacking bucks but you'll never let it

Go down the tubes when you can use that carbon guilt credit;

That your devoted donors buy from your company:

Oh! Re-store, Al Gore to me!

*With Nobel Prize in hand you bring an air of defiance;*

*That even right wing nuts cannot deny;*

*The inconvenient truth is that you walk with the giants:*

*"Your sweet alliance, with men of science!"*

You are the global leader of the climate-change choirs;

And all of those whose minds are closed are out-and-outliers;

Then there's that golden statue from the Academy:

Oh! Re-store, Al Gore to me!

The DLC and Harold Ford may say you're a whacko;

But you can snuff them like a puff of Carthage tobacco;

For Christmas all I want beneath my carbon-based tree:

Oh! Re-store, Al Gore to me!

[Lisa Fabrizio](#) is a columnist who hails from Connecticut.

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Eliminate Gas Tax?

by Alan Caruba

Issue 97 - December 12, 2007

With the cost of a barrel of crude oil edging toward \$100 (remember the good old days when it was *only* \$70?), it's time to look at the gas tax. In August, the Cato Institute published a "Policy Analysis" that was titled, "Don't Increase Federal Gasoline Taxes—Abolish Them."

Masters of turgid prose, Jerry Taylor and Peter Van Doren, Cato senior fellows authored sixteen pages of a tightly reasoned argument against raising the taxes on gasoline, plus seven small-print pages of footnotes documenting their position. A prodigious amount of scholarly effort was invested in this analysis.



Alan Caruba

Fortunately for me, there was an "Executive Summary" on page one that helped to identify the major themes. "Gasoline consumption does not necessarily distort American foreign policy, impose military commitments, or empower Islamic terrorists organizations," say the authors.

"State and federal gasoline taxes should be abolished." That's the kind of thing that catches my attention.

I was thinking about it the other day as I drove a short distance on New Jersey's Route 280, a testament to potholes and the ruination of roadways imposed by a combination of Mother Nature and relentless commuters. As a lad in the 1960's, I was the editor of a weekly newspaper and recall watching the highway's construction. Why, I wondered, wasn't this roadway being maintained properly?

Then I remembered that I was, after all, in New Jersey! Spending money on highway repair is far less glamorous than creating more entitlement programs and borrowing into the next century to pay the pension demands of teachers and other civil servants.

You just have to like people like Taylor and Van Doren who say things like, "In fact, we find no compelling reason for a federal gasoline tax at all and call for its repeal. Nor do we find any compelling case for state gasoline taxes."

According to the American Petroleum Institute, "The nationwide *average* tax on gasoline is 45.8 cents per gallon as of March 2007, up 0.3 cents from October 2006...the federal tax on gasoline is 18.4 cents per gallon. The *average* state gasoline excise tax remained consistent at 18.2 cents per gallon." Other taxes such as sales, oil inspection, underground storage tank, and miscellaneous environmental fees add 9.15 cents per gallon to the average tax. Do the arithmetic.

Taxes differ, however, from state to state. New York extracts 60.8 cents per gallon, while Arizona takes only 37.4.

One of the common arguments for taxes is that the world is running out of oil, but they note this concern is based "on shaky ground...concerns that conventional crude oil is becoming scarce in any meaningful sense have not withstood close scrutiny."

They go on to note that our frequently cited "dependency" on oil imported from "unstable countries" is the result of a conscious decision to continue this practice because it is, in fact, cheaper in many ways.

To those politicians calling for higher taxes to force people to drive less, conserve energy, or switch to solar or wind power, "government solutions have the dubious distinction of being more expensive not just most of the time, but all of the time."

Citing the price fixing in the 1970s when the government wanted to reduce import dependency, the authors note that, "Consumers were made worse off as a consequence." Anyone who remembers the long lines at gas stations can testify to that.

Listening to George W. Bush say that we are "addicted" to oil makes about as much sense as saying we are addicted to water.

The Greens have, as long as my memory serves, hated gasoline as much as DDT. We instinctively know that taxing gasoline "will not discourage highway congestion and reduce accidents on the roadway." And common sense tells us, "A national emissions tax would be inefficient because it would ignore the large geographic variation in damages associated with pollution." That is to say that Los Angeles gets more than, say, Bozeman, Montana.

"Many foreign policy analysts think that U.S. oil imports are dependent on friendly relationships with oil-producing states. The fear is that unfriendly regimes might not sell us oil." Well, tell that to Hugo Chavez in Venezuela or Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad whose economy is dependent on selling oil and not influenced by whether they think George W. Bush is the Devil Incarnate.

Moreover, "The fact that Saudi Arabia and Kuwait paid for 55 percent of the cost of Operation Desert Storm suggests that keeping the Straits of Hormuz free of trouble is certainly within their means." To those who say we are in Iraq because of that nation's oil, the memory of 9/11 has grown very dim indeed. We are also in Afghanistan, a nation famous for its heroin, not oil production. Keeping one's eye on the ball, i.e., terrorism fueled by Islamic fanaticism, is essential when all manner of spurious reasons are given to raise taxes on gasoline.

"Once oil leaves the territory of a producer, market agents dictate where the oil goes, not agents of the producer, and anyone willing to pay the prevailing world crude oil price can have all he wants."

What gasoline taxes do is "extract revenue" and this is what politicians live for. It has little to do with whether it makes any sense for Americans to be paying taxes on an energy source that is absolutely essential to our daily lives and the welfare of the national economy.

If I thought the potholes on Route 280 would actually be fixed, I wouldn't mind that much about the gasoline tax I pay every time I fill up the tank, but I stopped believing in the Tooth Fairy along about the time I concluded that government is a confiscatory enterprise with little concern for my well being or wallet.

*Alan Caruba writes a weekly column, "Warning Signs", posted on the Internet site of The National Anxiety Center, [www.anxietycenter.com](http://www.anxietycenter.com). He is the author of "Right Answers: Separating Fact from Fantasy", published by Merril Press.*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Free Government Housing?

by Paul Weyrich

*Issue 97 - December 12, 2007*

Have you ever been to a Communist or former Communist country? If so I am sure you have seen street after street of government-funded housing. Usually this consists of numerous drab apartment buildings crammed together with tiny apartments inside. But at least everyone is "equal" and has housing, right?

