News Watch

On the Hill

PX Porn Nixed. Congress passed and President Clinton has promised to sign the 1997 Defense Authorization Bill, which includes a provision removing pornographic materials from military stores. Government-sponsored vending of pornography sends the unseemly message that profiting from material that demeans women is okay. Last year, the Pentagon earned $4.3 million from sales of 12.6 million copies of 219 different pornographic magazines. Military customers receive discounts and pay no tax. Opponents claim the new law violates the First Amendment and are expected to file suit.

Going Against Goals 2000. While Senate moderates and liberals pushed for increased Goals 2000 funding, Rep. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) introduced the Goals 2000 Elimination Act on Sept. 18. The bill would repeal Goals 2000 and send the money back to local school boards. Instead of 100 pages of federal directions for providing more social services in schools, the five-page Graham bill puts spending authority back in the hands of local officials, aiming to demonstrate that education policy reform should be free from Washington's control.

Enough Is Enough. Thirty Republican senators have told Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) that the Senate has approved 202 judges in Clinton's first term, compared to 189 for President Bush and 164 for President Reagan in his first term. The senators say they are concerned about the weak qualifications of some of Clinton's pending nominees. Clarence Sundram, for instance, defended his crafting of a New York law which decriminalized marijuana and admitted to having no litigation experience.

Around Town

Bishops Witness. More than 60 Catholic bishops, seven Catholic Cardinals, and numerous other religious leaders joined together for an ecumenical prayer vigil at the U.S. Capitol on Sept. 12, praying that Congress would override President Clinton's April veto of the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act. Congress has been flooded with more than eight million postcards on this issue from Catholics across the nation. More than 71 percent of the American people support a ban on partial-birth abortions, according to a July 1996 Gallup opinion poll.

Dobson Appointment. Dr. James Dobson, president of Focus on the Family, has been appointed to the new National Gambling Impact Study Commission. Gambling is yet another symptom of the cultural decay our nation is experiencing. As a champion of the American family, Dr. Dobson is an excellent addition to the commission, and FRC applauds his appointment. His role on the commission will include the examination of the cultural impact of gambling on our families, our communities, and our nation as a whole.

Across the Nation

Faith-Based Programs. In late September, a Texas task force will recommend ways that faith-based programs can flourish. Governor George Bush, Jr. set up the task force to examine how to remove unnecessary obstacles to faith-based social services and to save taxpayer funds. It met four times this summer and received public input on how government has impaired the faith community's God-given ability to help. The task force is expected to recommend that faith-based drug programs be exempt from state licensing and identify how faith-based programs can better serve their communities.

RU-486. The Food and Drug Administration has given conditional approval to U.S. marketing of the abortion drug RU-486. This once-banned drug may be available as soon as issues regarding manufacturing and labeling are worked out. Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider, recently announced that it has received FDA approval to test yet another chemical abortion combination: methotrexate, an anti-cancer drug, and misoprostol, a labor-inducing, anti-ulcer drug. About 35 Planned Parenthood affiliates are planning to test this abortion drug combination on a total of 3,000 women in upcoming months.

Crew Cuts. Facing an over-enrollment of 91,000 students and limited funds, New York City public schools chancellor Rudy Crew should welcome help. He doesn't. That's because Mayor Rudy Giuliani wants to accept Cardinal O'Connor's offer to take 1,000 of the Big Apple's neediest children in the city's Catholic schools. Even when the mayor arranged for *private* scholarships for the kids, Chancellor Crew balked. Corporations are more bullish on the future, however, and are joining in. The liberal education monopoly is not happy.

Judge Lets Parents Choose. Approximately 1,500 Cleveland elementary students have received vouchers of up to $2,500, allowing them to attend the private and religious schools of their choice this fall. Charged by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) as violating the "separation of church and state," the program was declared constitutional by the Franklin County Common Pleas Court in August. The AFT has declared it will appeal the decision. This is the first tax-funded voucher program in the nation to include religious schools.

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Policy Update

Teen Drug Use Soars

Drug abuse among adolescents may soon return to all-time highs. Based on recent reports, parents share some of the blame.

On Aug. 20, the federal government released the National Household Survey (NHS) on Drug Abuse, indicating that an estimated 12.8 million Americans use illicit drugs. Adolescent abuse is especially high. The percentage of teenagers using illicit drugs increased between 1994 and 1995. Since 1992, teenage abuse has risen 105 percent.

In 1995, the teen drug of choice was marijuana. Statistics show teen use of marijuana jumped 33 percent between 1994 and 1995. Since 1992, the rate of abuse has more than doubled.

So-called "hard" drug abuse is especially alarming. The NHS found that adolescent abuse of cocaine (measured by use within the past month) rose 166 percent between 1994 and 1995. LSD abuse rose 55 percent.

A good antidote for teenage drug abuse is parental influence. A 1995 survey by the Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education found that among high school students whose parents "never" talk about drugs, one-third smoked marijuana. Among those who said they talk with their parents "a lot" about drugs, one-quarter smoked.

