

# Future NEWS

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June, 2005

## UNDER THE TRAINING OF CHRIST

**U**nder the training of Christ the disciples had been led to feel their need of the Spirit. Under the Spirit's teaching they received the final qualification, and went forth to their lifework. No longer were they ignorant and uncultured. No longer were they a collection of independent units or discordant, conflicting elements. No longer were their hopes set on worldly greatness. They were of "one accord," "of one heart and of one soul." Acts. 2:46; 4:32. Christ filled their thoughts; the advancement of His kingdom was their aim. In mind and character they had become like their Master, and men "took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13.

"Pentecost brought them the heavenly illumination. The truths they could not understand while Christ was with them were now unfolded. With a faith and assurance that they had never before known, they accepted the teachings of the Sacred Word. No longer was it a matter of faith with them that Christ was the Son of God. They knew that, although clothed with humanity, He was indeed the Messiah, and they told their experience to the world with a confidence which carried with it the conviction that God was with them.

"They could speak the name of Jesus with assurance; for was He not their Friend and Elder Brother? Brought into close communion with Christ, they sat with Him in heavenly places. With what burning language they clothed their ideas as they bore witness for Him! Their hearts were surcharged with a benevolence so full, so deep, so far-reaching, that it impelled them to go to the ends of the earth, testifying to the power of Christ. They were filled with an intense longing to carry forward the work He had begun. They realized the greatness of their debt to heaven and the responsibility of their work. Strengthened by the endowment of the Holy Spirit, they went forth filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross. The Spirit animated them and spoke through them. The peace of Christ shone from their faces. They had consecrated their lives to Him for service, and their very features bore evidence to the surrender they had made." *The Acts of the Apostles*, 46.

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The ministry of *Future for America* is to proclaim the final warning message of Revelation 14 as identified within the prophecies of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. The end-time fulfillment of Bible prophecy is no longer future—for it is taking place before our eyes. The historic, prophetic understanding of Seventh-day Adventism is now present truth. We are the final generation. Our emphasis on the prophetic word includes all the counsel of God's Word. To know what lies ahead is useless if we do not possess the experience to stand during these solemn times. Through obedience to God's law, and faith in the promises of God's Word, we are to receive that experience.

Coupled with the prophetic message, *Future for America* emphasizes all aspects of the medical missionary work. The "entering wedge"—medical missionary work—must be practiced by those who are to finish God's work in these final hours.

During this time period, country living becomes more essential with each passing moment. *Future for America* upholds and promotes this end-time truth. God's people must prepare for the coming storm, and that preparation includes the experience of learning how to survive in a simple fashion, away from the great centers of population.

*Future for America* intends to print and distribute truth-filled literature, while helping in parts of the Lord's vineyard where faithful brethren do not have the means to share prophecy and the present truth messages for Seventh-day Adventism today.

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These sermons will conclude the set of five that began with sermons one and two in the May newsletter.

## **Five Sermons on Righteousness**

**By Alonzo T. Jones**

**Presented at the Ottawa, Kansas Institute  
and Campmeeting in May of 1889**

**Attended by Ellen G. White**

### **SERMON THREE**

This morning we will study some texts that speak to us of faith, what we are to do with it and what it will do for us. Romans 5:1 to be justified is to be accounted righteous and this by faith. Romans 4:5; Romans 3:22. This righteousness is to take the place of all our sins, remember. Now see what the Lord will do with our sins, Isaiah 1:18. The latter condition is just the opposite of the first—the sins no matter how deep the color will be made white as snow. We are to be clothed with white raiment, our scarlet sins to be changed, our filthy stained garments to be changed like wool, white as snow. When we ask to have our sins taken away it is asking to be cleansed. What does it mean to be made white as snow? Mark 9:3. That is the garment that is to be put upon us—whiter than any fuller can make them. This is the blessed promise. Faith says that this is so, Isaiah 44:22. The Lord has paid the ransom by the death of Christ, now he says return unto me, I have redeemed thee. All the thick, black clouds have gone—blotted out. Micah 7:18, 19 passed by the transgression of what? The remnant? Those who keep the commandments and have the faith of Jesus. That is a promise to us. He is fixing them up for Himself. He is taking their sins from them. He delights in treating them better than they deserve. He delights in us when we believe in Him. All our sins are to go into the depths of the sea, the deepest depth we can conceive of. Is not that a blessed promise? Psalm 103:11, 12. Who can conceive the distance of heaven

from us, so great is God's goodness and mercy towards us. Don't we want to worship such a Lord as that? Do we want to offend such a God as that? No, we want to be like Him. Now how far is the east from the west? Suppose we walk out looking for the west, how long shall we seek it? Eternally. Then so far are sins to be from us, as long as we believe it. Have faith then and keep them eternally away from you. Why should we not have peace? Faith then gives us peace. God gives us the Holy Spirit as a seal of his righteousness. We must ask for the Holy Spirit to receive it. Luke 11:9-13. How must we ask? James 1:6, Galatians 3:13, 14, the blessing of Abraham was righteousness through faith, Romans 4:21-25.

What does God promise us in reference to our sins? They shall be white as snow. Then we are righteous. He says he will blot out the thick clouds of our sins. If we believe it then, we are righteous. By Micah he says our sins shall go into the sea. Do we believe it? Then we are righteous. Our sins are to go from us an eternal distance. Do we believe God can do this? Then we are righteous. Now the promises were not written out for Abraham's sake alone, but for our sakes to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead. Romans 10:10. Then how are we to have righteousness? By faith. Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God—now read Galatians 3, again. We receive the seal of it by faith. Another step we want to take when we receive the promise by faith. Romans 5:1-5, we get into the grace of God by faith (whatsoever is not of faith is sin), and we must rejoice. Why should we not? What have we to complain of? What have we to do but rejoice? The Lord is good. Rejoice anyhow. Rejoice in tribulations also, because the Holy Ghost sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts. Don't get a wrong turn here. It is not love for God (though that will be there), but the Holy Spirit puts God's

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love in our hearts. God gave his Son when man was enmity toward him, because he loved them, and when his love is in our hearts they will go out towards mankind in love as his great heart has done. The evidence we want is to have the love of God in our heart.

Now Galatians 5:22. How shall we be good? Have the spirit of God in our hearts. Do we want the other virtues? These are all the fruit of the spirit of God. We can't have the fruit unless we have the tree—for it is God that works within us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. John 14:21-28. The Lord went away but promised to send the Holy Spirit to manifest him. Is that not what we learned yesterday? Where do we abide? At our homes. We are sojourning here. "We will come unto him and abide with him." Ephesians 3:14-21. We begin, then, at the 16th verse, which speaks of the family of God, not two, but only one, some in heaven, the balance on earth—this is a prayer for us—that we be strengthened by the spirit, that Christ may dwell with us by our faith. How can we know that which passeth knowledge? Why, only by faith and then we know it. Now verse 20. Paul could not find words to tell what he wanted to, and failed to express it all. The Lord says he will do all we ask or think. Do we believe it? Then we can get from him all we ask or think, further exceedingly abundantly beyond what we can ask for or think, according to what power? The power working within us. And what is this? Our faith. Well, then, that is all the limit put upon God—the power of God being limited only according to the measure of our faith. Then, brethren, let us have faith. God is able to do all he promises. Romans 1:16-17. Many do not know what this expression "from faith to faith" means. We begin with faith, and the exercise of that faith will develop the capacity to exercise faith tomorrow—so that we grow from faith to faith, from today's to

tomorrow's—therefore we grow in faith, and from grace, favor, power with God, to grace, and in knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us exercise our faith then, and it will develop power—the power of God unto eternal salvation. Why, then, should we not rejoice? Now faith works, Galatians 5:6. Here is where the work comes in, and is the only work acceptable to God, for it is of God, but works without faith are our own. James 2:18. Well let it do this for it is true, the man who has the most faith will do the most acceptable work to God. Work is of no value except it have faith, and faith without works is valueless. Works will tell the amount of faith we possess, 1 Thessalonians 1:3; 2 Thessalonians, 1:11. Now comes obedience. Where? Romans 16:25-26, all made manifest for the obedience of faith—then all short of this faith is sin, that is, "comes short" of the perfection of the law of God, according to the view of God—not intentional sin, perhaps, but short of the glory of God, and is not obedience—for without faith it is impossible to please God. So, then, our obedience comes in after we have faith, and God's spirit is dwelling within us. Do you not see now that we have to be made good before we can do good? If then you want to do better get more of Jesus Christ in your heart. It is all well enough to want to do better, but go first to Jesus to be made better. Romans 1:5, margin, also Timothy 6:12.