Historically, Americans have been averse to reliance upon governmental munificence, preferring instead to keep their hard-earned money and buy or build a house or apartment that suited their lifestyle and their needs. For this reason, the Constitution does not enumerate the power to provide housing for anyone as a function of the Federal Government.



Paul M. Weyrich

How times have changed. The House of Representatives passed H.R. 2895, the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund of 2007, by a vote of 264-148 and the bill now goes to the Senate. The bill would allocate up to \$1 billion per year to construct or repair 1.5 million low-income housing units in the next ten years. This is in addition to all of the low-income housing the Federal Government already provides.

Several Representatives who supported the bill preached about the need for the Federal Government to provide "affordable" housing for the poor. Representative Barney Frank (D-MA), the bill's sponsor, stated, "The Trust Fund will be the largest expansion in federal housing programs in decades." He also declared on the House Floor that "providing affordable housing for America [is] one of our greatest social and economic needs." His colleague Maxine Waters (D-CA) said the bill will put the Federal Government back in the affordable housing production business. Who knew it even belonged there in the first place?

Representative Waters also stated, "I want to emphasize that H.R. 2895 does so at no additional cost to taxpayers. It is a trust fund in the truest sense, a dedicated source of revenue, separate and apart from the annual appropriations process, reflecting the need for the Federal Government to make a long overdue commitment to affordable housing production."

This is part of the problem with our elected officials. They believe that if they declare something to be free then it is, as if by magic. The truth is that nothing is free. Someone must pay for this and other government entitlement programs. Usually the burden falls upon the middle class in the form of higher taxes. Or, according to the current trend in Congressional spending, our elected officials simply ignore the costs of the programs they enact or expand and push them off into the future, refusing to deal responsibly now with the coming fiscal crisis. Either way taxpayers have to pay for their own houses and someone else's.

In spite of the enthusiastic, feel-good rhetoric, the purpose of H.R. 2895 is similar to that of so much other legislation that creates or expands entitlement programs. It produces a group of people beholden to the generosity of the Federal Government for their daily needs. In other words, legislators create a solid voting bloc among their constituents who have an interest in maintaining them in power. It is as disgraceful to American politics as it is disingenuous.

It would, of course, be wonderful if all housing were affordable for the poor and the middle class but it is not the job of the government to build or distribute houses. It requires hard work and smart savings to afford a house, not instant handouts from the Federal Government. President George W. Bush has stated he will veto H.R. 2895 should it come before him. If it does may he fulfill his commitment.

*Paul M. Weyrich is Chairman and CEO of the Free Congress Foundation.*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Big Government Book

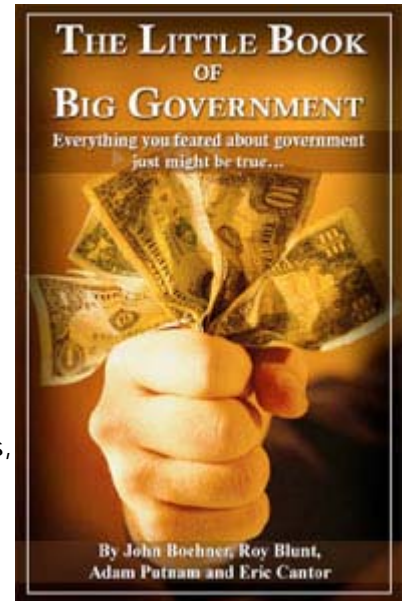
by Neil Bradley

Issue 97 - December 12, 2007

Recently, the Republican Leadership produced a booklet presenting a compilation of useful facts, figures, and examples to assist Republicans in making the case for a smaller, less intrusive, more efficient, and more effective federal government. As we enter the long-anticipated spending battle with congressional Democrats, it is our hope that this document will provide Members, staff, and our supporters with easy to access – and even easier to use – information for use in crafting speeches, preparing for interviews and writing op-eds.

The “Little Book of Big Government” can be downloaded from the Republican Whip’s web site: “[Little Book of Big Government.](#)” In addition, we have set up an e-mail address where anyone can send new tidbits, facts, and examples to help bolster the case for restraining runaway government. That e-mail address is [LBBG@mail.house.gov](mailto:LBBG@mail.house.gov). Finally, we intend to provide updates to the booklet as appropriate via the website and e-mail.

*Neil L. Bradley is Policy Director, Office of the Republican Whip  
Congressman Roy Blunt*



---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Prosecutors Out of Control

by *Nathan Tabor*

*Issue 97 - December 12, 2007*

The actions of former-District Attorney Mike Nifong in the Duke University lacrosse case have put the problem of prosecutorial abuse front and center for all Americans. Nifong, although a local prosecutor, has become the poster boy of prosecutorial abuse on every government level. With a story line that included sex, racial tensions, and gender and income inequality, the Duke case captured the attention of the media and the nation. We now know that Nifong willfully disregarded evidence of the boys' innocence and thanks in large part to enormous public attention and condemnation, he has been rightly stripped of his badge and the keys to his office.



Nathan Tabor

Similar attention is drawn to cases with strong partisan interest like the obstruction of justice case against Vice President Dick Cheney's aid Scooter Libby and the corruption case against Louisiana Democrat William Jefferson, where public opinion is sharply divided but nevertheless intense. Regardless of the merit if the case is sexy enough, the media pay attention.

The same cannot be said for less popular cases. As a result, we are moving toward a system where Constitutional rights of the accused are guaranteed only to those deemed by television editors to be ready for prime-time. In cases where the public interest is of lower intensity, prosecutors seem to have almost free reign. One need only go to the home district of the new Attorney General Michael Mukasey and Senate Judiciary Committee member Sen. Charles Schumer, to demonstrate the problem.

In *USA v. Stein*, Assistant United States Attorney Stanley Okula of the Southern District of New York (SDNY) was one of the lead prosecutors in a case against executives from accounting giant KPMG. At about the same time, he also prosecuted three cases against members of the Tollman family, a wealthy family based in Britain and Canada. Rather than a made-for-Hollywood plot line, these cases lacked the sympathetic defendants or partisan interests it seems are now needed to have ones Constitutional rights guaranteed. Predictably, there was little noise from the media and public about these cases, despite Okula being criticized by the judges of three nations.

