News Watch

On the Hill

Americans Oppose MFN for China. After more than three hours of debate, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 259-173 on June 24 to continue to extend most-favored-nation (MFN) trading status to China, despite a recent *Business Week* poll showing that 67 percent of Americans oppose such action. Congressional debate on U.S.-China relations is likely to continue, as several members have introduced legislation intended to toughen American policy on China and also to promote democracy there. The vote represented the largest number of House members opposing MFN for China since 1990. — *MLM and RD*

Budget Update. Both Houses of Congress recently passed tax relief bills (including family tax relief), but the details of the bills vary. The House bill delays the full $500 per-child-tax credit until 1999, but allows families to use the tax credit to pay for the necessities of the teen-age years. The Senate bill begins tax relief in 1997, yet forces parents of children ages 13-16 to put the money into higher education savings accounts. The House and Senate will work out these differences, among others, this month. — *ARM*

And the Beat Goes On. Congressional Republicans promised that 1997 would be the last year for federal funding of the National Endowment for the Arts. But on June 26, the House Appropriations Committee narrowly defeated (by a vote of 31-28) an amendment, introduced by Reps. Sid Yates (D-Ill.) and Mike Forbes (R-N.Y.), to restore the fiscal year 1997 funding of $99.5 million. Prior to that, the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee agreed to grant the NEA $10 million. The House is likely to vote this month on the fate of the NEA. — *JLH*

Pro-Life Victory. On June 19, the U.S. House of Representatives defeated (224 to 196) an amendment reinstating abortion-on-demand at U.S. military facilities. Rep. Jane Harman (D-Calif.) introduced this amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act (H.R.1119) to change current law and allow abortions for military personnel and their dependents. Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wa.) offered a similar amendment to the Senate bill (S. 936) which may force legislators to battle over differences in the House-Senate conference committee. Each chamber must pass the same bill before it goes to the president. — *SAM*

Around Town

Family Impact Statement Revoked. On April 21, President Clinton revoked former President Ronald Reagan's 1987 Executive Order (No.12606) that required Executive Branch agencies to provide a "family impact statement" before taking actions which might harm the family. FRC is working with members of Congress who have introduced new federal legislation to reestablish and strengthen the family impact statement. Now, more than ever before, the government must recognize the importance of the family as the foundation of our society and the impact that federal regulations have on America's families. — *ARM*

Conference Call. On June 19, Georgetown University hosted "Homosexuality and American Public Life," a three-day American Public Philosophy Institute conference. FRC's Robert Knight addressed the topic, "Homosexual Advocacy and Opposition Groups." Among other topics, attendees heard the genetic claims for homosexuality refuted by Dr. Jeffrey Satinover, author of *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth*, Dr. Richard Fitzgibbons of Comprehensive Counseling Services and Exodus International members Jane Boyer, Director of Amazing Grace Ministries, and Anthony Falzarano, Executive Director of Transformation Ex-Gay Christian Ministries and Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays (PFOX). — *KLE*

Across the Nation

Disney's Self-Censorship? Less than a week after the nation's largest Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptists, decided to boycott the Disney Company, the company released an obscenity-filled rock music CD to retail stores. Six hours after it was put on sale, Disney then pulled Insane Clown Posse's "The Great Malenko," an unprecedented move in the record business. A company statement said the record's lyrics were "inappropriate for a product released under any label of our company." We hope future Disney movies will enjoy the same scrutiny to prevent more offerings like "Priest," "Pulp Fiction," "The House of Yes," et.al. (movies known for objectionable themes and content). — *RD*

Marriage Unplugged. From welfare disincentives to same-sex "marriage," the traditional definition of marriage ("one-man-one-woman-till-death") has been under assault for the last 30 years. Marriage proponents are seeking to reverse this trend. FRC, Focus on the Family, and 18 state-based groups met on June 20-21 in Colorado Springs, Colo. to discuss this problem. They concluded that a successful strategy to reverse current anti-marriage trends must start with state and national polling to determine public opinion on the changes in marriage during the last three decades. We will be polling married couples, single parents, divorced men and women—a wide cross-section of America—beginning later this summer. Once this research is completed, media and legislative components will be utilized as well. Stay tuned! — *SBK*

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Washington Watch is published by Family Research Council. For more information, contact Family Research Council, 801 G Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. Phone: 202-393-2100. Fax: 202-393-2134. Legislative information line (toll call): 202-783-HOME. Toll-free publication order line: 1-800-225-4008. Internet address: **http://www.frc.org.** E-mail address: **corrdept@frc.org.**

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Family Research Council is exempt from taxation under IRC 501(c)(3). Contributions to FRC are tax-deductible.

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Policy Update

Military Sex Scandals

Military sex scandals have sparked several pieces of legislation, including a bill by Rep. Roscoe Bartlett (R-Md.), the "Military Recruit Training Policy Restoration Act," and a bill by Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), the "Anti-Hypocrisy Act."