A battle is to be fought, and the beauty of it all is there is a victory to be won, 1 John, 4:4. Mark what "overcome" means; "to conquer," "veni, vide, vice." I came, I saw, I conquered, is what Caesar wrote home to the senate. I came, I overcame, I conquered is the literal translation. Then to overcome is to conquer—but it does not protect from temptation and battles, but it fits us up and enables us to fight, and gives us the victory, all through faith. Is not faith, then, a glorious

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thing? Ephesians 6:10-18. After having conquered be able to stand when the battle is over (see margin of verse 13), having the righteousness of God as our armour, and above it all the shield of faith to not only stop the fiery darts of the enemy (which if they strike us create a flame within us), but it quenches them—puts them out. Hebrews 2:5 to Hebrews 2:1-3 (sic). Paul says Christ partook of our suffering and took upon him the bondage of death to rescue us from death, and took upon him our nature that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest, so that having stood in our place, remember that he stood there before we did, and if we put him between us and the temptation, it vanishes, and we conquer in him. That is the shield of faith. Another thing, brethren, the heart is purified by faith and the pure shall see God. Matthew 5:8; Acts 5:8-9. It is made pure and kept pure by him. How is it done? There is no “how” to faith; but let us read Luke 8:13-18. Why did he not say before this who touched him? Because the touch of the woman was the touch of faith and drew virtue from Him. Faith reaches out to Christ and virtue comes in response as surely as it did on that woman, and this is not all. Luke 6:19: Touch him by faith and virtue will come to all and make you faithful, i.e., full of faith.

Christ was faithful; his faithfulness comes to us in answer to our faith and that makes us faithful. It is only by his obedience that we are made righteous. Then when I have anything to do, let my faith reach out to him and bring faithfulness from him to enable me to do it. Faithfulness, that only can do it. If we want to be good let our faith touch him, and goodness comes to us and makes us good; if we want to be righteous, in answer to our faith, power comes to us and makes us righteous. In answer to our faith as it grows, more and more of his power and goodness will come to us,

and just before probation closes we shall be like him indeed, and then we shall be keeping the commandments of God in fact, because there will be so much of him in us that there will be none of ourselves there. That is when we get to the place where we keep the commandments of God, and there is the beautiful promise, “Here are they that keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus.” We must reach that place yet. There is too much self glorification, too much self confidence, but let our faith come to him. Then that is sanctification, that is what the 26th chapter of Acts tells us, verse 18; also John 17:19. That is genuine sanctification. When that comes it will be all right. Get all that kind of sanctification you can. Faith is actually a something, a reality, and when it touches Jesus Christ, in response to it virtue comes from him and makes us what we want to be. Get that into your minds, brethren, and let us understand what faith is. Let our faith touch him and draw from him virtue, goodness, righteousness, and every good and perfect gift will come to us. Then the glory, the praise and the honor is Christ’s, and let us give it to him. Then if there be any virtue at all it is Christ’s virtue that makes us acceptable to God in any way whatever. A text to sum up this matter is Hebrews 10:37, 38.

#### **SERMON FOUR**

1 John 5:4, “And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith.” Faith is victory. There is a warfare before us, a conflict to engage in, but I am glad we may have victory. The eleventh of Hebrews is all on faith and seems to be written with especial reference to Christ’s second coming as shown by the last of the preceding chapter. “For yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.”

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We believe that the coming of the Lord is near. We have believed this for a long time, and as time passes and the evidences of this event multiply we are confirmed in this belief, "that he who shall come will come quickly, and will not tarry." To the people living at this time it is said, "now the just shall live by faith." It is faith that saves, but works come in as the result and fruit of faith. Your faith will be shown by your works. It is the connecting link between God and man. We read the promises of God and become partakers of the divine nature. God speaks, faith claims, and we become possessors of that which God promises, and without it we cannot please God. We cannot honor God with our own ways. Faith is that which takes hold of present truth and acts upon it. There is much that people call faith that is not faith at all. To believe what God has not said is not faith at all. I may believe it but not by faith, because faith must have God's word to rest upon. Abel offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain. Cain's was rejected because he did not offer that which expressed a faith in the Christ. Abel brought a lamb, the blood of which was offered in expression of his faith in the blood of Christ. We can worship, we can pray, and not have faith. Noah became heir to righteousness by faith. When the Lord told him that he was going to destroy the world, did it look reasonable? Do you suppose the learned men, the D.D.'s. looked upon those things as reasonable? All arose and rejected the message of warning, but on the word of God Noah built the ark, preached the truth and was saved by faith while those who reasoned were lost. Faith keeps apace with the progression of the truth of God. "Abraham went out not knowing whither he was going." Was not that very foolish? He went on a thus saith the Lord. He was just simple enough to do as God commanded, and

to believe that when God had more instruction for him he would receive it.

Moses in the midst of darkness and apostasy stands a monument of his faith. Satan did not want a delivery of Israel, but he cannot hinder the work of God. Although educated in the courts of Pharaoh Moses chooses rather to suffer the reproach of Christ than to command the riches of Egypt. Unbelief does not make such choices. Moses knew of the promises God had made to the fathers and by faith he cast his life among his own people. So again we see that faith takes hold of the word of God.

Coming to our own time. A great majority of people in all ages have made the sad mistake of not understanding the times in which they lived. This is shown by the time of Noah and the time of Christ. Christ said on one occasion: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day the things which belong unto thy peace. But now they are hid from thine eyes...because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation." The Jews prided themselves on being the children of Abraham, the sons of God; yet they did not understand their own time. In their day we would think by the great professions of faith that the world would be filled with it; but we read: "When the Son of man cometh shall he find faith in the earth?" We trace the lines of prophecy down through Daniel and Revelation and we find we are always brought face to face with the fact that we are on the brink of the eternal world. This knowledge brings upon every man a solemn responsibility. Most of my audience believe this. Then our works should correspond. Faith is victory. Abel triumphed, and died a martyr to his faith. Noah was victorious, and his faith carried him over the waters of the flood to this side. The Israelites conquered at the Red Sea, by marching straight up to the waters without knowing how

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they were to pass. God's word never fails. May he forgive us for all our doubting which makes his word a lie.

If we live in the last days of the world's history, has he a work for this day? He doeth nothing in secret. Turn to Revelation 14:6, and we have three messages. The first angel proclaims the preaching of the gospel to all peoples because of the coming of the day of judgment. The second announce the fall from grace of God's church, and the third angel warning against the work of the apostate power that shall seek to deceive the people of God. What is the nature of this message? "To every nation, kindred, tongue, and people." Has this message been given? In 1844 we have the work of William Miller and others leading out in this country, the work of Irving and Wolff in Europe, and in all countries we find the same work done. In northern Norway we find people who remember well the preaching of that time from this text. In Denmark we find the same. So the whole world has received the message. Afterward comes the second message: "Babylon is fallen." All acknowledge this to be the fall of the popular churches and the coldness and corruption of the churches. Take the third message and we find the prophecy of the making of an image to the Papacy. We have preached this for forty years, and the time was when people laughed us to scorn for doing so; for preaching what we now see fulfilling in the national reform movement. Our own presence here tonight proves the fulfillment of that prophecy which says: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." To deny this truth is to deny your own existence. "The gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all nations as a witness; then shall the end come." The same work which is going on in this country is going on in Europe, and we there witness the power

of the truth. In Russia the work is going on in spite of their stringent laws. God is in this work and may we believe it. But we are not to the end yet. There are millions that have not received the good news of salvation. When I sense it, I say, "God, tarry yet a little time, that these souls may be warned."

Noah, in the eyes of the world, built a monument to his folly when he built the ark, but he believed God, and I thank God for his faith. His faith deserves an eternal monument. We want more missionary spirit, that we may act like living men, living Christians, real and genuine. We want the victory, and pray that we may be faithful. God help us to be faithful, and to consecrate all to the work of God. Let us have some of the consecration of the martyrs and be ready to lay all on the altar of God. Shall we not make the truth we believe a living reality? We have a warning to give; many of us have labored, prayed and sacrificed for the work, but let not our courage fail till our ark is built. May God help the work and bless the people in Kansas, that with others we may at last come off victorious.

