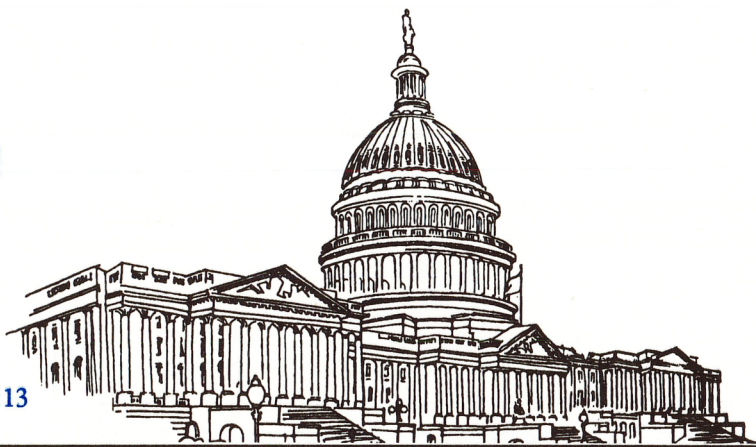


# SALT



*"You are the salt of the earth"* Matthew 5:13

Washington Newsletter, Christian Life Commission, Southern Baptist Convention

Vol. 4, No. 2, 1994

## Health care at crossroads in Congress

**Abortion inclusion will be  
grave defeat for pro-lifers**

By James A. Smith

Director of Government Relations

The health care reform debate is approaching a critical hour in Congress. As the pressure increases in Washington for a compromise plan—melding together various facets of proposals by President Clinton; Rep. Jim Cooper, D.-Tenn.; Sen. John Chafee, R.-R.I., and others—the policy issue of whether abortion on demand will be included in a basic benefits package cannot be forgotten.

Other policy implications of health care reform are also critically important,

### *In this issue: Help on health care*

Included in this edition are two items to help Southern Baptists and other Christians to understand some of the issues involved in health care and to impact federal action on health care reform. They are:

- On Page 3, information on the new CLC Legislative Action Line, 1-900-933-1776. It tells callers how to receive personalized letters to send to the President and Congress expressing opposition to abortion being included in health care.

- In a special fold-out, an explanation of six health care concerns issued by the CLC. "Health Care Reform: A Statement of Concerns" was formulated as a result of the Southern Baptist Consultation on Health Care earlier this year.

especially the possibility of rationing health care. The special fold-out section in this issue of *Salt* details the Christian Life Commission's "Statement of Concerns," drafted in January, which outlines a broad list of concerns about health care reform.

While these issues are significant, it is difficult to understate the importance of keeping abortion out of any health care reform plan. If abortion on demand is included in the final package, it will be

the greatest setback for the pro-life movement since the Supreme Court legalized abortion on demand in the landmark 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision. (See Page 3 to find out how you can send your representatives letters opposing abortion on demand in health care reform.)

Including abortion in a national health plan would vastly expand the acceptability and prevalence of abortion in America. Every working American, through taxes and private insurance, would be made complicit in the act of killing unborn children.

The "conscience clause" in the President's plan would only protect individual medical personnel from participating in abortions. Religious hospitals would have to perform abortions under the President's plan. Additionally, even religious institutions which are morally opposed to abortion would have to participate in the health care system forcing them to contribute to this heinous practice through the collection of tithes and offerings.

A number of committees in the Senate and House of Representatives are considering various versions of health

## *State stalks church, part II*

Uncle Sam is after people of faith—again.

Not only is the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission still considering guidelines which may stifle witnessing in the workplace, but the Clinton administration's Justice Department now is targeting tithing.

The Justice Department has sided with a federal bankruptcy judge who ordered a church in Minnesota to return \$13,450 in tithes given by a couple in 1991, the year before they filed for bankruptcy. Last year, a federal judge affirmed the decision, saying the couple,

Bruce and Nancy Young, had received nothing of value in return and had defrauded their creditors. They could have spent their money on alcohol, gambling or prostitution without having to return it.