A recent survey by Columbia University's National Center for Addiction and Substance Abuse found that among baby-boomer parents who had once abused drugs, about two-thirds thought their adolescent children would abuse drugs. By contrast, almost half of all parents surveyed said they thought their teenage children would use drugs sometimes. Sixty percent of baby-boomer parents are drug-experienced.

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America found other reasons for rising abuse. Its 1996 study found that today's teenagers see less physical and social risk in illicit drugs, in part because of the media's drug glamorization and the ongoing debate about drug legalization.

The drug war is winnable, but it must be fought on two fronts. Supply must be cut through aggressive enforcement at home and abroad. Demand must be reduced by employing prevention messages at home with community support and locally run drug treatment programs to help addicts recover.

Court Watch

Abortion Clinics and Free Speech

Family Research Council has been busy filing "friend of the court" briefs in all family-related cases in the Supreme Court's next term, which begins next month. Early in the term, the high court will determine the rights of peaceful, pro-life sidewalk counselors in *Schenck v. Pro-Choice Network of Western New York.*

In *Schenck*, the Court will be asked to overturn an injunction issued against Rev. Paul Schenck and other counselors. The injunction prohibits all speech within 15 feet of an abortion clinic and of pedestrians and vehicles traveling to and from the clinic. These "floating no-speech zones" apply even on public sidewalks and streets. The case comes to the Supreme Court from the Second Circuit Court of Appeals, which said that the injunction did not violate the free speech rights of pro-lifers.

Never before in the history of our country has a federal court prohibited peaceful, non-threatening speech on a public sidewalk where access to businesses is not impeded. The Supreme Court has recognized that this nation is divided on the issue of abortion. By shutting off one side of the debate, it would be telling one group of Americans that their voice does not count. A victory in the *Schenck* case is crucial to show that the First Amendment is not a politically-correct document, and that the free speech rights of a "currently disfavored class of antiabortion protesters," as Justice Antonin Scalia calls it, are not second-class.

Oral argument in the *Schenck* case is on Oct. 16. FRC is hosting a "moot court" to prepare the lawyers for argument.

Military Readiness Project. FRC's Military Readiness Project has filed yet another brief on homosexuals in the military. Oral argument in that case, *Watson v. Perry* (filed June 14), and *Holmes v. Perry* (filed May 15), was heard in Seattle before one of the judges who held recently that the Constitution provides a right not only to assisted suicide, but to euthanasia. In *Equality Foundation, Inc.*, FRC also filed a brief on Aug. 26 supporting the City of Cincinnati in a case that will be critical to determining the constitutional future of laws precluding special rights for homosexuals.

Bulletin Board

- **Gary Bauer on the Road**

Oct. 1-Addresses Family Policy Council, Bismarck, N.D.

Oct. 4-Addresses Crisis Pregnancy Center, Fairview Park Marriott, Falls Church, Va.

Oct. 10-Addresses Crisis Pregnancy Center, Chattanooga, Tenn.

Oct. 17-Addresses Trinity Christian Academy, Jackson, Tenn.

Oct. 28-29-Addresses Bethany Christian Services in Myrtle Beach and Greenville, S.C.

- **FRC in Print**

Sept. 11-William R. Mattox, Jr.'s article, "Mobility Mangles Marriage," appears in *USA Today*.

Sept. 8-Mattox op-ed, "Too Pooped to Parent," appears in *USA Today*.

Sept. 8-Gary Bauer's op-ed, "Framing the Same-Sex Marriage Debate," appears in *The Washington Times*.

- **FRC on Air**

Oct. 1-Gary Bauer's program, "A Vision for the American Family," will be heard on Focus on the Family. Check your local Focus on the Family radio broadcasts for times.

- **FRC in Action**

Sept. 8-9-Senior Policy Analyst Robert Maginnis addressed a 19-nation conference entitled "Courage to Take a Moral Stance" in Feldkirch, Austria. Maginnis spoke on faith-based drug treatment in the United States. On Sept. 9, Maginnis addressed two groups from the Zurich, Switzerland-based Association for the Advancement of Psychological Understanding of Human Nature regarding teen drug abuse, juvenile delinquency and family disintegration.

Sept. 19-Maginnis (Lt. Col., U.S. Army, Ret.), director of FRC's Military Readiness Project, addressed West Point's class of 1974 at a Pentagon luncheon. Topic: political correctness in the military and cultural decline.

Oct. 1-FRC Special Assistant Robert G. Morrison will address students at American University regarding FRC's education mission.

Oct. 2-FRC's Deputy Director of Government Relations Cathy Deeds speaks at Christendom College's career day on pro-life work.

Oct. 2-William Mattox will be a panelist at the Redefining Progress seminar in Washington, D.C. Seminar topic: "Does the GDP Really Measure America's Well-Being?"

Oct. 15-FRC's Director of State and Local Affairs, Steve Knudsen, will address the Franklin County Christian Coalition, Greencastle, Pa.

Oct. 26-Knudsen will address the 99th annual convention of the Christian Civic League of Maine in Caribou.