#### **SERMON FIVE**

2 Corinthians 5:17. We have seen how we are brought into Christ and how this says if any man is brought into Christ he is a new creature. Galatians 6:15; 5:6, nothing avails but this and faith that works by love of God, being made a new creature by faith. Romans 5:1,2,5; 1 John 5:3—then keeping the commandments comes in after we are new creatures, so then we must be made good, be made righteous, before we can do good or do righteousness; 1 Corinthians 7:19—that is the aim set before us in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:8-10. We are created unto good works; made new creatures in him, his righteousness counting for our unrighteousness. The good works God's creatures are created in Christ

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to do are the good works we could not do before. So a new creature will aim constantly to keep the commandments. James 2:1, 9. We do not have the faith of Christ with the transgression of the law. Christ did not come to set us free for that, because if we turn from a single point of the law our faith will not avail. But our intent is accepted and ignorant sins are forgiven, yet willful refusal to accept points of truth presented will cause us to lose all the righteousness we ever had. This explains the fast growing evil in the popular churches of today. Years ago the churches were religious—even when the third angel’s message started they were accepted of God but when they refused to comply with the requirements of the message, then they lost all the righteousness they had and have had to invent all manner of means by which to keep the congregations together, by entertainments. This is the philosophy of the degeneration of the churches. James 2:14. No more does faith profit unless it is kept alive by these works. God has provided, Numbers 18, let us show our faith by our works. Faith is the anchor that holds the craft in the right place to work and the storms beat us nearer home. Verses 21, 23. Abraham was counted righteous when he believed and without works, the other righteousness came in twenty-five years after, so he was not counted righteous by works, that scripture was spoken when he believed and more than twenty-five years after James says the scripture was fulfilled. If he had refused to offer Isaac, his former righteousness would have disappeared, so the obedience of his faith completed his righteousness that he had by faith. Then our keeping of the commandments is not to become righteous, but because we are righteous. Romans 8:26 shows that we can not even pray aright, but the spirit does it for us, so our prayers are acceptable only through the intercession of Christ and the merits of

his blood. Revelation 8:3, 4. Here is the intercession in the sanctuary making intercession for us and God looks upon Christ, his wounds and his sacrifice and accepts them. Christ was perfect before he came to earth, and his absence makes our prayers acceptable, God imputing his prayer for us to us. How is his righteousness imputed to us? Are our acts righteous as far as they go and is his righteousness applied to finish out the work? No. Christ’s righteousness starts at the beginning and makes the action what it ought to be. Romans 1:16. Is not our faith greater than when we came here? Do we not see more of his righteousness than we did? How is it we have more faith and see more of his righteousness? Why our faith has grown. So it is day by day. We came daily for greater supply of faith. And we finally have so much of Christ’s divine nature in us that we can draw the bow strongly enough to hit the mark, and then we will be keeping the commandments of God. Then is it not Christ’s work from the beginning and all his divine power? Where, then, do our works come in? Nowhere. Why then do we strive so hard to keep the commandments, if it avails not? It is only by faith in Christ that we can say we are Christians. It is only through being one with him that we can be Christians, and only through Christ within us that we keep the commandments—it being all by faith in Christ that we do and say these things. When the day comes that we actually keep the commandments of God, we will never die, because keeping the commandments is righteousness, and righteousness and life are inseparable—so, “Here are they that keep the commandments of God and faith of Jesus,” and what is the result? These people are translated. Life, then, and keeping the commandments go together. If we die now, Christ’s righteousness will be imputed to us

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and we will be raised, but those who live to the end are made sinless before he comes, having so much of Christ's being in them that they "hit the mark" every time, and stand blameless without an intercessor, because Christ leaves the sanctuary sometime before he comes to earth. Now some say, "I will live better; I will try to build myself up into that place where God can accept me." If a child tries to do something to build up himself that you may think more of him, and falls, you say it was selfishness and pride, and serves him right; but if a child tries to do something simply to please you, even though bunglingly done, you commend him and praise him. So with us, if we strive to please our God, no matter how bunglingly we do it, he is so glad to put Christ's righteousness upon us and all heaven rejoices over it. How often a child tries to help mother and she lets it go on, although mother has to do it all over again—yet she delights in the effort of the child to please her. Now like as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

So then we can say with David: "I delight to do thy law, oh, my God." Why? Because the love of God was shed abroad in his heart. Now let me read a few texts about pleasing God: Hebrews 11:6. The aim of faith is to please God, because he is so good. Romans 8:8. Again 2 Corinthians 5:14. The love of Christ draws us and we get that love through faith. But can we love God if we cannot keep the commandments of God? No. We can do neither until we become new creatures. 1 John 3:21-22. Now let us read Colossians 1:9-10. We should be able to walk pleasingly before him. 1 Thessalonians 4:1. This then is the root and motive in keeping the commandments—to please God, and not to make ourselves righteous. God makes and keeps us righteous and then we keep the commandment to please God who has done so much for us. As then it

is the power of Christ through which we keep the commandments now, and it will be his power through which we shall live forever in the new earth. His name to us is what? Jeremiah says it is "the Lord our Righteousness." Jeremiah 23:5-6.

## **Current Events**

### **National ID Cards**

As a security technologist, I regularly encounter people who say the United States should adopt a national ID card. How could such a program not make us more secure, they ask?

The suggestion, when it's made by a thoughtful civic-minded person like Nicholas Kristof in the New York Times, often takes on a tone that is regretful and ambivalent: Yes, indeed, the card would be a minor invasion of our privacy, and undoubtedly it would add to the growing list of interruptions and delays we encounter every day; but we live in dangerous times, we live in a new world....

It all sounds so reasonable, but there's a lot to disagree with in such an attitude.

The potential privacy encroachments of an ID card system are far from minor. And the interruptions and delays caused by incessant ID checks could easily proliferate into a persistent traffic jam in office lobbies and airports and hospital waiting rooms and shopping malls.

But my primary objection isn't the totalitarian potential of national IDs, nor the likelihood that they'll create a whole immense new class of social and economic dislocations. Nor is it the opportunities they will create for colossal boondoggles by government contractors. My objection to the national ID card, at least for the purposes of this essay, is much simpler.

It won't work. It won't make us more secure.

In fact, everything I've learned about security over the last 20 years tells me that once it is put in place, a national ID card program will actually make us less secure.

My argument may not be obvious, but it's not hard to follow, either. It centers around

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the notion that security must be evaluated not based on how it works, but on how it fails.

It doesn't really matter how well an ID card works when used by the hundreds of millions of honest people that would carry it. What matters is how the system might fail when used by someone intent on subverting that system: how it fails naturally, how it can be made to fail, and how failures might be exploited.

The first problem is the card itself. No matter how unforgeable we make it, it will be forged. And even worse, people will get legitimate cards in fraudulent names.

Two of the 9/11 terrorists had valid Virginia driver's licenses in fake names. And even if we could guarantee that everyone who issued national ID cards couldn't be bribed, initial cardholder identity would be determined by other identity documents...all of which would be easier to forge.

Not that there would ever be such thing as a single ID card. Currently about 20 percent of all identity documents are lost per year. An entirely separate security system would have to be developed for people who lost their card, a system that itself is capable of abuse.

Additionally, any ID system involves people...people who regularly make mistakes. We all have stories of bartenders falling for obviously fake IDs, or sloppy ID checks at airports and government buildings. It's not simply a matter of training; checking IDs is a mind-numbingly boring task, one that is guaranteed to have failures. Biometrics such as thumbprints show some promise here, but bring with them their own set of exploitable failure modes.

But the main problem with any ID system is that it requires the existence of a database. In this case it would have to be an immense database of private and sensitive information on every American—one widely and instantaneously accessible from airline check-in stations, police cars, schools, and so on.

The security risks are enormous. Such a database would be a kludge of existing databases; databases that are incompatible, full of erroneous data, and unreliable. As computer scientists, we do not know how to keep a database of this magnitude secure,

whether from outside hackers or the thousands of insiders authorized to access it.

And when the inevitable worms, viruses, or random failures happen and the database goes down, what then? Is America supposed to shut down until it's restored?

Proponents of national ID cards want us to assume all these problems, and the tens of billions of dollars such a system would cost—for what? For the promise of being able to identify someone?

What good would it have been to know the names of Timothy McVeigh, the Unabomber, or the DC snipers before they were arrested? Palestinian suicide bombers generally have no history of terrorism. The goal is here is to know someone's intentions, and their identity has very little to do with that.

And there are security benefits in having a variety of different ID documents. A single national ID is an exceedingly valuable document, and accordingly there's greater incentive to forge it. There is more security in alert guards paying attention to subtle social cues than bored minimum-wage guards blindly checking IDs.

That's why, when someone asks me to rate the security of a national ID card on a scale of one to 10, I can't give an answer. It doesn't even belong on a scale. *schneier.com*, April 15, 2004.

### **Real ID Act: Congress Takes Another Step Toward a Police State**

When President Bush signed into law earlier this month the \$82 billion bill to fund ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, incorporated within it was a second piece of legislation known as the REAL ID Act. When implemented three years from now, it will enable the government to follow the daily comings and goings of every US resident, citizen and non-citizen alike.

The law mandates state uniformity of driver's licenses, in a manner to be determined by the Department of Homeland Security. It will require machine-readable electronic devices to be embedded so that an electronic swipe will reveal the location and business of all persons, whenever they do almost anything. At the same time, state databases will be interlinked to provide instantaneous checking

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of data. Every police stop could well incorporate not only arrest records, but also immigration status, and more.

The effect will be a profound transformation of daily life in America, as the driver's license becomes tantamount to a national identity card. The card will nominally be issued by each of the 50 states, but if any state should not go along with the federal standards, its residents will not be allowed use their licenses to board an airplane or to enter a federal building. Without an approved card, it will be impossible to open a bank account, collect Social Security payments, or use virtually any other government services.