Crystal Evangelical Free Church of New Hope, Minn., fighting the rulings because of their threat to religious freedom, has appealed to the Eighth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Several religious liberty groups have sided with the church. The Christian

(See *State* on Page 4)

(See *Health* on Page 4)



## Does character matter?

By Richard D. Land

For some time now a debate has raged among Americans about whether a public figure's private life has any impact on that person's ability to perform the duties of elected or appointed office. Many have argued that a person's private life, particularly *sexual* behavior, is irrelevant to a public figure's fitness for office and that it is inappropriate to even raise such questions. Many others counter that whether a person has been unfaithful to his or her spouse is extremely relevant, because if a person will break a promise of fidelity to a spouse, why will he or she not break promises made to the public? The "character" question is really about credibility and trust. When this person tells you something, based on his or her character, can you believe this person?

Many Christians have expressed frustration with society's unwillingness or inability to grasp the heart and soul of the character question, which is integrity. Often I have heard exasperated evangelicals exclaim, "They just don't get it!" That may be changing. Since the Whitewater revelations began and questions have surfaced about the Clintons' investments and tax returns, powerful secular voices in the larger culture have begun to address the "character" issue in various forms. *Newsweek* published an article entitled "The Politics of Promiscuity" (*Newsweek*, May 9) in which the author, Joe Klein, questions the President's character, linking his public and private behavior. Klein quite correctly points out that while the charges against the President have not been proven, and even presidents should be presumed innocent until proven guilty, that there has been "a rising landfill of allegations" against the President. Increasingly, the country is saying that whether or not the charges are true *is* relevant.

As *Time* recently argued, if the President and Mrs. Clinton are not telling us the truth about Whitewater and their private finances, then "who can believe them when they say their health-care plan will really cut costs, or improve the quality of medical care, or not lead to rationing, or increase rather than narrow our choice of which doctors to consult" (*Time*, March 21)? *Time's* Lance Morrow admitted that he "was wrong" in downplaying the character issue (*Time*, May 16).

As *Newsweek's* Klein put it: "It's not too much to ask that a leader be mature, fully formed and not flailing about in a narcissistic, existential quest for self-discovery. Life may be a journey; but character, most assuredly, is not. It is a destination most adults reach, for good or ill. And it is both tragic and quite dangerous that we find ourselves still asking if Bill Clinton will ever get there."

I believe *Time* and *Newsweek* just got it. Character matters.

That is why when asked by a recent *Newsweek* poll whether President Clinton had "the honesty and integrity you expect in a President," 45 percent of Americans said yes and 46 percent said no. Character matters. That is why President Nixon, despite foreign policy accomplishments, will forever be diminished by the Watergate scandal. For that matter, Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart stand as testimonies that "character" matters in ministerial leadership as well. Character *always* matters.

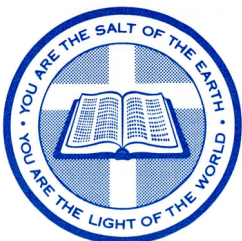
## They said it

"Regardless of political persuasion, evangelicals must strive to be of one mind. We ought to show unfailing civility to government officials. But being civil does not mean being silent or forsaking politics. 'Priestly sanctification' must always be balanced with 'prophetic criticism.' To fall short of either responsibility is to betray our richest heritage and deny our biblical calling."

— **Chuck Colson, chairman of Prison Fellowship and author**, writing in *Christianity Today*.

"It's clear that the sexual orientation of parents has nothing to do with the sexual orientation or outlook of their children. Many children in this society are born unwanted, and I feel that if gay or lesbian couples feel that they want children enough to adopt, well, then they are probably just as capable of being good parents as heterosexual parents who choose to adopt." — **U.S. Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders** in *The Advocate*, a magazine for homosexuals.

Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun's reasoning in the 1973 decision legalizing abortion "was not only solid but has proven the test of time. . . . What Justice Blackmun actually wrote in *Roe v. Wade* has been simplified to the point of distortion by those who do not want abortion in any sense to be recognized as a legal right. It's plainly wrong to say that Justice Blackmun authorized abortion on demand." — **Stan Hastey, executive director of The Alliance of Baptists**, upon Blackmun's retirement announcement, according to Associated Baptist Press. Blackmun's *Roe* opinion, however, coupled with the definition of the mother's "health" in the *Doe v. Bolton* companion decision, resulted in the legalization of abortion for any reason during all stages of pregnancy.