In the KPMG case, Okula's prosecution was found to have violated the defendant's Fifth and Sixth Amendment rights. The judge wrote that the prosecutors "used their life and death power over KPMG to coerce its personnel to bend to the government's wishes" and described the prosecutors actions as "outrageous and shocking". In the Tollman cases--Okula went after the family in Canada, Britain and the United States--judges have been similarly critical, including a British judge describing Okula's actions as "reprehensible" and a Canadian judge saying "misconduct of this sort cannot ever be tolerated".

Despite this extraordinarily harsh rebukes by three courts in three different countries, Okula continues to practice law, ready to once again run roughshod over the Constitutional rights of defendants. From the court documents, it is clear the prosecutions never should have been brought in the first case. But the rich make easy targets and provide prosecutors a reputation for being for the little guy, which does not hurt if one has political ambitions in a democracy.

Should we care about injustice against the rich as with the KPMG executives or the wealthy Tollman family? The Canadian judge reminds us why. "If the system went awry for [Tollman], what hope is there for the weak, the poor and those less powerful? The answer must be in the vigilance of the justice system itself."

As Thomas Jefferson warned us, "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance."

*Nathan Tabor is a conservative activist based in Kernersville, NC. He is the author of *The Beast on the East River* (Thomas Nelson Publishing) and the Founder and CEO of [TCVmedia.com](http://TCVmedia.com) and [TheConservativeVoice.com](http://TheConservativeVoice.com).*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Arctic Warming, Antarctic Cooling?

by Dennis Avery

Issue 97 - December 12, 2007

The global warming alarmists are at it again, shrieking about “ice melt at the Poles.”

“The relentless grip of the Arctic Ocean that defied man for centuries is melting away,” warned Doug Struck in the *Washington Post*. “The sea ice reaches only half as far as it did 50 years ago. In the summer of 2006, it shrank to a record low. This summer, the ice pulled back even more, by an area nearly the size of Alaska.”



Dennis T. Avery

NASA’s James Hansen keeps claiming that CO<sup>2</sup> is “pushing the climate past its tipping point.”

British banks are sending “volunteers” to the Arctic to see for themselves the loss of sea ice, and to view the “endangered” polar bears—whose numbers have tripled in recent years.

Ho hum. Just another day at the scare factory.

Point one: We’ve known for 20 years about the earth’s moderate, natural 1,500-year climate cycle, which we discovered in the Greenland and Antarctic ice cores. The ice shows seven previous global warmings in the past 12,000 years. Two of these—8,000 years ago and 5,000 years ago—were, for many centuries, substantially warmer than today. The Greenland and Antarctic ice caps didn’t melt.

Point two: This can’t be global warming. 1) The Arctic was also warm in the 1920s; the Russians say it happens every 70 years or so. 2) The Antarctic Ice is now at a modern high. The Antarctic has been cooling since the 1960s, according to Peter Doran’s 2002 paper in *Nature*. Thanks to warming’s additional snowfall, the East Antarctic ice cap is currently gaining about 45 billion tons of ice per year.

Neels Reeh of the University of Denmark says that another 1 degree C of warming would melt enough Greenland ice to raise sea levels perhaps half an inch per year—but added ice in the Antarctic would *lower* sea level almost that much. The net increase has been six inches per century, and it isn’t expected to change.

Why not? Cliff Ollier, well-known geoscientist from the University of Western Australia, writes to say that Hansen is just a climate modeler who doesn’t understand either ice caps or their melting. He thinks the whole ice cap melting thing is a figment of the climate modelers’ computerized imaginations, conjured up to ensure that we’re properly frightened of global warming. Otherwise, the grant money might dry up.

If the media only reported facts, who would be frightened about sea levels rising at the current rate of six inches per century? Who’d be frightened by the earth warming just two-tenths of a degree C over the past 70- years?

Ice caps don’t melt from the surface down, they melt only at the edges. Once the edges are melted, further ice loss depends on the uphill weight of the ice built up over previous centuries. The ice flows—reluctantly because it’s so cold—on the warmer ice at its base, with the upper, brittle ice carried downhill by its own weight. When a chunk of ice reaches the edge of the cap it falls off—and the AP writes a news story. That’s neither melting nor collapse.

The Greenland ice cap is 2–3 kilometers deep and much of its ice lies inside a basin that won't slide off. Its undisturbed ice dates back at least 105,000 years. The temperatures over the ice are well below freezing, at about -30 degrees C in the north, and -20 degrees C in the south.

The Antarctic ice cores date back more than 760,000 years, in the coldest place on earth. The lowest recorded temperature was -89 C at Vostok in 1983. The highest Vostok temperature taken was -19 C in 1992—still far below freezing.

By the way, even the southernmost polar bear population is doing fine in the Davis Strait, with higher numbers and some of the largest bears yet seen.

*Dennis Avery was a senior policy analyst for the U.S. State Department, where he won the national intelligence medal of achievement. He is the co-author, with atmospheric physicist Fred Singer, of the book, **Unstoppable Global Warming—Every 1500 Years**, available from Rowman & Littlefield. Readers may write him at the Center for Global Food Issues ([www.cgfi.org](http://www.cgfi.org)) post Office Box 202, Churchville, VA 24421.*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Malaria Correctness

by Paul Driessen

*Issue 97 - December 12, 2007*

If an accident kills wildlife or people, punishment is meted out and restitution made. A host of regulators, lawyers, judges, activists, journalists and politicians help bring the wrongdoers to justice.

But when it comes to policies and programs that sicken and kill millions of parents and children a year, these ethics cops and eco warriors are not just silent. They refuse to hold government agencies and activist groups to the same honesty and accountability standards they apply to for-profit companies. They even oppose programs that would reduce disease and save lives.



Paul Driessen

More than 2 billion people worldwide are at risk of getting malaria, and 350-500 million contract it every year, mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa. The disease kills up to a million African children annually, making it the continent's greatest executioner of children under age five.