The final bill passed by a 368-58 vote in the House of Representatives on May 5. The Senate passed it unanimously on May 10, and President Bush signed it the next day. Even as Bush was taking this step in establishing the legal framework for a police state at home, he issued a prepared statement hailing the "new democracies ... taking root in Iraq and Afghanistan."

The REAL ID Act was finally approved following several previous attempts by its supporters to enact it stumbled. Its leading proponent, Representative James Sensenbrenner (Republican of Wisconsin), only agreed reluctantly to withdraw similar provisions from an earlier bill to create the position of intelligence "czar" when the Republican leadership promised that he could introduce REAL ID as a stand-alone bill later in the session.

As a separate bill, the REAL ID Act passed the House in February by a 261-161 margin, but it faced an uncertain future in the Senate. The Bush administration then agreed to attach it to the \$82 billion earmarked for the US occupations. Tagged the Emergency Supplemental Appropriation Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief Act of 2005, it was rightly judged that the big business politicians in Congress would swallow it whole, no matter what else was included.

The REAL ID Act moved through Congress on the coattails of the military appropriation bill—which was pitched as a means of "supporting the troops"—without so much as a debate in the Senate, let alone any hearings.

In reality, this legislative maneuver only confirmed that the turn towards militarism abroad is inseparable from the drive to destroy democratic rights at home. Moreover, the overwhelming margins in favor of the bill in both houses of Congress demonstrate the bipartisan character of this policy.

The need for wholesale changes to the system of licensing drivers in the country was sold as a measure to forestall some future terrorist attack by preventing the licensing of undocumented immigrants. One of the recommendations of the so-called independent commission set up to investigate September 11 was the establishment of federal guidelines for identification, including uniform standards for birth certificates and driver's licenses.

Security experts have long questioned whether a national identity card would make anyone more secure. All but one of the 19 hijackers on September 11, 2001, had some form of official US identification, some of it fraudulent.

The rhetoric in favor of the bill was laced with anti-immigrant chauvinism. In the much-abbreviated debate in the House, Sensenbrenner said the bill was needed to "hamper the ability of terrorist and criminal aliens to move freely about our society."

Many of the bill's provisions are especially hard on immigrants. States will not be allowed—as 11 of them currently do—to issue driver's licenses without proof of "lawful presence" in the country. Immigration advocates, supported by many local law enforcement officials, argue that since the undocumented are going to drive anyway, even if only to get to work, it is in the interests of society that they be subject to the basic standards required for getting a license. This argument was not even given a hearing before Congress.

Only valid US visas and passports from other countries will be accepted to show "lawful presence." Licenses will have to expire on the same date as the applicant's visa, even if they meet all legal requirements for their stay.

The 50 state departments of motor vehicles will be required to verify documents submitted to prove identity, legal name and date of birth. Foreign documents, including birth certificates issued outside of the United States, are not

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acceptable. This alone will make it impossible for many immigrants to qualify for licensing.

Apart from these burdens, a whole new raft of measures against immigrants has also been passed. Among the most dictatorial is the one that grants the secretary of homeland security, at his sole discretion, the right to waive all legal requirements that he deems necessary to expedite the construction of security fences and barriers at the border.

Lawsuits filed against the erection of the barriers, which have to date held up their construction on environmental grounds, are specifically removed from the jurisdiction of state courts and must be heard in federal courts.

Other measures make it much easier to target immigrants for deportation. Inclusive new definitions of terrorists and terrorist activity have been incorporated for this purpose. A terrorist organization, in addition to those named on the attorney general's list, includes any "two or more individuals, whether organized or not," who engage in prohibited activities.

Prohibited activities, besides planning or engaging in violent acts of terrorism, include "circumstances indicating an intention to cause death or serious bodily harm." Under this definition, a careless statement made in the heat of an argument could lead to deportation as a terrorist!

Persuading others to espouse terrorist activity and support for a terrorist organization are both deportable offenses, meaning that someone writing or speaking in defense of the Palestinian people or the Turkish Kurds could be prosecuted. Also on the list is gathering information on "potential targets for terrorist activity," and soliciting funds "or other things of value" for "terrorist activity." Even spouses and children of those defined as terrorists will be subject to deportation with limited ability to appeal.

To avoid deportation, those deemed terrorists must meet the virtually impossible task of presenting "clear and convincing evidence" that "the alien did not know, and should not reasonably have known, that the organization was a terrorist organization." Any findings of corroborating evidence by

immigration judges are considered "findings of fact" rather than judgments, and are thereby eliminated from higher judicial review.

Similarly, judgments, decisions or actions deemed "discretionary" may not be appealed. Among these, immigration judges are allowed to consider the defendant's "demeanor" in adjudicating deportation hearings, a notoriously unreliable indicator, especially when dealing with people who have been subjected to torture in their home countries.

The possibilities of judicial review of deportation decisions have been curtailed. All challenges to final deportation orders now pending in federal district courts have been transferred under the new law to the Court of Appeals. Likewise, the higher court is designated as the sole judicial arbiter of claims for asylum brought under the United Nations Convention Against Torture. Appeals for asylum in the United States on the basis of persecution, and even the threat of execution, in the country of origin, will also be sharply curtailed.

In one of the most sweeping attacks on immigrant rights in particular and democratic rights in general, the new law eliminates habeas corpus, the right to petition against unlawful detention, in those cases otherwise excluded from judicial review. As a statement on the REAL ID Act by the American Immigrant Lawyers Association explained, "By eliminating habeas, this provision gives the immigration agency unchecked power to deport and detain many longtime residents of this country. Such draconian measures have nothing to do with enhancing our security..."

Under the guise of fighting the "war on terror," immigrants are being stripped of some of the few rights they now have. Already at the mercy of INS judges, agents and their jailers, undocumented immigrants have been subjected to beatings and indefinite detentions, in many cases after being picked up for only minor visa violations.

Those who have come to the United States to escape desperate conditions at home, and who work very hard at low pay, are automatically considered potential terrorist suspects in the eyes of the government.

The attacks on immigrants embodied in the REAL ID Act, however, are not merely an

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attempt to victimize the foreign-born. By spreading unfounded fear of the immigrant "menace," politicians of both the Republican and Democratic parties have enacted the legal basis for establishing unprecedented state control over citizens and non-citizens alike.

One of the requirements of the act is that each state provide electronic access to information in their motor vehicle databases to all 49 other states. Security experts have warned of the high risk of privacy intrusions and identity theft inherent in integrating data from a variety of different systems. Security standards are not addressed in the legislation, but are left up to the Homeland Security and Transportation departments of the federal government.

Also left to the same cabinet secretaries are future requirements for the machine-readable component of the driver's license. Digital fingerprints, photographs and retinal scans encoded on computer chips are all possibilities. Even DNA information could be included down the road.

The cost of these license modifications has been left as an unfunded mandate to state governments. The program will require the re-issuance of every driver's license across the country. The cost of this alone, even without the document verification requirement, the database interlocks, and the new machine-readable mechanisms, will be a burden on already deficit-ridden state governments.

The National Conference of State Legislatures estimates a cost of \$750 million to implement the REAL ID requirements, including \$80 million to create the links among state databases and other costs to purchase equipment to collect code and store the necessary data onto the licenses.

Besides the state legislature group, the National Governors Association, the Council of State Governments and the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, among others, all came out in opposition to the REAL ID Act.

Neither this opposition—nor that of the American people, to the extent that they are aware of these new measures—was able to outweigh the determination of both Republican and Democrats in Congress to support US war

abroad and intensified repression at home. *wsws.org*, May 26, 2005.

### **US Wants to be Able to Access Britons' ID Cards**

The United States wants Britain's proposed identity cards to have the same microchip and technology as the ones used on American documents.

The aim of getting the same microchip is to ensure compatibility in screening terrorist suspects. But it will also mean that information contained in the British cards can be accessed across the Atlantic.

Michael Chertoff, the newly appointed US Secretary for Homeland Security, has already had talks with the Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, and the Transport Secretary, Alistair Darling, to discuss the matter.

Mr. Chertoff said yesterday that it was vital to seek compatibility, holding up the example of the "video war" of 25 years ago, when VHS and Betamax were in fierce competition to win the status of industry standard for video recording systems.

"I certainly hope we have the same chip...It would be very bad if we all invested huge amounts of money in biometric systems and they didn't work with each other. Hopefully, we are not going to do VHS and Betamax with our chips. I was one of the ones who bought Betamax, and that's now in the garbage," he said.

Mr. Chertoff also proposed that British citizens wishing to visit the US should consider entering a "Trusted Traveller" scheme. Under this, they would forward their details to the US embassy to be vetted. If successful, they would receive a document allowing "fast-tracking" through the US immigration system.

A pilot scheme will start within a few months between the US and the Netherlands, allowing Dutch visitors to use a Trusted Traveller card to enter the US without being subjected to further questioning or screening.

Britain is one of 27 countries whose citizens do not need visas to enter the US if they intend to stay less than 90 days. The American government has said it wants 27 to issue new passports by 26 October this year containing a computer chip and a digital photograph.