*Salt* is the public policy newsletter of the Christian Life Commission. The CLC is the moral concerns, public policy and religious liberty agency of the Southern Baptist Convention. For information, contact the Christian Life Commission, 400 N. Capitol St. NW, Suite 594, Washington, DC 20001, (202) 638-3223.

*Salt* is published six times a year. It is mailed without charge to individuals who request it. Voluntary subscriptions are \$10 annually. Subscribers to *Salt* also will receive *Light*, the CLC's ethics magazine. Checks should be made payable to the Christian Life Commission. Your canceled check will serve as your tax-deductible receipt. Please send requests for subscriptions or extra copies of issues to the Christian Life Commission, 901 Commerce, #550, Nashville, TN 37203-3696. *Salt* is printed on recycled paper.

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# Health Care Reform: A Statement of Concerns

## **Concern No. 1: Implications for the inalienable rights of human persons, particularly their right to life and liberty, which have been conferred by our Creator and guaranteed in our Constitution.**

We are especially concerned about the impact of the proposed Clinton plan or any other health care plan on health care at the edges of life. The Clinton plan, at present, includes so-called "pregnancy-related services." Both the President and Mrs. Clinton have made it clear that these services will include abortion services. Along with the majority of Americans, we are opposed to any reform which includes funding for elective abortions.

Without question, the inclusion of abortion on demand in the final version of any health care reform would be the most devastating setback for the pro-life movement since *Roe v. Wade*. In 1973, the pro-life movement was caught by surprise when the Supreme Court decided *Roe v. Wade*. The decision about health care reform will not be by judicial fiat but will be decided by a democratic political process. And this time the pro-life movement is ready.

Both sides in the abortion struggle agree on the importance of this battle, while, of course, disagreeing on the final outcome. It is unfortunate that the President is apparently so committed to the pro-abortion lobby that he seems willing to jeopardize the most significant social policy legislation of this century for a medical procedure which most Americans agree is elective, except in the rarest of circumstances.

The winner of this debate will have achieved an enormous victory. The pro-abortion movement understands quite well that the inclusion of abortion on demand in any "basic benefits package" validates and radically expands its movement. Tens of millions of Americans who are not currently able to pay for abortions (whether because of lack of insurance, insurers' refusal to cover the procedure or the current federal ban on Medicaid funding of abortion) will have ready access to this procedure under the President's plan. There can be little doubt that, in spite of the President's professed desire that abortion be "safe and legal, but rare," the killing of unborn children will vastly multiply as a result of his national health care plan. Consequently, we are adamantly opposed to any government-funded or government-mandated abortion-on-demand services.

In addition to our concerns about abortion, we are deeply troubled by other aspects of this plan. The sanctity of human life is an issue which goes far beyond the issue of pre-born life. In addressing the proposed health care reform, Mrs. Clinton said, "I haven't told my husband this . . . but we're going to have a living will." She also said, "We'll try to reduce the level of defensive medicine in the last six months of life" (*Washington Post*, Sept. 22, 1993). We will likewise contest any plan which opens the door to or actively promotes euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide as a method of reducing medical expenditures near the end of life. *Primum non nocere* (do no harm), not "kill as few as possible," remains the capstone of the physician's duty to her patient.

**Concern No. 2: The radical revision of the physician-patient relationship.** For more than 2,500 years, medicine in the Hippocratic tradition, especially as it has been informed by the Christian ethos, has been characterized by the inviolability of the covenant relationship between a physician and his or her patient.

The insinuation of health care alliances into the relationship threatens the quality of care and erodes the level of trust between the physician and patient. Reform efforts must not undermine this time-tested relationship and the enduring values surrounding it. A physician's best efforts to preserve human life must never be impeded by harmful government intrusion.



**Concern No. 3: Religious liberty and freedom of conscience.** It is embarrassing that a President who claims the Baptist heritage of religious freedom would consider so violating the consciences of millions of pro-life Americans by forcing them to pay for abortion with their taxes. Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Virginia Statute on Religious Freedom that "to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves, is sinful and tyrannical. . . ." President Clinton seeks not just the propagation of his opinion about the morality of abortion, he seeks "contributions of money" for the very act of killing unborn children from those who are conscientiously opposed to this act. This destroys the essence of true religious freedom.