In Uganda alone, a nation of 30 million people, 60 million cases of malaria caused 110,000 deaths in 2005. In its Apac District, a person is likely to be bitten 1,560 times a year by mosquitoes infected with malaria parasites. The disease also perpetuates poverty (sick people can't work) and increases deaths from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, diarrhea and malnutrition.

Controlling and eradicating this serial killer ought to be a global priority. But far too many organizations fail to take sufficient measures, while others actively oppose critically needed interventions.

UNICEF partners with Malaria No More to raise money from donors, distribute educational materials and long-lasting insecticide-treated bednets (LLINs), provide anti-malarial drugs, and save lives. "Sometimes" they organize teams to spray insecticides on the inside walls of houses, to "kill the female mosquito after she feeds on a person" (and frequently infects him or her). Under "some special circumstances," they support treating mosquito breeding sites, if the larvacides are "environmentally friendly."

All these interventions will help reduce disease and death tolls. They will garner plaudits from environmental activists. But these limited measures will not result in No More Malaria. Unless and until their programs include regular use of larvacides and insecticides to control mosquitoes, and DDT in selected cases to keep the flying killers out of houses, UNICEF and MNM will not even come close to reducing malaria cases and deaths to what a moral person would deem tolerable levels: close to zero – not 50% or even 25% of current levels.

Kenya claims widespread distribution of insecticide-treated nets cut malaria deaths in half, in the short run anyway, when regular compliance was monitored. But that means 15,000 people are still dying each year. For Uganda, a 50% reduction via nets would mean 30,000,000 cases and 55,000 deaths.

Uganda 's Ministry of Health recently studied 410 children who had been given LLINs and instructed in how to use them. Within two to three weeks, 52% of the children were again infected with malaria.

"The use of nets relies greatly on behavioral change and compliance, while indoor spraying eliminates that factor and protects everyone in the sprayed house," noted Malaria Program Director John Rwakimari.

And yet misguided aid agencies, radical environmentalists and pseudo ethicists are telling African nations they should be happy with nets, "sometimes" use of limited insecticides, and a 50% reduction in malaria cases and deaths – because these activists in malaria-free countries dislike chemicals.

Equally unacceptable, 60% of African child malaria victims are still being "treated" with chloroquine, which no longer kills African plasmodium parasites. The typical justification is that chloroquine is much less expensive than Artemisia-based combination therapies (ACT drugs) that do work.

In other words, medical malpractitioners are saying it is better to give millions of children cheap drugs that don't work, and let thousands of them die – than it is to give fewer children more expensive drugs that work, and ensure that they live. By failing to support chemical mosquito killers and repellants, they are also guaranteeing tens of millions of needless malaria cases every year, continued shortfalls of effective medicines, and countless unnecessary deaths.

That is unforgivable, unconscionable and immoral.

To achieve moral levels of malaria, countries need comprehensive, integrated programs that include every weapon in the arsenal. None is appropriate in all places, at all times. But all must be available, so that they can be employed at the proper time and place. That is why the U.S. Agency for International Development, President's Malaria Initiative and World Health Organization determined that these chemical weapons are vital in the war on malaria, and safe for people and the environment.

Larvacides, insecticides and DDT – in conjunction with nets and other interventions – can reduce the number of malaria victims dramatically, and ensure that people who still get malaria can be treated with ACT drugs like Coartem. These truly integrated strategies have enabled South Africa, Botswana, Swaziland and Zanzibar to largely eradicate malaria.

Uganda, where I just spent a week on an anti-malaria mission, is using larvacides, insecticides, nets and other interventions. It has sprayed 95% of households in Kabale District (with Icon) – and slashed the prevalence of malaria parasites in residents from 30% before spraying to 3% afterward.

Three other districts have also been sprayed, and Uganda's Ministry of Health plans to spray another 15 highly endemic areas in 2008, including the Apac District. In January, it will add DDT to its program, for indoor residual spraying that will keep at least 70% of mosquitoes from entering homes for up to six or eight months, with a single application.

Radical environmentalists are trying to stir up opposition to DDT and other spraying programs, and some people in USAID and WHO continue undermining efforts to utilize chemical interventions. However, Uganda is adamant about ending the needless slaughter of its children and parents. President Yoweri Museveni, Director General of Health Services Sam Zaramba and other leaders know DDT will save lives.

Anti-pesticide activists claim insecticide spraying is not sustainable. They are wrong – on financial, practical, public health and moral grounds.

What are not sustainable are nothing-but-nets programs that require constant monitoring to ensure daily use and moderate success – while raising the risk that mosquitoes will become resistant to pyrethroid pesticides that impregnate the nets, and parasites will become resistant to drugs that by default become the primary weapon in the war on malaria.

What are truly not sustainable are unconscionable malaria tolls that result from politically correct policies that are best described as lethal experimentation on African children.

*Paul Driessen is senior policy advisor for the Congress of Racial Equality and Committee For A Constructive Tomorrow, and author of Eco-Imperialism: Green power · Black death ([www.Eco-Imperialism.com](http://www.Eco-Imperialism.com))*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Candidates on Health

by John Goodman

*Issue 97 - December 12, 2007*

I served as one of the judges for the National Journal's recently published report card on the health plans of the leading Democrat (Clinton, Edwards and Obama) and Republican (Giuliani, McCain, and Romney) presidential candidates.

In some cases, my scores differed substantially from those of the other judges. Anyway, here is my take:



**John Goodman**

**Most Radical:** McCain by a long shot. He would completely replace our arbitrary, regressive, wasteful system of tax subsidies for private health insurance with a \$2,500 refundable tax credit for everybody (\$5,000 for couples). By contrast, the leading Democrats would not repeal a single existing subsidy; they just add new ones. (That is why their plans are so costly.)

**Most Expensive:** Clinton and Edwards. By their own reckoning their plans would cost more than \$1,000 per year for every household in America. Obama, a mere piker, comes in at only half that amount.

**Most Oppressive:** Edwards. All three Democrats would force people to buy insurance, whether they want to or not. Mandates of one sort or another would be imposed on individuals and/or small businesses and/or large businesses. Edwards (a true believer in the nanny state as well as a nanny health care system) would even mandate preventive medicine. (You veel get your mammogram!)