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Mr. Chertoff said compatibility and the checking system was intended purely to track down "terrorists and criminals" and the main aim was to provide a "fair and reasonable system".

US diplomatic sources stated later that Washington did not wish to interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries.

"When we screen based on names, we're screening on the most primitive and least technological basis of identification—it's the most susceptible to misspelling, or people changing their identity, or fraud," he said.

The scheme will also, say diplomats, ease confusion over who exactly constitutes a suspect. The most high-profile case was that of Yusuf Islam, the singer formerly known as Cat Stevens, who was barred from entering the US because his activities "could be potentially linked to terrorism". The British government is insistent that Mr. Islam had no such links.

However, this is the latest controversy to surround Britain's proposed combined identity card and passport due to be introduced in three years' time. Rising costs have pushed the cost up to £93 each after the overall estimated 10-year cost of the project grew from £3.1bn to £ 5.8 bn.

There have also been problems over the effectiveness of the biometric technology which is supposed to safeguard the security of the cards. There were also verification problems with 30 per cent of those whose fingerprint was taken during an enrolment trial of 10,000 volunteers. *news.independent.co.uk*, May 27, 2005.

**Millions of Scots will have to accept identity cards, despite the Scottish Executive's attempt to limit their use north of the Border, Westminster warned yesterday.**

The controversial plan for ID cards, announced in the Queen's Speech yesterday, will form the centrepiece of the government's huge legislative programme for the next parliament.

Should it be passed, the Identity Cards Bill will lead to a voluntary ID card by 2008 and

give ministers the power to make the card compulsory at a later date.

The cards are opposed by the majority of MSPs, including the Liberal Democrats, and Scottish ministers maintain that the voluntary scheme will have less force on this side of the Border.

The Executive reaffirmed this yesterday, saying the cards would carry less weight in Scotland because, unlike to England, people will not be required to use them to gain access to basic public services, such as NHS treatment.

The card's more limited application in Scotland raises the possibility that fewer Scots will chose to carry one voluntarily, making its later compulsion more controversial.

However, Alistair Darling, the Scottish Secretary, yesterday rejected the idea that there would be a different take-up of the card north and south of the Border.

While not questioning the Executive's right to set different rules, he made it clear that Scots would still require ID cards for many aspects of everyday life, regardless of the opt-out on public services.

He said an ID card would be required to claim state benefits, for example, and new rules would require one to be produced when applying for a new biometric passport or renewing a driver's licence. Perhaps most controversially, Mr. Darling pointed out that Scots would be required to show a card should they travel to England and try to use public services there.

"People move around so much," he said. "The days when people stayed in their own town or village are gone. They will come down to London to visit, or people will go to Edinburgh to work."

He went on: "It is my view that, in years to come, most people [in Scotland] will have ID cards because it is convenient for them to have ID cards. In time, some, not all, of the opposition to ID cards will go away."

Asked if he expected any difference in the take-up of the voluntary cards between England and Scotland, Mr. Darling replied: "No."

Nicol Stephen, MSP, the favourite to become the next Scottish Liberal Democrat

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leader, confirmed that his party remained committed to opposing the roll-out of ID cards.

"The Liberal Democrats are opposed to ID cards. That hasn't changed and the parliament has voted against them as well," he said.

Even before the question of the spread of the cards in Scotland arises, the bill creating them must pass the House of Commons, and that is far from certain.

Government officials confirmed that the Identity Cards Bill would be among the first to go before the Commons, promising it would be published "as soon as possible".

Despite the threat of a rebellion among Labour MPs, the government's business managers believe that, if they rush the legislation forward, they can wrong-foot the Tories and win the key Commons votes.

The Conservatives are still debating their response to the ID cards plan amid divisions among leading party figures.

When the legislation was debated during the last parliament, Michael Howard, the Tory leader, overrode objections from front-benchers, including David Davis, the shadow home secretary, and ordered Conservative MPs to back the bill.

Mr. Howard and his allies are concerned that, by opposing the ID card scheme, they risk being depicted as soft on crime and terrorism, and of misjudging public opinion.

Mr. Davis and other senior figures think the Tories should oppose the bill, portray themselves as the party of personal liberty and capitalise on Mr. Blair's difficulties with the Labour Party.

Sir Malcolm Rifkind, a Tory front-bencher who has criticised the ID card plan, hinted last night that the party would oppose it. "All the proposals that have been announced have made Conservatives more hostile," he said.

Mark Oaten, the home affairs spokesman for the Liberal Democrats, who will vote against the bill, said: "If the Conservatives come off the fence, we can defeat this measure."

Ministers claim there is overwhelming public support for ID cards, citing polls that suggest 80 per cent approval, and Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, warned the opposition yesterday not to try to block the bill. "It is a manifesto commitment and it is one we will honour, and I

urge other parties to think carefully before opposing what is necessary for our security," he told MPs. *scotsman.com*, May 18, 2005.

## **THE DRAGON**

### **UN urges US Congress Not to Withhold Dues Legislation Would Tie Funding to Overhaul**

The United Nations yesterday criticized a bill proposed to the US Congress to withhold tens of millions of dollars in dues unless the world body reforms, calling it "counterproductive" to efforts now underway.

The House International Relations Committee, headed by Representative Henry J. Hyde, Republican of Illinois, distributed an early version of the United Nations Reform Act of 2005' this week. It seeks to cut funding for programs seen as useless and to bar human-rights violators from serving on UN human-rights bodies.

The United States is the largest contributor to the UN budget, and the congressional efforts to restrict funding could set the stage for a monetary battle like the one that plunged the UN into financial crisis a decade ago.

One of the bill's most controversial proposals is to link dues to the changes it spells out. The document stipulates that if those changes are not carried out, Congress will withhold 50 percent of US dues to the UN general budget, taking the money from programs it deems wasteful.

UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the United Nations did not believe that withholding dues was the solution, particularly as UN Secretary General Kofi Annan pushes his own vision for an overhaul, unveiled earlier this year.

"The secretary general's position on the use of withholding as a tool for reform is pretty clear," Dujarric said. "He feels it's counterproductive, particularly at a time when reform is such a primary agenda item. I think the best way for member states to undertake reform is to engage in discussion among themselves."

The 80-page bill has only recently been distributed to Democrats, who are likely to oppose several elements.

At a hearing Thursday on overhauling the UN, Representative Tom Lantos, a Democrat

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from California, also cautioned against using dues to push for change. As the ranking Democrat on Hyde's committee, Lantos's support would be crucial for getting bipartisan support. "It will be very important for us to resist the powerful temptation to withhold the payment of our dues in an attempt to leverage needed changes at the United Nations," he said.

The proposed changes would shake the UN system at its foundation. The United States pays almost 25 percent of the world body's annual \$2 billion general budget. But that money does not include funding for peacekeeping, international tribunals, or programs such as the UN Development Program and UNICEF, which are funded separately.

For many, the move could be reminiscent of the 1990s, when the United States fell millions of dollars behind in its dues, throwing the UN into financial difficulty. The dues were held up because several US lawmakers argued that the payments were excessive and that the UN bureaucracy was bloated.

That earlier crisis also strained ties with other countries. In 1998, the United States almost lost its voting rights in the General Assembly over unpaid dues.

Yet while some missions still oppose the US strategy, others remain open to the idea. They include Japan, which pays more UN dues than any other nation besides the United States.

"I think we, of course, will be very much interested in how the United States would want to do it," said Jun Yamazaki, the minister for budgets of Japan's mission to the UN.

In a separate development yesterday, the United States defended itself against allegations it is not making enough progress toward nuclear disarmament.

"The United States balances its obligations under Article VI [the treaty article on eventual disarmament] with our obligations to maintain our own security and the security of those who depend on us," US Delegate Jackie Sanders said. *boston.com*, May 21, 2005.

## Corridors of Power: Germans at the gate

Germany's campaign to win US support for a permanent Security Council seat went into high gear this week. Volker Ruehe, Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's special envoy on UN reform was in Washington to put Berlin's case. Ruehe, a senior member of the Christian Democrat opposition, is chairman of the foreign relations committee in the German parliament.

Also this week, Berlin announced that Schroeder will visit Washington for the first time since before Germany's rift with the Bush administration over the Iraq war. On June 27, Schroeder will have talks and a working lunch with President Bush; and German sources said the Security Council issue was sure to be on the chancellor's agenda. Germany has joined Japan, India, and Brazil in lobbying for permanent seats in the Security Council as part of proposed reforms of the world body put forward by Secretary General Kofi Annan.

On Monday, the four aspiring countries submitted a proposal (which they hope will become a resolution) to the UN General Assembly for expanding the Security Council by adding six permanent seats and four non-permanent seats. Two of the additional permanent seats would go to African countries, one to Europe, one to Latin America, and two to Asia. Ruehe told United Press International he was in Washington "to ask for diplomatic support" for the German Security Council bid. "We are looking for co-sponsors," was how he put it.