Will a person of religious faith be allowed to choose a doctor of a similar world view, within a government-mandated, managed-care system, or will he or she be forced to see a doctor whose world view is clearly in opposition to the patient's deeply held beliefs? This is a serious question in all fields of medicine, but it is absolutely critical in the mental health fields. Will a Christian be forced under this proposed system in a time of mental stress to see a psychologist who is not informed by a Christian world view but rather an opposing or antagonistic world view?

While the President, on MTV, has said that most health alliance plans will cover abortions, there will be what he called "religious exemptions" or a "conscience clause" so that some health plans do not have to include abortion services (*Baltimore Sun*, Sept. 25, 1993).

President Clinton has acknowledged to reporters that tax funds and employer-mandated contributions, presumably even from those persons morally opposed to abortion, would be used "indirectly" to pay for abortions. The conscience clause then is merely smoke and mirrors.

Southern Baptists still maintain, through their state conventions, some oversight of denominationally operated hospitals. Most of those hospitals do not offer elective abortion services. We are concerned about the Clinton proposal's impact on the religious liberty of those facilities that refuse to perform abortions.

**Concern No. 4: Allocation of finite medical resources.** We believe that the benefits of health care should extend to all humanity, including the elderly, the chronically ill and the unborn.

Health care rationing based on factors other than medical need and patient willingness are ethically suspect. In particular, age-based systems of rationing are unjust and discriminatory. Systems which discriminate on the basis of quality of life judgments or mental or physical disability are especially abhorrent. We will oppose any form of restricted access based on age, quality of life or disability.

**Concern No. 5: Interference with families.** Again, as the Clinton plan presently exists, it includes so-called "family planning services." We will resist any plan which will fund abortion counseling, contraceptive distribution to minors, medical care without parental consent and school-based clinics which facilitate these activities.

**Concern No. 6: Impact on Southern Baptist entities and agencies, including local churches.** Most Southern Baptist pastors, agency employees and missionaries are covered by insurance plans which are under the aegis of the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. The consultation made clear that every Southern Baptist, every Southern Baptist church and every Southern Baptist organization will be impacted significantly by any of the health care reform proposals currently under consideration. We are concerned that Southern Baptists, along with most Americans, may be worse off under the Clinton blueprint.

*This document, issued by the Christian Life Commission and reprinted in Salt, the agency's public-policy newsletter, was formulated as a consequence of the Southern Baptist Consultation on Health Care Jan. 18, 1994, in Washington, D.C. A companion document, "Health Care Reform: A Moral Preamble," was included in the March-April 1994 issue of Light, the CLC's ethics magazine.*

# Abortion Is Not Health Care: Send Washington This Message Now!

## Speak Out Today!

Call now to receive your four personalized letters, as seen on this page, addressed to the President, your Senators and Congressional Representative.

**The Christian Life  
Commission, SBC  
Legislative Action Line**

**1-900-933-1776**  
(The total cost is only \$5.95)

*Act Now!*

### Here's how to use the CLC Legislative Action Line:

- Begin by calling 1-900-933-1776. This service is available in all 50 states, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. The total cost of this call is \$5.95 and will appear on your telephone bill.
- After a brief message from the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission you will be asked to say and spell your name. Next you will be asked to say and spell your street address, including any apartment or unit number. You will then be asked to just say your city, state and zip code.

Your Name Printed Here  
Your Street Address, Apt. or Box Number  
Your City, State, Zip Code

Your Senators/Representative Name  
United States Senate or House of Representatives  
XXX Senate or XXX House Office Building, Room XXX  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear (Your Senator/Representative Name):

I urge you to oppose any health care plan that will pay for abortion on demand.

I would consider it a serious violation of my conscience to be made complicit in the act of destroying human life if my taxes were used to pay for abortion or if my private insurance was mandated to cover abortion services. Thomas Jefferson wrote in 1785, "To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical."

As a Christian who has learned about the health care reform plans under consideration from the Southern Baptist Convention Christian Life Commission, I support the principle of freedom of conscience. Many Christians fought for the First Amendment's protection of religious freedom so that the government was not able, through its taxing power, to violate the conscience of its citizenry by subsidizing practices some Americans oppose.