Rep. Bartlett's bill would have required all services to separate the sexes during basic training thus removing distractions and sexual temptations. In spite of 120 co-sponsors, the bill never left committee. On June 11, it was scuttled by the House National Security Personnel Subcommittee Chairman Steve Buyer's (R-Ind.) compromise to initiate a year-long study of mixed-sex basic training.

On June 5, the Senate heard from uniformed service representatives concerning mixed-sex military training. Dissenting voices were not welcomed. During that hearing, Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W.V.) promised to introduce a bill calling for the creation of an "independent, blue ribbon body with unquestioned credentials to look at gender-integration at all levels."

We expect the defense authorization conference committee to approve a year-long study group later this summer.

On June 17, 1997, Rep. Frank offered a defense bill declaring that the Pentagon's prevailing moral views are wrong. If passed, the legislation would do away with the military's adultery law, eliminate all legal obstacles to adult consensual sex and make homosexual behavior legal.

What Frank couldn't get during the 1993 homosexual debate he now hopes to achieve behind the smokescreen of military sex scandals. He wants homosexuals to be able to openly serve and engage in behaviors now considered illicit.

The proposed bill would effectively keep commanders from halting sex parties in the barracks. As long as soldiers are consenting, anything goes.

Frank's proposal would legalize most sexual behaviors including immorality and adultery. But these can have serious negative effects on morale, discipline and unit cohesion. Today, most military people are married, a fact that has proven to be key to readiness. Current prohibitions seek to vaccinate fragile military families against broken commitments, domestic violence, and long-term problems for children. — *RLM*

Court Watch

1997 Court Jester Awards

Family Research Council's first annual ***Court Jester Awards*** luncheon on June 10 was a huge success. The winners:

The **Out of Order! Award** went to Judge Russell Clark, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri, for his opinion in *Missouri v. Jenkins*. For more than 20 years Judge Clark has overseen every improvement, repair and renovation in the Kansas City School District. Thanks to his expensive taste, the residents of Kansas City have incurred a massive tax hike to fund his court-ordered improvements.

The **See No Evil Award** went to Judge Rosemary Barkett, from the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, for her extensive coddling of convicted criminals in numerous opinions. She has blamed heinous murders on, among other things, the killer's "emotional deprivation" and the "milieu of violence" that left the killer "unable to function in an appropriate manner."

The **Overruled! Award** was awarded to Judge Thelton Henderson, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, in recognition of his disregard for the will of the people of California in the case of *Coalition for Economic Equity v. Wilson*. Judge Henderson said the California Civil Rights Initiative was discriminating because it outlawed discrimination in the form of sex and race preferences.

The **Invisible Ink Award** went to Judge Stephen Reinhardt, from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, for his opinion in *Compassion in Dying v. Washington*. According to Judge Reinhardt, judges should not feel bound by the words of the Constitution. Judge Reinhardt took his own advice and decided there was a constitutional right to assisted-suicide.

The **Lifetime Achievement Award** was awarded to Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, for his role in decisions on gay rights, abortion, and school prayer.

Thank you for all the nominations you sent to us, and watch for the Second Annual Court Jester Awards next summer! — *JPC*

Bulletin Board

New Christian Coalition Leaders. Former Interior Secretary Don Hodel was recently named the new president of the Christian Coalition. Former Congressman Randy Tate (R-Wash.) is the new executive director of the organization. Pat Robertson, former Christian Coalition president, has now become the organization's chairman of the board; former executive director Ralph Reed will serve on its board of directors. Mr. Hodel served with Gary Bauer in the Reagan administration and was on the board of directors for Focus on the Family from late 1994 until last month. Mr. Tate served as a member of Congress with deep commitment to the issues that affect America's families. FRC looks forward to working with these fine men to defend family, faith and freedom.

• Gary Bauer on the Road

July 25—Addresses Physicians Resource Council, Birmingham, Ala. The event is being held in conjunction with the Alabama Family Alliance.

Aug. 6—Addresses The Leadership Institute, Arlington, Va.

Aug. 28, 29—Addresses the Free Enterprise Celebration, Atlanta, Ga.

• FRC in Print

June 2—William R. Mattox's op-ed, "When Love Songs Disappear, Love Isn't Far Behind," appeared in USA Today.

June 12—Mattox's op-ed, "A Father's Death Leaves Love Behind," appeared in USA Today.

• FRC in Action

July 2—Policy Analyst Jennifer A. Marshall addresses a Christian Educators Association International workshop, Rosslyn, Va.

July 14-17—Policy Analyst Gracie Hsu attends an Intensive Bioethics Institute at the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity at Trinity International University, Deerfield, Ill.

Aug. 1-2—Hsu participates in the National Leadership Summit on Abstinence, sponsored by the Medical Institute for Sexual Health, Washington, D.C.