**Least Coherent:** Hillary. The Democratic Party is full of people who are dead certain they know how to reform health care. Unfortunately, they don't agree with each other. Some want socialism (Medicare for everybody). Some want to keep their current employer plan. Some want the health system available to members of Congress. Hillary's answer: All of the above. Everybody can pick and choose.

**Most Loyal to Bush's Vision:** Giuliani. He endorses the idea of a standard health insurance deduction that is independent of the amount people spend. Economists love this idea, because it eliminates perverse incentives in the current system. (No one could lower his taxes by buying more insurance.) Unfortunately, voters haven't a clue what this means.

**Least Loyal to his Own Vision:** Romney. He enters the contest with a huge advantage. He engineered a bi-partisan plan to credibly create universal coverage in Massachusetts. (Compare that to Hillary's failed reform.) So what does Romney do when he gets in front of primary voters? Pretends it never happened.

Now let's turn to the questions of cost, quality and access. Regular readers of Health Alerts will not be surprised to learn that the results are disappointing.

**Problem of Cost.** If you agree with me that we cannot control costs unless someone is forced to choose between health care and other uses of money, then the Democratic plans are a disaster. They don't even mention Health Savings Accounts and all leave the impression that ideal health insurance is first dollar coverage. To make matters worse, Clinton and Edwards would inject an additional \$1 trillion-plus dollars into the system over the next 10 years.

All three Republicans endorse HSAs, which encourage cost control despite all the defects in their current configuration. Romney is most explicit about endorsing complete HSA flexibility - which would greatly expand their use and their impact. Unfortunately, Romney offsets these advantages

with an aberrant idea - the deductibility of all out-of-pocket spending. (This is a virtual invitation to all taxpayers to spend, spend, spend!) McCain gets the edge from me here because he completely removes the incentives to overinsure and appears to back the concept of a flexible HSA.

**Problem of Quality.** If you agree with me that substantial quality improvements are not possible unless providers compete for patients based on price (and therefore on quality), then again the Democratic plans are a disappointment. None of them envision patients paying a real price for anything. To make matters worse, they all to one degree or another endorse managed competition - a system under which health plans have an incentive to overprovide to the healthy and underprovide to the sick (more on that in a future Health Alert). Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that the Republicans will not also succumb to the allure of this faulty idea - as Romney did in Massachusetts. The redemption for the Republicans is HSAs. To the degree patients manage their own health care dollars, they will force providers to compete on price and quality.

**Problem of Access.** If you agree with me that access to care for low-income families will not improve unless they have access to the same doctors and facilities that other patients have, we are left with a mixed bag. All the Democratic candidates endorse an expansion of Medicaid and SCHIP. Given MIT economist Jon Gruber's estimate of crowd out, this implies that millions of people would move from private plans (where they generally have wide access) to public plans (where access is limited). On the other hand, it's hard to spend \$120 billion a year without some expansion of private coverage. So on balance, the Democratic plans are moderately positive on this measure. I give higher marks to the three Republicans because I assume they would use free care and Medicaid and S-CHIP money to enroll people in private plans - where access to care is much greater. But not much higher, because none of them is explicit enough on these points.

I cannot resist commenting on one more reform idea. Sen. Clinton has repeatedly stressed that insurance premiums should be totally unrelated to health status. But they are already largely unrelated. Do you suppose she intends to go all the way - allowing people (no matter how sick) to enroll in any plan at the drop of a hat? If so, the number of uninsured would double or triple. (Why pay expensive premiums when you are healthy if insurance is always available once you get sick.) The problem with grading her plan is: do we take her statements seriously?

*John Goodman is President of the National Center for Policy Analysis.*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Harassing Charity

by Bob Barr

*Issue 97 - December 12, 2007*

I am considering sending the following letter to U.S. Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa:

"Dear Sen. Grassley:

I see where you recently sent letters to six ministries in four states, including my home state of Georgia, requesting detailed information on the finances of those ministries. Apparently, your concern was sparked, at least in part, by reports that these ministries and the individuals leading them might be spending monies in excess of what you believe is proper and in excess of what a tax-exempt institution is allowed.



Bob Barr

I commend your diligence in monitoring the funds donated to these ministries.

Being now aware of your keen interest as a watchdog for questionable spending patterns, I would urge you to inquire into the practices of a certain individual who exhibits the following expenses that appear to indicate a lavish business lifestyle far in excess of that which his reported annual salary of \$165,200 could reasonably sustain:

- He maintains a beautifully decorated and expansive office in one of the most exclusive addresses in Washington, D.C.
- He keeps six additional offices in the state that is his permanent declared residence.
- He has an office staff of at least three dozen men and women.
- His travel expenses run into the tens of thousands of dollars each year.
- He works for a nonprofit entity that spends lavishly on all manner of programs not authorized by its charter and that are far in excess of its income each year."

Oh, I'm sorry, I neglected to give you the suspect person's name. It is U.S. Sen. Charles Grassley, whose primary office is in the Hart Senate Office Building, and who maintains six additional offices in the state of Iowa.

Obviously, Grassley is not going to investigate himself, even though there appear to be superficial questions concerning his ability to maintain a huge staff and multiple offices on a senator's salary. And it makes about as much sense for him to use the power of his Senate office to inquire into the expenditures of a handful of pastors because they reportedly spend money on items that don't meet his notion of legitimate expenditures.

The fact is, the items on which the Rev. Creflo Dollar and Bishop Eddie Long of Georgia —and their colleagues in other states who have received letters of inquiry from Grassley — spend their money apparently do meet with the approval of their constituents. In this respect the ministers are just like Grassley, since, presumably, the Iowa Senator's constituents approve of the manner in which he is spending their "donations" (even though others may take issue with how the senator spends money over which he has control).

For both the senator and the ministers, if there were any real evidence any of them were defrauding those funding their operations, there are legitimate, clearly defined avenues of redress. Attempting to intimidate private citizens, especially those heading recognized religious institutions, however, is not among them. If the good senator believes Dollar, Long or any other minister of a tax-exempt organization is defrauding their constituents or the government, then he can — indeed, should —

request that the appropriate federal agency investigate to determine if such allegations are true and if so, prosecute them.

