NEWS WATCH

On the Hill

The Faceless Unborn. Both the U.S. House (on Nov. 18) and Senate (on Nov. 16) have approved versions of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) bill. A House-Senate conference committee will work out differences in the two versions, with votes on final passage in 1994. Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) amended the bill to apply its penalties aimed at pro-lifers to those who disrupt religious activities in churches or elsewhere. Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Tex.) won another amendment exempting parents from prosecution under the bill. The Hatch and DeLay amendments do not save FACE, but write your representative and senators and urge them to support their retention as the bill is conferenced.

"Choice" in China. Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.), along with two Chinese nationals, filed suit Nov. 9 against the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) for resuming support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The suit charges AID with failure to comply with the Kemp-Inouye law prohibiting U.S. funding of any program that participates in coercive abortion or sterilization. The UNFPA strongly supports China's population control program, which has systematically employed coercion against its citizens.

Healthy Competition. Sen. Don Nickles (R-Okla.) and Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-Fla.), with cosponsorship by all but two members of the House and Senate Republican leadership, introduced the Consumer Choice and Health Security Act on Nov. 20. Modeled on the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), the bill preserves a wide choice of plans, provides for individual tax credits and medical savings accounts, and promotes competition among insurers. There are no new employer mandates, no required abortion coverage, no new taxes, no price controls or premium caps, and no new government boards or bureaucracies.

Around Town

Off the Wohl? The Clinton administration recently announced the creation of a new Office of Workplace Initiatives to help make tele-commuting and other flexible scheduling options more widely available to federal employees. Tapped to lead the new office is Faith Wohl, a DuPont Co. human resource specialist whose mixed record on family-friendliness includes championing DuPont's most ghastly innovation: a corporate day care center for sick children called "Sniffles and Sneezes." ("Measles Without Mothers, Fevers Without Fathers" would have been a better name.) Will Wohl promote more of the same in her new post, or what family-oriented workers want most, flexibility and family time?

Deadly Perk. It's "open season" until Dec. 13 for federal employees to select their 1994 health plans. Same routine, same options, right? NOT! On Oct. 28, President Clinton signed into law H.R. 2403 — which repealed the long-time ban on funding of federal employees' abortion coverage. While not every plan now covers abortion, many will, creating a new abortion "perk." The new law is a major victory for the Clinton administration because it: (1) softens its failure to restore Medicaid funding of abortions; and (2) moves closer to its ultimate goal of mandating universal abortion coverage through a standard health benefits package.

Across the Nation

Bang! That giant popping sound you heard on election day was the backfiring of anti-family campaign tactics in Virginia on Nov. 2. Liberals sought to make races there a referendum on the "religious right." Pro-family candidates George Allen and James Gilmore won handily, showing that anti-religious bigotry doesn't pay. Home school defender Michael Farris, outspent 10 to 1 by popular incumbent Don Beyer and snubbed by some in his own party, lost but still captured 46 percent of the vote. Meanwhile, GOP liberals won the New York mayoral and New Jersey gubernatorial races by taking conservative stands on crime and taxes, respectively.

Cry of the Poor. Exit polls done by the respected Luntz-Weber firm showed that Prop 174, not school choice generally, was the big loser in Nov. 2 balloting. A majority of voters were willing to support choice if per-pupil funding did not decline and if new schools would be accountable. Married Californians with children were more positive (40 percent) for Prop 174, as were evangelicals and conservatives (49 percent each). Opposition was most intense among liberals (90 percent), Democrats and moderates (81 percent each). Lower-income, less-educated voters and minorities (especially Hispanics) were found most willing to back a future school choice plan.

Inhuman Rights. The International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) is taking steps to distance itself from two member organizations that promote pedophilia, the North American Man/Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) and Vereniging Martijn, a Dutch pedophile group. The controversy erupted after reports that the ILGA, with Clinton administration support, was granted consultative status on the United Nations Economic and Social Council. ILGA, which has adopted pro-pedophilia resolutions, asked the two groups to withdraw after widespread protest. It would take an 80 percent vote of ILGA's world conference, which meets next June, to oust them. Previous attempts to do so have failed. Clinton U.N. officials, reversing field, may push for ILGA's immediate ouster.

LegislativeWatch. A reminder that FRC provides a hotline, updated every Friday afternoon, on legislative developments in Congress. This educational resource can be reached by dialing 202-783-HOME (toll call).

Washington Watch is published by Family Research Council. For more information contact Family Research Council, 700 13th St., NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005. Phone: 202-393-2100. FAX: 202-393-2134. Legislative information line (toll call): 202-783-HOME. President: Gary L. Bauer. Editor: Charles A. Donovan. Contributors: Scott E. Daniels; Amy Dixon; Sheila T. Ervin; Anne N. Fitzpatrick; Meghan R. Flaherty, Dan Garcia; Craig A. Gottlieb; Kristi S. Hamrick; Gracie Hsu; Robert H. Knight; Elizabeth Kepley Law; Lt. Col. Robert L. Maginnis, USA (Ret.); William R. Mattox, Jr.; Robert G. Morrison; Wende Nocton; William T. Spont; David M. Wagner, Esq. Designer: Sherry Nicolai Russell.

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

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COURT WATCH

Knox: Putting Pornographers First

The *Knox* child pornography case continues to galvanize opposition as the Clinton administration hems and haws.

As recounted in last month's *Courtwatch, Knox* involves a defendant who possessed videos showing teen-age and pre-teen girls wearing bathing suits or leotards, with the camera focusing heavily on their chests, buttocks, and genital areas. The nature of this material was pornographic, as the accompanying ad copy made clear. But because the genital areas of the victims were not directly visible, the Clinton administration — breaking with its two predecessors — argued that this material was not child pornography, and not illegal under the 1984 Child Protection Act.