There is still considerable uncertainty surrounding both the modality for entry and the disposition of the five countries to enlarge their exclusive club. The United States, China, Britain, Russia, and France have enjoyed permanent membership since the United Nations emerged from the ruins of World War II in 1946. But Ruehe feels that "the momentum for a change has been building up and is now very strong. We've been discussing this issue for 13 years."

He said "an opening to the south—India, Asia, Africa—is overdue. Germany's aspirations have to be seen in the context of its contribution politically and economically." Germany is said

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to be the third largest net contributor to the United Nations after the United States and Japan, and recently upped its support for Third World countries through the United Nations.

But Ruehe's US visit got off to an unpromising start when the Washington Post reported that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was cool towards admitting Germany along with the other three. The paper quoted from a leaked memo on a meeting between Rice and leaders of the Congressional Task Force on the United Nations—including former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich—in which Rice said there was "a very poor rationale for giving another member of the European Union a permanent (Security Council) seat."

The memo—on which the State Department refused to comment, but did not deny—indicated a distinct lack of enthusiasm in the Bush administration to support Germany's inclusion. The argument that the addition of another EU country would tilt the balance unfairly towards Europe may well be one reason for this opposition. But other sources say that Washington's residual resentment at Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's opposition to the Iraq war is also an underlying factor.

Ruehe shrugged off the newspaper report: "I was told, don't take it seriously," he told UPI. "There is as yet no US position. President Bush has said that America supports Japan, but I don't think anybody could seriously believe that only Japan would be added, and not the other three." German sources said members of the Congressional Task Force—possibly Gingrich himself—that had prepared the memo planned to visit Berlin to reassure the Germans that Washington had no specific objection to Germany as a permanent Security Council member.

German sources in Washington say they expect that the UN General Assembly will vote on the issue of enlargement, and then has a second secret ballot on the candidates. Ruehe says a two-thirds majority would be required in the first instance. "If you have 128 member countries voting for the reform, the Security Council will find it hard to oppose it," he argues. Berlin is pushing for a vote in four to six weeks

on a framework resolution to start the process of enlargement.

Few Germans want to think the unthinkable, namely that Washington will block Germany after all. Those that do argue that if that happens a defeated Germany may have to quit the United Nations. The idea horrifies Ruehe. But he's an optimist. *washtimes.com*, May 21, 2005.

## THE BEAST

### Broadcast Media Complaints

If you see something in the broadcast media that defames, demeans or simply insults Catholics, make your concern known. Write a letter to the offending broadcaster or publisher holding them to account.

Remember, other than government operated media, broadcasters are attempting to make a profit. So the easiest way to effect change is to ensure that anti-Catholic material is a detriment to their profitability. To this end, it is necessary that we build up a strong enough Catholic voice that no broadcaster would knowingly and willingly offend and alienate us. *ccrl.ca*, May 28, 2005.

This was posted on the Catholic Civil Rights League of Canada website. They speak of strength, profit, and censure which have always been key components for the beast.

### Spokane Diocese Says Victims Can't Seek Parish Assets

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Spokane said yesterday it does not own its parish churches and so they cannot be used to pay alleged victims of sexual abuse by priests.

The diocese filed documents in US Bankruptcy Court challenging the assertion by victims that Bishop William Skylstad owns the 81 churches, 16 schools, one high school and 79 other Catholic assets in the sprawling region.

The diocese, which faces lawsuits filed by 58 alleged victims of sexual abuse, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in December, listing assets of \$11.1 million and liabilities of \$81.3 million—the vast majority of the liabilities being sexual-abuse claims.

In April, the plaintiffs asked US Bankruptcy Judge Patricia Williams to rule that the 81 parish churches and other Catholic entities in Eastern

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Washington were owned by the bishop and thus available to settle the claims.

The diocese has asked Williams to instead rule that Skylstad controls only the roughly \$11 million worth of assets that belong specifically to the diocese.

A hearing is scheduled for June 27, in which Williams is expected to either rule in favor of one of the motions or order a trial on the issue of who really owns the church property.

That will be a closely watched decision as other Catholic dioceses across the nation deal with lawsuits regarding sexual abuse by priests.

Catholic dioceses in Portland and Tucson, Arizona, also filed for bankruptcy protection in the wake of a nationwide scandal involving sexual abuse by clergymen. The issue of who owns parish buildings has not been settled in those cases.

The Spokane Diocese believes that state, federal and canon law is clear that the bishop holds in trust title to parishes and some other assets, but does not actually own them, said Shaun Cross, an attorney for the diocese. *seattletimes.nwsourc.com*, May 28, 2005.

### **Mission Money Spurs Church-State Separation Fight**

A federal court is considering the case of a California church whose historical status is being questioned after it was given taxpayer dollars to pay for its preservation.

The San Gabriel Mission, just outside Los Angeles, is one of 21 Spanish colonial landmarks that dot the California coast. After nearly 200 years of rain, wind and earthquakes, the elements have taken their toll.

"Now we have a moisture problem with water seeping up through the bottom of the floors," said Helen Nelson, who works for the mission. "To repair and restore it now, it'll take a little bit of money."

Last year, Congress allocated \$10 million from taxpayer funds to help restore the historic structures. Now, the group Americans United for Separation of Church and State is suing to stop that money from being spent.

"Nineteen of these missions are active, worshipping congregations and I don't think it's the responsibility of the taxpayers of the country to bail out those or any other

churches," said Barry Lynn, head of Americans United.

Mission preservationists and Catholic officials say nothing is unconstitutional about the appropriation and that, like the Old North Church in Boston, these are no ordinary houses of worship.

"They're historic monuments, they need to be preserved. They represent the earliest stages of California's history, of the nation's history," said Knox Mellon of the California Missions Foundation.

Both camps say they believe legal precedent is on their side.

"In a series of cases back in the 1970s, the Supreme Court was quite clear that if money is going for a so-called 'dual-use' building that is religious and secular, you can't get it from the taxpayers," Lynn said.

"I think you can document that, beginning in the mid-'90s, that there was a relaxation on the part of the federal government toward the use of federal monies for landmark structures that have had some sort of identification with religion," Mellon countered.

California Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer originally led the fight to get tax money for the missions, marking one of the few times she and President Bush have seen eye to eye on religion and government. No court date has been set for the case, but the \$10 million to be used for the repairs will be held up until it is settled. *foxnews.com*, May 27, 2005.

### **Joint Anglican, Catholic Statement on Mary Marks Global Launch**

Some Anglican and Roman Catholic leaders celebrated the global launch of the joint publication on the Virgin Mary's role in the church. The joint statement, "Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ,"...

The joint statement, "Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ," essentially upholds the Catholic dogma on the Immaculate Conception—a belief that the mother of Jesus was born free of original sin—and the Ascension of Mary into heaven without dying.

The 81-page booklet is the fruit of five years of ecumenical talks between the two largest Christian bodies, and represents the first joint Anglican-Catholic statement on Mary.

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The principal launch of the document took place at the Cathedral of St James (Roman Catholic) in Seattle, but the global launch was held in London on May 19 at the Jerusalem Chamber of Westminster Abbey.

During the London launch, Abbey Canon Nicholas Sagovsky – one of the Anglican members of the commission that drafted the report – said the report does not speak on behalf of the two church bodies since top authorities must first recognize and give credence to the work.

However, Sagovsky said that even if the authorities decide not to affirm it, the statement shows “a remarkable convergence amongst Roman Catholic and Anglican theologians on issues which have long been painfully divisive.”

Sagovsky also recognized that the study of Mary has “been an obvious area of division between our two Communion.” However, he said his group tried to answer two key questions: can such devotional practices and dogmas be reconciled with the Scripture? And would Anglicans need to agree to those teachings before sharing communion with Catholics?

“What we have achieved, we suggest, is an answer to the first question and a partial answer to the second,” he said during the vespers, according to Anglican Communion News. “We have shown that our two traditions are nothing like so far apart on Mary as we might have thought.”

He explained that the Marian devotion comes from the belief that God has graced the Virgin Mary by blessing her life from the beginning.

“This was our way of approaching the two Marian doctrines in the light of our reading of Scripture. If we are right - that it is legitimate to approach the dogmas in this way - then Anglicans should not reject Roman Catholic Marian doctrine out of hand as ‘unscriptural,’” he said.

The booklet, which received much criticism from evangelical and protestant-leaning Anglicans, has yet to be affirmed by the top Anglican and Catholic authorities. *christianpost.com*, May 28, 2005.

## THE FALSE PROPHET

Bush Proclaims Memorial Day as Day of Prayer for Peace

President Bush officially proclaimed the upcoming Memorial Day as a day of prayer for permanent peace

President Bush officially announced the upcoming Memorial Day day of prayer to begin 11 a.m. in each region. He urged all Americans to unite in prayer for permanent peace.

