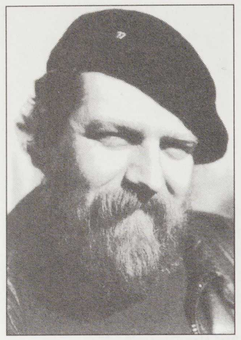

What do you mean "we," newscaster?

by Paul deParrie

The neatly tailored blond woman on the television screen intoned, "but we are now learning " in the midst of her story.

Always ready to learn something, I perked up my ears to find out what great revelation would be uttered by the genteel newscaster. It seems that a recently released massive report from the Council on Families in America said the most surprising thing — divorce is bad for children.

Now my tone here is not to mock the report itself, but to jape the look of news-from-Mt. Sinai on the reporter's face. Not only did this newsreader seem to be announcing that the sun rose in the West, but that, now that the "media" had announced it, it was all so suddenly true!

The study itself was done by a bunch of "names" who could not be tied to some right-wing religious fanatic (Christian) perspective, or to the Religious Left.

The report said, "No amount of public investment (read: tax-supported day-care and school lunches) in children could possibly offset the private disinvestment that has accompanied the decline of marriage."

More simply, the report admits that every human social relationship is a trade-off between parties both of whom hope for certain benefits. Marriage and parenthood are pure giving.

"The parental relationship is unique in human affairs," it said. It cannot be replaced with a single mom with lots of "social support services," or a "caregiver" (even a "*primary* caregiver"), or a significant other, or one of the "partners" in a serial monogamy, or even a same-sex "partner." Mom-and-Pop parenthood was the key to raising kids, and *marriage* was the key to good parenthood. A nice tight little circle with not a whole lot of maneuvering room.

The report continued that the huge upswing in children involved in violence, drugs, gangs, teen-pregnancy, and a host of other problems was directly attributable to the liberal "divorce revolution" which began in the 1960s. The social experiment which was to free women (and men) from being "trapped" in bad marriages "for the sake of the kids" and improve the chances of individual happiness and choice (and, oh, how we love that word), created a sense that one could abandon responsibility for personal "growth" — a lesson learned well and immediately by the children left behind. The children learned that lesson well and practiced their own brand of "pursuit of happiness" to the dismemberment of society.

The family, being the foundational form of social government, was soon reflected in our political forms. Selfishness, divisiveness, alienation, and what Alan Keyes calls "empty licentiousness."

But it wasn't news to me, however, or anyone I know that divorce hurts children — and thus society. I've been in the chorus who have been saying it for years.

Still the newscaster kept on saying what "we" *now* knew about the damage done by divorce.

Apparently this woman (and other newsreaders) live in a sheltered environment. The fact that she thought that "we" had not known this until "now" indicates that she thinks that tiny, sheltered environment is the whole, wide world.

Similar revelations in the news over the past two years tend to show that this is not a problem isolated to this one issue.

Who can forget the trumpeting of *Time* magazine — on its cover, no less — that *men and women are different!*

These people in the media were obviously caught completely off guard by the announcement that *science* — no less — had made this earth-shattering discovery. Even a recent *Newsweek*, still in shock over the revelation, reported that a new study showed that the actual brains of men and women, given precisely the same problem, worked differently.

Of course, having lived as a minority in my own home — six women, two men — for all these years, I could have saved them the expense of the study. In fact, if I had only had *one* of these creatures in my home — namely, my wife — I could have testified that women were as close to being a *different species* as I could imagine. I'm sure my wife could say the same of men. But, the French, always *avant garde* in these matters, say it well — *Vive la difference!*

And who can forget the taxpayer-funded study that showed that — I'm not sure if "we" can handle this — students who study more get better grades! Wowzers!

I suppose we should all be very tolerant of the simple-minded. We should not be too offended when they include us in their "we" when they have their epiphanies. Media personalities have led sheltered lives and truth must be spoon-fed to them in small doses. The truth that they are not at the forefront of "we" is a truth that is too large for them yet to grasp. We must be patient.

In the meantime, I am on the edge of my seat to hear the next revelation. Maybe they'll find out that abortion kills babies. ■

Acts of worship, acts of obedience

by Cathy Ramey

In light of the events of the past two years, i.e., that four different individuals have been arrested for shootings at four different abortion facilities, I've been given to more than the usual amount of thought about Paul's letter to the Romans — chapter 13. The text is frequently cited —as though it was the only text to be found between the binding of the Bible—by those who *wish to* condemn these forceful acts aimed at saving the lives of unborn infants. I say "*wish to*" because all too often the expositors of Romans 13 have framed out arguments while wearing blinders to the rest of Scripture. They have failed to synthesize Romans 13 along with the other chapters and books which make up the inerrant Word of God (Yes! There are other chapters and books!).

Interesting that these are some of the very people caught on video tape at one abortion rescue or another. No, they aren't the ones "lawfully" limiting their protest and intervention to the public sidewalk. They are the ones chained together at the door of the abortion facility. They are the ones who resolutely refused to leave until "pain compliance" holds and handcuffs were applied by police. They are the ones who have stood before first one judge and then another, refusing to pay fines or "victim costs" to an enterprise engaged in the murder of people too small and too weak to defend themselves.

Where was their hard-line view of Romans 13 when they were ordered by police to leave their post as rescuer at a door? And what kind of submission to governmental authority were they displaying when, instead of accepting an order to pay a fine, they openly rebuked the judge for failing to work for justice on behalf of all people, including the yet-to-be-birthed?

And if they are not one of these, they are part of the crowd which applauded these acts from the side-lines and encouraged the rescuers to do more.

The intense emphasis on Romans 13 — to the exclusion of many other Scriptures which cite biblical characters as heroes for having acted with charity outside the constraints of the law — actually reveals that there are deeper problems in our theology than a mere lopsided view of a few verses. Our emphasis on absolute obedience and tolerance to corrupted authority raises the question, *Has the Church allowed government to become a competing deity?*

Alan Keyes, before announcing his candidacy for president, gave a speech before a local Republican assembly. In it he accused some of making "government into God and the people into slaves." And history tells us that it wouldn't be the first time a population has done that. Robert J. Lifton, in his book, The Nazi Doctors, states that "Even before the Nazis, German universities had been bastions of conservative or reactionary political thought which tended to deify the concept of the state."

Many of us would say that this dual deity—God and government—has been apparent for many years in the Church, at least to the extent that almost all of us, to our shame, have bowed the knee to the U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized the murder of unborn infants. God has said one thing about the shedding of innocent blood, and the Court has said another. For twenty-two years we have opted to allow the Court's model of *in*justice to take precedence over God's model of justice. By doing so, we have elevated the law of corrupted man above the Law of God. While we engage in acts of worship to the One God in our Sunday services, we reserve our acts of obedience for the other god, government.

Corporately we, the Church, shudder at the idea of Christians coming into conflict with the god of government. Our dissatisfaction with abortion law and other corrupt edicts may be spoken of in oblique terms as we fellowship together on the Sabbath — a token of our respect for the One God — but there are clear boundaries which leave us still honoring the god of government which has set itself against Him. And all the while, in order to rationalize our intercourse with another god, we strain the Scriptures looking for reasons to justify our adultery.

Indeed, God has framed out and ordained for us certain models of government. And He has raised up individual rulers to fill those seats of government. We have an obligation to the office and to the *honorable* office-holder. I insert the word