Additionally, if the leaders of any one of the ministers suspect in Grassley's eyes is defrauding their donors, then those believing themselves cheated have full recourse to the courts of this land to seek redress and hold the ministers accountable.

This is the path that those at Oral Roberts University in Oklahoma have chosen to pursue. Interestingly, Grassley chose not to investigate Oral Roberts ministries.

Grassley may simply have forgotten he is no longer chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, but only the ranking minority (Republican) member. As such, he cannot himself compel any person — minister or layperson — to turn over to him detailed financial information of their income or expenses to peruse at his leisure and share with whomever he might like. The majority Democratic Party is now empowered to do that. It is hoped, in accord with long-standing precedent, including the doctrine of separation of powers, the majority will exercise sounder judgment than the ranking member.

For now, Dollar, Long and the others should pray for the senator and simply ignore his ill-advised and unenforceable request.

*Former congressman and U.S. Attorney Bob Barr practices law in Atlanta. Web site: [www.bobbarr.org](http://www.bobbarr.org)*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Talking Federalism

by David Keene

*Issue 97 - December 12, 2007*

M. Stanton Evans, one of the fathers of the modern conservative movement, once promulgated what he dubbed "Evans's Law," which held, quite simply, that "once our conservative friends get themselves elected or appointed to a position of influence we discover that they're no longer our friends."

Stan's point was that elected officials in particular tend to forget what got them into politics in the first place and abandon promises and principles in favor of whatever they think might be needed to win reelection. Evans's Law was demonstrated by the conservatives who got themselves elected to Congress in 1994 and, finding themselves in the majority, went on a spending binge.



David Keene

It also explains the peculiar tendency of politicians in the White House to forget that the Founders didn't intend the president to be a king and that the Constitution they bequeathed to us was all about limiting executive, legislative and even judicial power through a system of checks and balances in a federal system that was designed to protect all of us from rulers convinced that they know better than anyone what we need and what freedoms we ought to be able to exercise.

Thus, presidents from the beginning have tried to expand their own power at the expense of the other branches, and those branches have fought back and on more than one occasion tried to seize more power than the Founders granted them.

I remember a meeting of my fellow conservatives back in the early '90s discussing welfare reform and the concept of block-granting programs to the states. The argument was, of course, that local and state officials, being closer to the people than those of us toiling within the Beltway, might be in a better position to decide how monies should be spent and on what. One leading conservative expert on welfare reform objected on the grounds that "we can't trust the governors."

I was taken aback by this response, but quickly realized that a corollary of Evans's Law might be that politicians bent upon achieving their substantive agendas will almost always decide that meaningful decisions should be made by them, regardless of constitutional or theoretical niceties.

This fact was brought home to me recently when GOP presidential wannabe Mike Huckabee suggested that as president he would, for the good of the people, support a federal anti-smoking law. You see, as governor, Huckabee supported such laws because, well, he doesn't like smoking and doesn't think folks should indulge in so health-threatening an activity. If he could move on up to the presidency, he would continue his abolitionist crusade at the national level without giving much, if any, thought to the question of whether the Constitution or anything else would legitimize a federal ban on smoking.

It was therefore rather refreshing to find the laconic Fred Thompson on Sunday suggesting that in spite of his own views on a number of subjects, he would, as president, resist the temptation to impose those views on the entire nation and all the states just because they are his views.

That has upset some of his supporters, and at least one adviser has abandoned Thompson's campaign because the candidate doesn't believe the federal government should be in the business of defining marriage. He believes that in our system the federal government and the courts ought to butt out and let the states, through their elected legislatures, deal with the issue. That's not President Bush's view, but a lot of conservatives who believe it is as important to know who ought to do what as to know what ought to be done share his position.

He goes further and suggests that if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned and abortion policy is returned to the states, he would leave it there in spite of his strong and unquestioned pro-life position. These sorts

of answers won't satisfy those more interested in ends than means, but I find them both intriguing and interesting. They are also the answers one might expect from a conservative who, unlike the former governor of Arkansas, has read and understands the Constitution ... or parts of it.

But remember Evans's Law. When he was last in a position of power, Thompson was perfectly willing to skip over the First Amendment in championing his campaign finance reform agenda, so we don't know what he might do if he ever makes it to the White House.

But at least he's talking a good game.

*David Keene is the chairman of the American Conservative Union.*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Ruinous Sugar Politics

by Warren Coats

*Issue 97 - December 12, 2007*

Late month I spent a week in Nairobi Kenya discussing monetary policy with seven senior officials from the Bank of Southern Sudan (BoSS), the branch of the Central Bank of Sudan set up in the South as part of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended Africa's longest civil war.

I didn't want to go to Sudan, so they agreed to meet me in Nairobi. The gathering included three days of 9 to 5 lectures, the most lecturing I have ever done in three days. It was exhausting but well received and fun. We are all crossing our fingers that the civil war does not reignite before the African South votes for independence from the Arab North in 2011, at which time BoSS will become the Central Bank of Southern Sudan.



I have tried in these notes to share experiences from my travels that shed light on current events. I have avoided preaching to you about my political views on other topics. Our great country is full of first rate political commentators with whom I could hardly compete. This is a mini exception, justified I hope by the fact that I spent two college summers working for the Speckle Sugar Company in Kern County, California.

The sugar beet industry in the U.S was launched in the mid 1960s to fill the sugar gap created by the then new U.S. economic boycott of Castro's Cuba. We thereby hurt ourselves and our national security in two ways. First, like virtually all economic (as opposed to military) embargoes, this one strengthened Castro's hold on Cuba and weakened the communist opposition within Cuba by making Cuban society more dependent on its government in coping with the impact of the embargo. Secondly, by subsidizing a U.S. sugar industry that was otherwise uncompetitive, rather than importing it from other more efficient sugar producers, we diminished (modestly) our economy's productivity and thus our economic strength, which is an essential aspect of our military and political strength in the world.