In a statement released by the White House on Friday, the president requested the United States Governors, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Governor, and all appropriate governmental unit officials to fly the flag at half-staff in all areas under their jurisdiction until noon on Memorial Day. In addition, President Bush asked that the request be honored in all buildings, grounds, and American naval-vessels throughout the United States.

“On Memorial Day, we remember that this history of great achievement has been accompanied by great sacrifice,” Bush said in the May 20 statement. “To secure our freedom, many heroic service members have given their lives. This year we mark the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II, and we remember the Americans who died on distant shores defending our Nation in that war. On Memorial Day and all year long, we pray for the families of the fallen and show our respect for the contributions these men and women have made to the story of freedom,” the president stated.

“Our grateful Nation honors their selfless service, and we acknowledge a debt that is beyond our power to repay,” added the president.

Since May 11, 1950, the Congress has annually requested the president to issue a proclamation calling on the people of the United States to observe Memorial Day as a day of prayer for permanent peace, and designate a time period for the prayer.

In addition to proclaiming May 30, 2005 as the day of prayer for permanent peace, Bush also asked on Friday that all Americans observe the National Moment of Remembrance beginning 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day. *christianpost.com*, May 23, 2005.

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## Young Americans Know Little About Bible

Unless we read the Bible, American history is a closed book," The Weekly Standard's David Gelernter posited in a recent look at Bible literacy in America, with young Americans knowing very little about the Word of God and thus lacking the perspective necessary to understand major themes of history.

"What made John Adams say, in 1765, 'I always consider the settlement of America with reverence and wonder, as the opening of a grand scene and design in Providence'? What made Abraham Lincoln call America (in 1862, in the middle of a ruinous civil war) 'the last, best hope of earth'?" Gelernter wrote in the May 23 issue.

"... One thing above all made them true prophets. They read the Bible."

Gelernter briefly traced the role of the Bible through history, from the Puritans of the 18th century, when America was "born in a passionate spiritual explosion" created and fueled by the Bible, to George W. Bush's worldwide war on tyranny as a quintessential biblical project, "one that sees America as an almost chosen people, with the heavy responsibilities that go with the job."

The Bible Literacy Project, based on a Gallup-conducted survey of young people mostly in the seventh through ninth grades and 41 teachers in both public and private schools, found that the fewer than a quarter of the students were what teachers would call "Bible literate."

The report, released in late April, said the teachers were convinced that students ought to know the Bible and don't. Forty of 41 agreed that "Bible knowledge confers a distinct educational advantage," the report said.

Seventy-two percent of students in the survey could answer correctly that Moses "led the Israelites out of bondage," Gelernter noted, and 90 percent realized that Adam and Eve were the first man and woman in Genesis. But 8 percent of teens "believe that Moses is one of the twelve Apostles."

Aside from such basic questions, the Bible Literacy Project reported that "very few American students" have the level of Bible

knowledge that high school English teachers regard as "basic to a good education." Nearly two-thirds failed to choose the right answer out of four choices when asked to identify a quotation from the Sermon on the Mount, and two-thirds didn't know that the Road to Damascus is where Paul was blinded by a vision of Christ.

"But students need to read the Bible, not just read about the Bible ... It happens that nearly all of the smartest, deepest readers of the Bible through the ages have approached it from a religious direction," Gelernter wrote.

The responsibility for providing America's youth with an intimate, adequate understanding of the Bible, and thus of American history, should not fall on the public schools, Gerlenter said, but on "our churches, our synagogues, and all other institutions that revere the Bible." *bpnews.net*, May 25, 2005.

## Mainline Churches No Longer Dominate

Mainline Protestant churches no longer dominate a list of the 25 largest American church groups, according to the National Council of Churches' 2005 "Yearbook of American & Canadian Churches."

Pentecostal and African American churches made significant gains, the yearbook reported, and the Southern Baptist Convention with more than 16 million members and a growth rate of 1.18 percent remains the second-largest denomination in the United States.

The data for the report was gathered by churches in 2003 and reported to the yearbook in 2004. The yearbook provides information on 217 national church bodies with 150 million members, including brief church histories and contact information for church leaders, according to an NCC release.

Until 1968, the yearbook published statistics on American home and foreign missionaries, and after a 36-year break, the stats are being published again. Mainline Protestants have increased their mission activity for the first time in a quarter century, the report said, and American Christians are "attempting great things" in missions. Mainline church agencies reported an increase of 600 missionaries over the number reported in 1966, the release said.

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Of the roughly 6 billion people on earth, about 33 percent consider themselves Christians, the yearbook said. Most of the world's Christians, as is widely known, are Roman Catholics. Independents account for the next largest group, followed by Protestants, Orthodox, Anglicans and "marginal Christians." *bpnews.com*, May 25, 2005.

### **Church Hosts 'Drive-Thru' Sunday Services**

This Sunday church service will take five minutes and you don't even have to get out of the car.

The Metropolitan Church of the Quad Cities, 3019 N. Harrison St., Davenport, is sponsoring "Drive-Thru Church" from 10 a.m. to noon Sunday.

"Just pull up in our parking lot," the Rev. Rich Hendricks suggests.

He promises some humor in the offerings. Congregants, for example, will be dressed like anglers in tune with a fish theme.

"This is a way to try and reach out to people who might not otherwise approach the doors of the church," he said. "Some people don't relate to traditional church services at all."

The Harrison Street location prompted Metropolitan Church to choose Memorial Day weekend for the event, said Loretta Gamble of Davenport.

"People will be busy doing any number of activities but we want to allow folks to have a moment or two, if that's what they can spare, to think about worship," she said.

Clowns stationed on Harrison Street will attract cars to the church parking lot located on West 31st Street. Drivers will be greeted by a team of three "anglers" and supplied with the daily scripture and a take-home homily. Prayer requests will be honored.

Everyone will be given communion, but this will be specially delivered in a tackle box, the minister said, in a clean bait cup.

A station will be set up for an informal church choir, and those interested may exit their vehicles and sing. Participants also will take home a special gift in the form of brightly-colored fish key chains or other accoutrements.

No cost is involved but a free-will offering will be collected with part of the proceeds going to AIDS Project Quad Cities.

While a drive-thru service is unusual for this area, Hendricks said his church is not the first in the world to do one. Congregations on both coasts have established drive-thru services and received national attention for it. The non-denominational World of Faith Family Worship Center in Suffolk, Va., relocated to a former bank building in 2001 and began the practice, according to *Jet* magazine.

The Los Angeles Times reported in 2003 that the Main Place Christian Fellowship, a Southern Baptist congregation south of Los Angeles, established a drive-thru facility in a former photo kiosk across the street from the main church. It was especially valued by unattached Christians, the newspaper said.

Gamble believes the drive-thru event is a creative way to disperse information about the congregation she's belonged to for more than 10 years.

"In our church, we believe that God created each and every one of us as good, and we celebrate that," she said. *qctimes.com*, May 26, 2005.

### **Radical Islam**

#### **Twin Bombs in Central Indonesia Kill 22**

Two bombs exploded in a crowded market in a Christian-dominated town in central Indonesia today, killing at least 22 people and wounding 40, police said. The blasts came two days after unspecified security threats prompted the United States to close its diplomatic offices.

The explosions within 15 minutes of each other flattened food stands in the Sulawesi island town of Tentena. Witnesses said many of the victims had come to help those injured in the first blast, only to be killed by a second, larger explosion that left a 3-foot-deep crater. The blasts also damaged a bank, a church and a police station.

"The latest report says 22 people were killed," Vice President Jusuf Kalla told a news conference in Makassar, provincial capital of South Sulawesi.

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A Christian clergyman and a 3-year-old boy were among the dead, police said.

No one claimed responsibility for the bombings at the meat and produce market, but Kalla said without offering proof that they were not connected with ongoing sectarian violence between Muslims and Christians.

"It was carried out by the terrorists instead of warring Muslim and Christian factions," he said. "The motive of the perpetrators is to disturb the security situation in Poso."

More than 90 percent of Indonesia's 210 million people are Muslims. It is the world's most populous Muslim nation, but central Sulawesi has roughly equal Muslim and Christian populations.

Tentena, site of the market bombings, is 35 miles from Poso, where fighting between Muslims and Christians claimed at least 1,000 lives in 2000-2002. Palu is 74 miles from Poso.

Rinaldy Damanik, a Christian clergyman and leader of the Synod Churches of Central Sulawesi, also ruled out the involvement of local groups.

"The blasts were different with what happened here in the past," he said. "This has nothing to do with the sectarian conflict. This is the work of uncivilized terrorists who just don't want to see peace in this region."

Police later discovered an unexploded bomb outside a nearby church, said Poso district Chief Andi Asikin Suyuti.

In January, police found 60 homemade bombs in an abandoned house in Poso, and security officials last year blamed the al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah group for attacks that killed at least 12 Christians.

On Thursday, the United States closed its embassy and diplomatic offices — including those in Jakarta, Surabaya, Medan and the island of Bali — until further notice, citing security concerns.