Developments since our last report: The U.S. Senate voted unanimously on Nov. 4 to repudiate the Justice Department's new interpretation. But the Supreme Court seems to have bought it. The Court has the prerogative of deferring to the executive branch's understanding of a statute; why it did so in this case is not clear, since it did not issue a written opinion. Instead, it sent the case back to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, with instructions to decide whether Knox's videos were covered by the 1984 statute as reinterpreted by the Justice Department.

While Attorney General Reno has defiantly stood by the new policy, President Clinton has sent her a letter that looks like a rebuke, telling her to enforce our nation's child-porn laws vigorously. But he also called for a new federal statute to ban the sort of material Knox possessed. Why should this be necessary? The old statute did just fine until it was reinterpreted.

Even if a new statute was passed, all those being prosecuted for underwear-oriented child porn under the old statute would walk. Furthermore, a "Child Protection Act of 1994" could end up carrying the liberal "children's rights" agenda, with a little toughening up of the child-porn laws thrown in to woo conservatives.

Meanwhile, the administration's next chance to redeem itself will come when it files a brief in the Third Circuit. Will it actually argue that those who traffic in skimpy-clothes shots of children for sexually exploitative purposes are not criminals — even after all 100 senators voted to say they did intend to criminalize such material?

POLICY UPDATE

Whither Parental Choice?

After California voters drubbed Proposition 174 by 69-31 percent on Nov. 2, some choice-in-education advocates drew stern lessons. Former Bush speechwriter Dan McGroarty spoke for many in a column arguing that Prop 174 attempted too much, too soon. Better, he said, to try more limited choice plans, focus on inner cities, and limit vouchers to new private school students by imposing as much as a six-year waiting period on grants to students currently enrolled in private schools.

Also, says McGroarty, it might be better to appeal to the state legislatures instead of the voters. Certainly the wide appeal of state Rep. Polly Williams' (D) efforts in Milwaukee, and the aid Republican Gov.-elect Christine Whitman has promised for Mayor Bret Schundler's (R) Jersey City initiative, commend this approach.

But McGroarty's well-intended advice poses risks, too. Limiting school choice plans to inner-city youth risks casting this essential reform as yet another "program" which the majority is willing to try out on others' children, but not on their own. Furthermore, voter anxieties are likely to be exploited by teachers' unions' warning of the creation of "Farrakhan schools," an effective tactic in California that will become ever more effective if community-building religious schools are barred from participation.

By restricting assistance to students currently enrolled in public schools, McGroarty's "pragmatic" approach risks losing the necessary support of private and home-school parents who know the benefits of choice firsthand and who provide the enthusiastic volunteers any successful campaign needs. Finally, by turning to the legislatures, McGroarty runs into the teeth of teachers' union strength. Facing union political action committee muscle, few lawmakers — even those in conservative and rural areas — will tough it out for reform.

President Clinton's controversial Goals 2000 bill — which would sidetrack parental choice — has been put off until February. Grassroots opposition to Goals 2000 by thousands of reform-minded parents is helping to change the debate. This is no time to abandon them.

BULLETIN BOARD

*** Gary Bauer on the Road**

Nov. 12-Bauer addressed Focus on the Family physicians' meeting in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Dec. 7-FRC at the National Press Club to release new and surprising family poll data (*See Inside D.C., next page*).

Jan. 20, 1994-Bauer to address Columbus, Ga. Chamber of Commerce.

Jan. 21, 1994-Bauer speaker at Coral Ridge Ministries' Reclaiming America national conference in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

*** Kay Coles James**

Nov.-Article by James appeared in *Decision* magazine.

Nov. 11-James addressed Florida family policy council.

Nov. 23-James addressed Habitat for Humanity in Spartanburg, S.C.

*** Staff in Action**

Oct. 13-Policy analyst Robert L. Maginnis on the Phil Donahue show discussing Clinton policy on Somalia.

Oct. 22-FRC ran full-page fatherhood ad in *Houston Post* during the controversy over lineman David Williams' decision to attend his child's birth instead of the Houston Oilers football game.

Nov. 5-Robert Knight, Director, Cultural Studies, was interviewed on American Family Association radio with Donald Wildmon and Pat Trueman.

Nov. 10-13-Legal Policy Director David Wagner spoke on "The Family and American Constitutional Law" at Chesterton Society Conference on Ethics and Economics in Post-Communist Europe, Zagreb, Croatia.

Nov. 10-Knight quoted in *USA Today* on gay adoption.

Nov. 12-Knight debated Bob Beckel and a homosexual activist over gay parenting on Pat Buchanan's nationally syndicated radio show.

Nov. 16-Knight spoke at Focus on the Family Medical Research Forum on national policy implications of research.

Nov. 16-Education policy analyst Bob Morrison addressed Washington Christian School parents on outcome-based education and Goals 2000.

Nov. 16-18-Knight and Scott Daniels, Ph.D., addressed Focus on the Family physicians' event on the homosexual agenda and national health reform, respectively.

Nov. 18-William Mattox, Vice President for Policy, taped a U.S. Information Agency television segment on fathers' role in child development.

Nov. 18-House Republican Policy Committee report on family issues in 103rd Congress to date lauded FRC study on health reform and the family. Copies of the report are available from FRC.

Nov. 20-Mattox appeared on Jubilee Broadcasting System talk show with former Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl Gates, discussing the link between crime and father absence.