Since that time we have significantly liberalized our economy (banking, airlines, and telecommunications, to name a few) and greatly liberalized and expanded trade with the rest of the world. As a result, the U.S. economy has grown rapidly, and employment and the standard of living for virtually everyone has increased significantly. Unemployment is at historically low levels. But we still have the artificially created "temporary" sugar industry and the subsidies without which it could not exist. Forty years later we still have Castro and the economic waste of an uncompetitive sugar industry.

A bill now in Congress would authorize another billion dollars (we didn't use to even speak in terms of such large numbers) over the next ten years to keep this otherwise non viable industry going and to keep out competition. You pay for this in taxes and again in higher sugar prices. "The Government Accountability Office has estimated that the sugar program costs consumers and food processors between 1 billion and 2 billion annually" (Washington Post 11/4/07).

How can this happen? So far this year alone, "nine sugar farm or refining groups have made more than 900 separate contributions totaling nearly 1.5 million dollars to candidates, parties and political funds..." ( Washington Post 11/4/07).

The government's increasing catering to special interests is wasting more and more precious resources, but more worryingly it is increasing a climate of corruption. There is no other honest

name for the buying of favors by special interest groups against the interests of the country as a whole. It is a result of government involving itself in the economy in unnecessary and undesirable ways. It will eat away at our economic strength and thus our military and political strength unless we can restore a more limited roll for government.

*Warren Coats is an international financial consultant.*

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Reason and Child Sex Abuse

by Stephen Ralston

*Issue 97 - December 12, 2007*

In regard to Carey Roberts' "4 Year-old Sex Fiends," first, let me be perfectly clear on one issue. "ANY" abuse of a child, in any form, by an adult, is not only pathetic, its disgusting, its revolting, its irresponsible, its illegal, its immoral, and most of all, its unacceptable! There are NO if, ands, or buts, it is totally unacceptable. Personally, it makes me sick to my stomach that an adult would do anything like that to a child.

However, there must be an injection of basic common sense into this issue. When a kid hugs an aide, "longer than someone feels is appropriate," we need to try to understand what that means exactly. A kid, who may or may not have had a bad day on the playground, may or may not be facing difficult times at home as Mom and Daddy argue over finances or whatever, sometimes needs to hang onto an adult, authority figure, a person they trust, and feel safe with. Kids love to hug when their feelings are in turmoil. And to assert there is something wrong with that is in and of itself suspect.



Roberts reported, "Last year a pre-schooler in Waco, Tex. hugged a female aide as he boarded the school bus. The four-year-olds embrace lingered a bit long, and soon the boy was required to defend himself from a charge of sexual harassment. The scarlet letter of "inappropriate physical contact" is now stamped on the child's school records." Now lets be real here folks. A "PRE-SCHOOLER" is accused of inappropriate sexual conduct for hugging an aide? Comeon. Get real!

It is also reported, "Middle school students in McMinnville, Ore. designated Fridays as Slap Butt Day. Those days 'pretty much we would just go around slapping people's butts,' recounted Megan Looney. But one day the local police got wind of the racy activities. They came in and arrested 12-year-old Ryan Cornelison and 13-year-old Cory Mashburn, charging each with five counts of felony sex abuse. Six times the teenage boys were subjected to a strip search. Six days later they were released from jail. Then it took the judge six months to hear a motion to dismiss the case, even though the 'victims' had signed affidavits saying they wanted the charges to be dropped."

There is no way these kids were conducting "FELONY SEX ABUSE" in their school tradition of "slap butt day." It may be childish, but there are kids here. It may be inappropriate. But these are kids here. If they had been repeatedly warned, if they had faced disciplinary actions previously, if their hands had lingered & they felt up the party slapped, "THEN" you "MIGHT" have a case.

A school administrator justifies these actions as follows, "It's important to understand a child may not realize that what he or she is doing may be considered sexual harassment, but if it fits under the definition, then it is, under the state's guidelines."

It seems to me the state has issued "guidelines" that are incredibly oppressive, repressive, restrictive, and draconian in the wording and the implication, while not even looking at any part of the circumstances behind such activities or actions. Someone has simply written a "rule" and made it so ambiguous that almost any contact at all could be called or labeled sexual and misconduct. Its overly broad and apparently designed to create an atmosphere of fear. It is also designed to cast a huge net in order to develop some sort of justification for the law or guidelines.

Definitions of sexual misconduct are required if "kids" are to be included in such issues. And if the age of a child is not considered, then what we have is someone making rules, laws, or guidelines who are looking to suppress the activities of others based on their own internal problems. Perhaps

those folks were themselves abused. Perhaps they felt then they were taken advantage of. Perhaps a bully got to them so by creating this set of guidelines they can "get back" at them.

Tagging a child as a sexual predator, especially before even puberty has set in, is irrational and incredibly excessive. In fact, it is way overboard! And such guidelines need to be thoroughly repudiated and expunged from the records as an enforceable anything. Up to the age of adult consent, we need to be extremely careful what we call sexual predator. We need to be careful we have not so repressed a kid for whatever reason that we create a dysfunctional adult in the process.

It is difficult to accept the logic we label a "kid" a sexual predator, but abortion proponents do not want parents informed if their minor child seeks an abortion. For that minor girl to be pregnant, she had to have been raped. Young girls may participate in sexual activities as young as 10 or 12. But, if that child becomes pregnant, then "the law" and especially "the parents" have a legal and moral obligation to be informed and to investigate the circumstances. And if the child was made pregnant by someone in their majority, then criminal rape charges must be filed. If a 17 year old gets his 15 year old girlfriend pregnant, then we have a familial issue that both families need to deal with. But such actions are not criminal. They are foolish and should have not happened, but they are not criminal.

If we did more to convince kids to abstain from sex, we may avoid many of those circumstances. Just giving them condoms and counseling them on safe sexual practices is not legally, morally, or logically, enough. In fact, failure to counsel abstinence is irresponsible and should never be permitted. If you are going to give kids condoms, you must also give them the best advice possible and that is, wait until you are married or at least until you are sure the one you are with cares about you. But definitely wait until you are 18 or older!