Police said they did not know of any specific threats against Americans but added that they had intelligence indicating that Malaysian terror suspects Azahari bin Husin and Noordin Mohamed Top might be planning attacks. Their targets typically are Western-related.

National police spokesman Maj. Gen. Anang Budihardjo said he could not rule out the

possibility that Azahari played a role in the latest Poso bombing.

"I cannot say (the bombs) were the work of Azahari's group, but because he has been a fugitive for long, it is possible that he has recruited new members in the region," the spokesman said Saturday.

The two Malaysians are believed to have masterminded two of the worst past attacks: a Sept. 9, 2004, blast at the Australian Embassy in Jakarta that killed 10 people, and an Aug. 5, 2003, blast in Jakarta that killed 12 at a Marriott hotel. *chron.com*, May 28, 2005.

### **Crusade? No Thanks**

President George W. Bush's first response to the attacks of September 11 was to call the nation to war. "This crusade," he said. "This war on terrorism." This unscripted remark was a gaffe, which is when a politician slips up and says what he truly believes and feels. In the Muslim world, the word "crusade" was given its literal translation: "war of the cross," and the reaction was, predictably, negative.

The president's spin doctors hastened to apologize for any offense inadvertently given, saying the president had used the word in its generic sense, as a synonym for a struggle against something bad. But just as Osama bin Laden called for jihad—holy war—against the "crusaders and Jews," so many Christians in the United States have taken the president at his word as he has continued to portray America's conflict with Islamic extremists as a metaphysical struggle of good against evil.

There was Lieutenant General William Boykin, who while addressing a prayer meeting, said the president had been "appointed by God," to lead a Christian nation against unbelievers who "will only be defeated if we come against them in the name of Jesus." The Pentagon disavowed these remarks, but General Boykin still has his job in military intelligence. Apparently, he's quite good at it.

Then there is the North Carolina preacher who put up a sign in front of his church that said "The Koran needs to be flushed," a reference to the latest prison scandal at Guantanamo Bay. There is the scandal at the Air Force Academy, where evangelical cadets have been accused of aggressive proselytizing

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that borders on religious harassment. And there is the picture of those Marines in Iraq who painted "New Testament" on the barrel of their tank's cannon.

So while the official position is that we are not engaged in a holy war, that Islam is a religion of peace and that we are shocked, shocked at the desecration of the holy book, some people persist in seeing it General Boykin's way. Osama bin Laden's view is the same, only reversed: Israel and the oil states are part of an ongoing western crusade to destroy Islam and subjugate the Arabs, and just as Salah-el-din led the jihad that eventually expelled the crusader knights, so will he eventually prevail. No doubt he smiled to hear George Bush reading from his script.

The rest of us can only watch, aghast, as the holy warriors bring it on. Let us remember how the religious fervor to destroy the unbeliever led to an obsession with the enemy within, how the Crusades led not only to the streets of Jerusalem running with blood, but to the Inquisition. Religious war is greatly to be feared because it is unlimited and open-ended. The other guys are just as fervent in their beliefs, and they may yet gain access to weapons of mass destruction. If we cannot stop it in time, this holy war may end in Judgment Day before any of us are ready. *berkshireeagle.com*, May 27, 2005.

### **Al-Qaeda thrives despite body blow**

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi has long been viewed as the key figure in the insurgency sweeping Iraq. By capturing him it was once thought that the new government would gain control of even the most hostile areas of the country.

But the power struggle to succeed al-Qaeda's leader in Iraq has shown that the organisation is resilient enough to withstand the blow.

Since being wounded last week it has emerged that Iraq's most wanted terrorist has fled the country for emergency surgery after an American air strike left him with shrapnel in his chest.

According to a senior insurgent commander in close contact with Zarqawi, who has a \$25m bounty on his head after being blamed for suicide bombings, assassinations and the

beheadings of hostages, including Liverpoolian Ken Bigley, he is believed to be in Iran.

He has suffered from bouts of high fever since being wounded as he fled the American offensive near Al-Qaim in northwestern Iraq, the commander said. Although his condition has stabilised, supporters are said to be preparing to move him to another "non-Arab" country for an operation to remove the shrapnel.

The absence of triumphalism in Washington over the shooting of Zarqawi indicates that the US no longer considers that the insurgency can be beaten through the removal of one man.

There were no shortage of candidates vying to take over from Zarqawi.

The power struggle surfaced on the internet, which al-Qaeda uses as its main means of communication and propaganda with a skill surprising for an organisation that wants to return to the purity of the seventh century.

Analysts say that the insurgency can carry on with or without Zarqawi's guiding hand, as it showed last week when it downed a US helicopter, killing two soldiers.

"The organisation has proved to be somewhat resilient," said Brigadier General Carter Ham, commander of Task Force Olympia, who directed thousands of troops during 13 months of operations in Zarqawi's former stomping ground of northern Iraq. "We ought not to expect that the organisation will crumble and cease to exist" as a result of Zarqawi's death or capture, he added.

Diaa Rashwan, an expert on radical Islam at Egypt's Al-Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, said: "The real danger in Iraq is that you have more than 50 attacks a day, with some made by Zarqawi and 80% made by others.

"It's not really a problem of who will be the successor. He's a symbol for a kind of network of small Islamic groups which share tactics and ideology."

The dispute over the leadership started with an internet announcement in the name of the media coordinator for al-Qaeda's Iraq branch, Abu Maysara al-Iraqi, that Zarqawi had been wounded and that Muslims should pray for him.

There followed another statement signed by an unfamiliar name, Abu Doujanah al-Tunisi

of the media committee for al-Qaeda's Iraq branch, claiming that a Saudi militant known as Abu Hafis al-Qarni had been made the group's interim leader - or "deputy of the holy warriors" - until Zarqawi recovered from his wounds.

Al-Qarni "is known for carrying out the hardest operations, and our sheikh would choose him and his group for the tough operations", it said.

A Western diplomat said: "The split itself reveals the extent to which al-Qaeda, which was unknown in Iraq before the US-led invasion, has built an organisation with different departments. A number of potential successors are being mooted, showing that this is not a one-man band. You might even detect shadowy signs of a government-in-waiting.

"The US is no longer giving the impression that if they can remove Zarqawi they will have got rid of al-Qaeda in Iraq. After initially building him up by putting a huge price on his head, they are now playing down his significance."

The widely respected pan-Arab newspaper Al Hayat reported that a number of candidates were competing to succeed Zarqawi. Al-Qarni was not among those named, but Abu Maysara al-Iraqi, the man who ruled him out, is on the list.

Sources in Jordan, close to Zarqawi, also name Abu Maysara al-Iraqi as a potential successor, but also add another contender, Abu al-Dardaa al-Iraqi, an al-Qaeda operative in Baghdad.

One reason for the insurgency's resilience is that despite Zarqawi's Jordanian lineage - and the attempt by the US to foster the belief that almost all suicide bombers are foreigners - the insurgency is largely homegrown.

Its principal supporters are Iraqis formerly loyal to Saddam Hussein and Iraqis devoted to an extreme radical strain of Sunni Islam.

"The majority of people blowing up things, assembling car bombs and financing the blowing up of Humvees or attacks on police stations are Iraqi," said an American diplomat. "There is also a foreign element, a very pernicious foreign element, which is one of the reasons it's so difficult to degrade it."

Steven Emerson, a terror analyst with the Washington-based Investigative Project and author of the book *American Jihad*, said: "It's the same as we've seen in Pakistan and Afghanistan - hundreds of millions of dollars in collective rewards for Bin Laden and Zarqawi and others have not produced anything in terms of people coming forward in exchange for money.

"There is a deeply entrenched network. It comes from Syria. It comes from Saudi Arabia. There are some people transiting through Jordan. The Syrians, in particular, have a lot of blood on their hands."

However, he added of the wounding of Zarqawi: "Because he's such an on-the-ground commander, and so control-oriented, this could have a major effect in disrupting the insurgency's coordination and operations. Zarqawi was the glue that held the organisation together. It was Zarqawi, Zarqawi, Zarqawi. Not like Bin Laden, who had a whole chain of command that he could rely on."

Another reason the insurgency is proving difficult to defeat is that it has perfected the technique of 'ghosting away' from major confrontations with US forces only to raise its flag in other cities.

Since the assault on Fallujah last November, which was supposed to 'break the back' of the violence, the insurgency has flared repeatedly.

"It's like toothpaste: you squeeze somewhere, and it just pushes the insurgents somewhere else," said Toby Dodge, an Iraq expert at the International Institute of Strategic Studies in London.

A senior Pakistan army commander said yesterday that al-Qaeda-linked militants had been eliminated in the country's South Waziristan tribal region after months of gun battles around this peak and in nearby mountains last year.

Major General Niaz Khattak, who is leading the troops hunting militants, said that between 500 and 600 al-Qaeda linked militants were believed to have been hiding in the region.

"According to our intelligence reports, we now think there are absolutely none in South Waziristan," Khattak said. *scotsman.com*, May 29, 2005.