News Watch

On the Hill

Gulf War Syndrome. At a Dec. 11 hearing, congressmen accused the Pentagon of suppressing information on chemical contamination in the Gulf War. "Routinely," said Rep. Christopher Shays (R-Conn.), reported chemical exposures "have been dismissed, discounted, discredited or denied." A Marine testified that he detected nerve agent. A chemical detection team commander declared that no senior officer on the ground disputed his team's findings. Congress will host more hearings, the Pentagon is researching effects of exposure to chemical weapons and Veterans Affairs officers pledge to do more on this issue.

"Medical" Drug Use Update. On Dec. 2, drug czar Barry McCaffrey told a Senate committee that recent California and Arizona initiatives approving "medical" use of otherwise illicit drugs "violate the medical-scientific process...[and] are a quasi-legalization of dangerous drugs." Thomas Constantine, administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration, warned, "These efforts will have a profound impact on our children." Few Americans know that 23 states currently have laws allowing medical use of marijuana. Although federal law supersedes state statutes, they are "symbolic" laws that ought to be rescinded before they find new life.

Population Control/Abortion Battle Brewing. Population control advocates, including Zero Population Growth, Planned Parenthood and the Sierra Club, are urging Congress to expedite funding for international "family planning." Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.), co-chairman of the House Pro-Life Caucus, argues that no additional funds should go to organizations that perform or promote abortion as a method of family planning. The administration, which overturned previous Reagan and Bush limits on international population funding, has resisted efforts to restore pro-life policies. Votes are expected in the House and Senate before March 1, 1997.

Around Town

Experience as a Teacher. Carmen Pate ably debates important women's issues. After two abortions and a divorce, she knows of what she speaks. A fast-track career weakened her faith but early one morning God told her, "That's enough." Returning to her Baptist roots, she raised two boys, met her Christian husband, and organized a crisis pregnancy center and a hunger-relief program. As Concerned Women for America's new vice president for communications, Pate uses her story to help women understand that hardship does not require abandoning ideals or dreams.

Not Dead Yet. Thousands of citizens, many of whom are disabled, will gather on the steps of the Supreme Court. Jan. 8, the day the Court hears arguments in a case involving physician-assisted suicide. "Not Dead Yet," the sponsoring organization of this rally, believes that *finding* a constitutional right to commit suicide will accelerate our society toward euthanasia. Their banner, "We Want to Live," implies an important question. Should a government bureaucrat be empowered to decide who has a life worth living?

Across the Nation

Beware of T.V.'s "Family Hour." A study commissioned by the Kaiser Family Foundation reports that the 8 to 9 p.m. programming slot is less than family friendly. The study found that sexual content appears in 75 percent of the programs, and 12 percent of sexual interactions involve teens. Compared with 1976—the year the family hour became official policy at the major networks—this is a fourfold increase in sexually related talk or behavior. More children watch television in this hour than on Saturday morning or weekday afternoons.

Advice to the Court on Physician-Assisted Suicide. Approaching his death bravely, Archbishop Joseph Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago uniquely appreciated the gift of life. In a letter to the Supreme Court, he wrote, "There can be no such thing as a 'right to assisted suicide' because there can be no legal or moral order which tolerates the killing of innocent human life, even if the agent of death is self-administered. Creating a new 'right' to assisted suicide will endanger society and send a false signal that a less than 'perfect' life is not worth living."

Cardinal's Death Brings New Life. Only a few days after Chicago Cardinal Joseph Bernardin's death, an Indiana abortionist announced that he would stop performing abortions. Inspired by the cardinal's courageous handling of his own death, Dr. John Nwannunu of Merrillville, Indiana, who admitted to having performed hundreds of abortions in the past two years, said he "will never again do this procedure." Gary, Indiana Bishop Dale Melczek called the decision "a miracle." For an extended period, dedicated pro-lifers had been praying and picketing outside Dr. Nwannunu's clinic for his conversion.

Homeschool Headlines. Their numbers are up (some say as high as one million students), they're earning honors and going to college. Homeschoolers are making their case—and winning. A Maryland homeschooler was recently acquitted after being threatened with a fine and sentencing for not submitting a portfolio of her daughter's work to authorities. Some critics say that kids can't be socialized in a homeschooling setting (a weak assertion given the destructive behaviors reported at many schools). Homeschoolers happily settle for being *civilized* rather than *socialized*.

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Policy Update

City in a Skid

Every movement has a shining city on a hill which represents the movement's ideals. For homosexual activists, San Francisco is that city.

—The City Council passed a law forcing companies doing business with the city to offer benefits to partners of homosexual employees. An estimated 8,000 companies—including firms owned by Christians—will be affected. The law, taking effect in May, will boost the drive for virtual same-sex "marriage" by requiring economic support of same-sex couples. Mayor Willie Brown (D) said the law could have national implications if applied to major airlines that service the city.