We cannot deal with these issues from two so incredibly extreme positions. Prosecutions of children for hugging or slapping butt day or pinching of butts, is excessive. Failing to report to parents their minor girl child is pregnant and wants an abortion, is just as excessive. While the pregnant child still may have the last word as to whether she will abort her baby, her parents have a right to know she is pregnant and perhaps to even have a day or so to discuss the issue with her. She needs counseling, not a hiding place. If Mom and Dad are problems or abusive, that will be revealed as part of that process. But by not telling Mom and Dad, all the state has done is feed irresponsible citizens behavior, to the extreme.

Logic, common sense, and a bit of reason need to be employed on this issue, before we become so paranoid about it that healthy sex becomes a problem for everyone!

---

**E-mail the  
Editor**

## Reader Comments

*Issue 97 - December 12, 2007*

---

**CONSERVATIVE  
BATTLELINE  
ONLINE**

Editor: I could not agree more with your "A Civil Debate on Torture." What has happened to the younger generation on the right? It is obscene that our United States, so well described by Ronald Reagan as the "shining city upon a hill," that we even have a public debate over torturing people. We wear the white hats -- we're the good guys. Torture is evil. Descriptions of the communist secret police using "cold rooms" brought groans of outrage from American audiences. Some argue that extracting information from captured terrorists is more needed than when the enemies were Nazis, Communists, Japanese Bushido fanatics, kidnapers or serial killers. They are even willing to put American captives at greater risk to be dreadfully mistreated. If potential information is that important, then they should stop quibbling about acceptable methods of torture. Why set a limit to the degree of pain and fear to be inflicted? In the real, often nasty world, the United States should simply condemn all torture. What if you hold a terrorist prisoner who definitely has information that could stop a terrible event? In that case, your action is between you and God. Charles Wiley

---

Editor: Great piece on "A Civil Debate on Torture." It is so unfortunate that our White House precludes rational debate on so many important issues. You are absolutely correct: we are the good guys and should act like it. Best regards, Bob Luddy, Raleigh, N.C.

---

Editor: Regarding your "A Civil Debate on Torture", as a Conservative Republican, I thought you would like to read my op-ed on what is and what is not torture. Lee Ellis  
<http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/index.php?id=1385168>

---

Editor: Regarding your "A Civil Debate on Torture," we have to understand our enemies in order to defeat them, in other words, to prevent them sneaking into our country to kill us. A few weeks ago, I saw one of our reporters, I forgot his name, who volunteered to act like he was being interrogated. He said that 8 hours after being interrogated he felt it is okay. I believe that that was the first time in his life had experienced anything like that. But we have to understand that the terrorists have been very well trained to deal with all kinds of torture. I am using the words "torture" to make my meaning clear. The way we are doing our interrogating is nothing to them. We have to understand that. Do not let them laugh behind our back. I never lived under Communism, but I have heard about them lots of times, and I believe the Communists and the terrorist are very similar. When it was in the South East Asia, it was called "communist" and when it was in the Middle East, its name is "terrorist." We do not too much care about the Geneva Convention. It seems that the Geneva Agreement is just for us to follow only. We should not let the terrorists keeps saying: "We keep going into their country, and killing them; they have never dared to hurt us because their hands are tied very tight in their own law, and in the Geneva Convention." We don't want them laughing on our face. Our country is being attacked by terrorists. Remember that. Sincerely, Theresa L. Pham, Huntington Beach, CA

---

Editor: Gosh, Carey Roberts' "4 Year-old Sex Fiends" is so right. I had two girls and at those young ages it never bothered me if they gave the teacher a hug. Lord knows why do these people have to bring sex into everything? Hugging is hugging not fondling. Bob Lewis, Norfolk VA

---

Editor: In regard to Carey Roberts' "4 Year-old Sex Fiends," I believe that the mainstream media have lost all prospective of what is right and what is wrong. From my viewpoint, as I have observed small children, they love everyone. Something is very wrong when small children are picked on for doing something that is natural to them like hugging a teacher. Ethel P

---

Editor: Regarding Carey Roberts' "4 Year-old Sex Fiends," too little is being done to expose the reporters who are looking for sensational news and not the truth; the truth be d\*m is most of their philosophy. Get the news attention never mind the ruined lives that are proven not guilty. We should be able to sue for character defamation and slander in all the not guilty cases, not let them get away on "freedom of the press" grounds. There must be many dirty minded reporters in this kind of witch hunt. Jerry O'Briant

---

Editor: Regarding Carey Roberts' "4 Year-old Sex Fiends," while the liberal dimwits who produce "Two and a Half Men" and "How I Met Your Mother" "entertain" us with nothing but heavy sexual innuendo, and even explicit sexual banter, suddenly they have discovered young persons actually touch during school hours; ergo, sexual harassment is rampant? Television is NOTHING but sexual titillation when it isn't actual smut--but that's the First Amendment. On the other hand, when a seven-year-old second grader kisses his "girlfriend," he's a molester. Planned Parenthood promotes abortions for twelve year olds (the legal age in NJ and parents do not have to be notified), but the outstanding organization balks at coughing up the names of adult males who are the fathers of fourteen year old pregnant teenagers' babies--that's "confidentiality"--BUT THAT'S REALLY STATUTORY RAPE AND SLIGHTLY MORE ILLEGAL THAN "HARASSMENT," Excuse me for yelling. Renny Hartmann, Toms River, NJ

---

Editor: I found and read with interest your article "Nuclear Is Back" by E. Ralph Hostetter while "Googling" for Westinghouse Nuclear Division. Can anyone tell me why we are not pursuing nuclear powered vehicles, steam driven with small pieces of nuclear fuel generating the heat? It would seem an easy design, to locate movable fuel pellets, probably a very, small amount, in the center of a protective core which when heated within the middle of a boiler, would generate steam? Why not? Dick Overton, Decatur, MI

---

Editor: Thank Jerry Bowyer so much for the article "Cho Against The West". I felt this was the case ever since someone briefly mentioned the writing on his arm. I really appreciate your going into detail with your explanation. Sincerely, Angela Orlando

---

Editor: If President Bush can pardon a turkey there is absolutely no reason why he can't pardon the two Border Patrol agents now sitting in jail. Ken Hearn, Huntsville, Alabama

**E-mail the  
Editor**