Millions of Americans are opposed to including abortion in health care reform. The snuffing-out of unborn children cannot be regarded as true health care. In fact, a New York Times survey from last year revealed that 72% of Americans are opposed to including abortion in a health care basic benefits package.

Please work against any health care reform plan -- Clinton, Cooper, Chafee or any other -- that includes abortion on demand or does not expressly forbid abortion coverage. I look forward to your reply and learning your views on this important issue.

Sincerely,

(Your signature and a handwritten P.S. lets Washington know of your active involvement.)

- Your 4 personalized letters will be mailed to you within 5 days. Just stamp the envelopes that come with the letters, sign your letters and mail them.
- Remember it's your thoughts that count, so feel free to add a handwritten postscript (P.S.) to your letters. And if, by chance, there's a problem with your letters; you can contact USA Letters at 1-800-755-1994.
- When calling our legislative action line, if you hear a recording that your call cannot be completed as dialed or a similar message, this is because your local phone company has placed a block on your telephone line for calls to 900 services. However, you still can participate by sending your name, address and a check or money order for \$5.95 to: CLC/USA Letters, P.O. Box 9865, Washington, D.C. 20016-8865.

**PLEASE PHOTOCOPY THIS PAGE AND PASS IT ALONG TO YOUR FRIENDS**



## Health care at crossroads

(Continued from Page 1)

care reform. Many experts believe the Senate Finance Committee will be the key committee from which a compromise will emerge.

The following are members of the Senate Finance Committee: Daniel Moynihan, D.-N.Y., chairman.; Max Baucus, D.-Mont.; David Boren, D.-Okla.; Bill Bradley, D.-N.J.; George Mitchell, D.-Maine; David Pryor, D.-Ark.; Donald Riegle Jr., D.-Mich.; Jay Rockefeller, D.-W.Va.; Thomas Daschle, D.-S.D.; John Breaux, D.-La.; Kent Conrad, D.-N.D.; Bob Packwood, R.-Ore.; Bob Dole, R.-Kan.; William Roth, R.-Del.; John Danforth, R.-Mo.; Dave Durenberger, R.-Minn.; Charles Grassley, R.-Iowa; Orrin Hatch, R.-Utah; Malcolm Wallop, R.-Wyo., and Chafee.

The Senate Finance Committee is expected about the middle of June to begin considering a compromise bill. Floor action in the Senate and House is expected in July.

Write your representative and senators now. Urge them to oppose any health care reform which does not expressly exclude abortion on demand. Send separate letters to your representatives informing them of your concerns regarding other issues impacted by health care reform.

### Express your opinion

The President  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

White House Comment Line  
(202) 456-1111

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Capitol Switchboard  
(202) 224-3121

## SAFE Act falters in Senate committee

Legislation requiring health and safety warnings in alcohol advertisements appears dead in this Congress.

A scheduled vote by the Senate Commerce Committee on the Sensible Advertising and Family Education Act, S. 674, failed to occur recently when Sen. Strom Thurmond, R.-S.C., withdrew his request for action. There did not appear to be enough votes to move the bill, Thurmond's staff reported.

The legislation still has not received a committee vote since its introduction in 1990. The Christian Life Commission is represented on the steering committee of the coalition supporting the bill.

## State stalks church again

(Continued from Page 1)

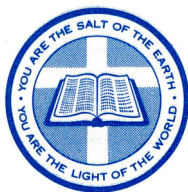
Life Commission joined six other organizations in a recent friend-of-the-court brief opposing the Justice Department's position.

Supporters of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which was passed overwhelmingly in Congress and signed by President Clinton last year, say the Justice Department's position undermines the new law. RFRA, which was passed in response to a Supreme Court ruling in 1990, restores the compelling interest test in cases involving free exercise of religion. The test requires the government to prove it has a "compelling interest" before restricting religious freedom.

Meanwhile, the EEOC's extended public comment period on proposed harassment guidelines closed June 13.

The proposed guidelines, which include religion as a category of harassment, potentially could result in harassment charges against employees and employers for witnessing to subordinates or fellow workers or having religious art or gospel literature in an office.

The CLC and other religious liberty and evangelical Christian groups have asked the EEOC to remove religion from the guidelines.



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**TELL WASHINGTON 'ABORTION IS NOT HEALTH CARE' (SEE PAGE 3)**