—The Bay Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America, which the local United Way cut off from general donations for not having homosexual scout leaders, introduced a "don't ask, don't tell" policy. According to the Associated Press, local guidelines for leadership say: "The Boy Scouts of America does not ask prospective members about their sexual preference, nor do we check on the sexual orientation of boys who are already in scouting." The policy bars "leaders whose public conduct or advocacy does not suggest...traditional values." Bay Area Council leader Steve Barnes told AP that "this is a very difficult issue. What we've done is define where and when we'd take action." A national Scout spokesman told *Washington Watch* that the Scouts had not changed their national policy and that the Bay Area situation remains under discussion.

—An openly homosexual city supervisor, Tom Ammiano, has proposed reopening homosexual sex clubs, closed since the AIDS epidemic began in the early 1980s. Permits would be issued for businesses "that encourage patrons to engage in, or to watch other patrons engaging in, sexual activities." Ammiano believes the clubs would constitute a safe place for sex, thus helping to stop the spread of AIDS. Dr. Mitchell Katz, head of the city health department's AIDS office, told the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "It's such a sensible thing that it's hard to think of a reason not to do it."

Court Watch

A Crucial Agenda

The FRC Legal Department has worked overtime on legal briefs for a very eventful Supreme Court term. On January 8, the Court will hear oral arguments in perhaps the most important pro-life case of the decade, *Quill v. Glucksberg*, in which the Justices will decide whether states may pass laws against assisted suicide.

FRC filed a brief along with many diverse groups (including the AMA, the American Psychiatric Association, the National Hospice Organization, the American Suicide Foundation, and the disabilities rights group, Not Dead Yet) urging the Court to reject the notion that there is any constitutional right to be killed by a doctor.

The brief filed by the AMA and APA explains to the Court that it is not pain from which most terminally-ill patients are trying to escape, but depression. FRC's brief asks the Court to consider the relevance of history's most tragic experience of physician-assisted death—the German euthanasia program of the 1930s and 1940s—and argues that we must heed the lessons of the past. FRC is assisting Not Dead Yet in their efforts to gather thousands of disabled people and their families on the courthouse steps the morning of argument.

The Supreme Court will also review the Communications Decency Act (CDA), which was struck down by a federal court in Philadelphia last summer in *ACLU v. Reno*. The CDA is based upon the legal principle that no one has a First Amendment right to give or show pornography to children. The CDA does not censor information, but criminalizes the act of giving indecent pornography directly to a specific child, or allowing children to access pornography without attempting to screen them out.

This is conduct which has never been protected by the Constitution, and the Supreme Court should be loathe to warp the First Amendment this way on the Internet. FRC is working with the National Law Center for Children and Families and Enough is Enough! on briefs to be filed with the Supreme Court later this month. Keep sending your stories of kids running into online pornography!

Bulletin Board

ATTENTION: For all who plan to participate in the March for Life on January 22, our new building will be open all day and we invite you to come by for refreshment and warm encouragement. Located at the corner of 8th and "G" streets, N.W., we are easy to find, directly across from the National Museum of American Art and the Martin Luther King Library. We'd love to see you on this very important day.

NEW PRODUCTS. FRC will be offering several new resources next month. Spanish-language translations of select save-sex and drug papers will be available upon request. In light of sharply increasing adolescent drug use—particularly the use of marijuana—FRC has developed a pamphlet with questions and answers to help parents talk to their teen-agers about the consequences of marijuana use. Most Americans were shocked by the successful referenda in California and Arizona which allow "medical use" of illicit drugs. These new laws serve as a "red herring" for outright legalization of now-illicit drugs. FRC has developed another pamphlet that details the truth about "medical" marijuana. Beginning in March, FRC will offer a monthly publication, "Drug Facts" via facsimile. This will address time-sensitive information about drug abuse rates, pending legislation, and prevention programs. It will also identify available resources for concerned drug warriors. More details to follow.

Washington Watch facelift. We are in the process of evaluating a redesign of Washington Watch and want your input. What do you like, dislike, or think would make it more appealing, more informative and more useful to you and others like you? Tell us about format, content, type size and any other factors that could assist us in designing a better publication for your use. Send your comments to or call Karl Day, Senior Editor. Thanks for your help.

- **Gary Bauer on the Road**

Jan. 19-Addresses American Collegians for Life at Brunch, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

Jan. 22-Addresses Ohio Right to Life Congressional Breakfast, J.W. Marriott Hotel, Washington, D.C.

- **FRC in Action**

Jan. 9-Director of Cultural Studies Bob Knight will speak on cultural issues at a pastor's conference near Tampa, Fla.

Feb. 1–5-FRC Policy Analysts Jennifer A. Marshall and Gracie Hsu will address FRC couples' retreat participants regarding public policy developments.

Feb. 19-Bob Knight to speak at the "Role of Advocacy Groups in the Entertainment Industry" conference in Santa Monica, Calif.