

The Christian Right's Influence and How to Counter It

By Duane Oldfield | March 2004

While the United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community, we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self defense by acting preemptively...

Today humanity holds in its hands the opportunity to further freedom's triumph over all these foes. The United States welcomes our responsibility to lead in this great **mission** (emphasis mine).

But our responsibility to history is clear: to answer these attacks and rid the world of evil.

—The National Security Strategy of the United States (2002), p. 6, preface, and p. 5.

That the administration of George W. Bush is pursuing a unilateralist foreign policy on issues ranging from the Iraq War to global warming to the International Criminal Court is obvious to observers at home and abroad. Also clear is the fact that the Bush policy, at least in its broad outlines, is very much in keeping with the preferences of the Christian right. As the second two quotes above indicate, the president, himself a born-again Christian, does not hesitate to use a moralistic, implicitly religious language in defense of his policies.

What, exactly, is the relationship between the Christian right and the unilateralist foreign policy of the present administration? For the last quarter century, the Christian right has been a key player regarding domestic social issues such as abortion, gay rights, and prayer in schools. While journalists, politicians, and academics continue to analyze and debate the Christian right's effectiveness in these areas, less attention has been paid to the religious right's influence on American foreign policy. However, that influence is becoming difficult to ignore and is in need of further analysis.¹

In the first two sections of this paper, I examine the political and religious roots of the Christian right's unilateralism and the development of the alliances that have allowed the Christian right to become a significant player in contemporary U.S. foreign policy. The final section of the paper looks at a second question: how should progressives understand and respond to the Christian right's influence? I contend that focusing on the "extremism" of the Christian right is a misguided strategy and that we should instead see the Christian right as part of a dominant foreign policy alliance. Resisting that unilateralist alliance requires a focus on its inherent contradictions.

I. The Roots of Christian Right Unilateralism

Although the unilateral inclinations of the present administration stand in at least partial contrast to those of its predecessors, unilateralism is nothing new for the Christian right.

Decades ago, movement precursors aimed their fire at internationalists and the UN. The John Birch Society launched its drive to "Get US out of the UN!" in 1959. In 1962, Billy James Hargis, leader of the anticommunist organization Christian Crusade, declared that "the primary threat to the United States is internationalism" (Redekop 66). Several older Christian right figures such as Phyllis Schlafly and Tim LaHaye trace their political origins back to the nationalist right of this era (see McGirr). Opposition to internationalist institutions, which are seen as a threat to American sovereignty and the country's role as a "redeemer nation," continues to this day in Christian right circles (see Lienesch, chap. 5).

During the cold war era, the primary foreign policy concern of the Christian right and its precursors was the anti-communist struggle. Support for unilateralism was part of a larger mission of throwing off internationalist constraints and unleashing U.S. power to conduct a more vigorous crusade against "Godless" communism. With the fall of the Soviet Union, unilateralist anticommunism lost much of its relevance.² In the 1990s, a new set of concerns about international institutions came to the fore and led the Christian right to increase its attention to global affairs.³ These concerns are rooted in a fear that the United Nations is being used to advance a liberal social agenda. High-profile UN conferences on the rights of women and population policy were among the developments that set off alarm bells for Christian right leaders.⁴ Laurel MacLeod, former Director of Legislation and Public Policy at Concerned Women for America, described her group's deepening involvement with international issues by saying: "We got involved, from my perspective, in international issues in late '94, when we prepared for the fourth world conference on the status of women in Beijing, and I like to say that with UN issues and international issues, it was like we stuck our toe in a pond and fell in up to our neck and realized that it was the Pacific Ocean."⁵



The Christian right's activism on UN issues has lured it into tricky territory. Led by the organizers of the World Congress of Families, elements of the Christian right have developed seemingly unlikely alliances, working with social conservatives around the world—including the Vatican and some Islamic groups—to defend the “natural family” in the international arena.⁶ Furthermore, as Concerned Women for America, Eagle Forum, and the Family Research Council have obtained official nongovernmental organization (NGO) status and participated in UN forums, they have potentially helped legitimate an institution many of their members see as profoundly illegitimate. Yet even as the Christian right grapples with the dilemmas of working within the UN, it remains quite hostile to the institution in its present form and opposes U.S. cooperation with it. From the Christian right perspective, the UN is an institution dominated by radical feminists bent on using international institutions to impose their agenda on both the U.S. and a socially conservative third world.

Another major foreign policy concern for the Christian right over the last decade has been the issue of religious persecution, especially the persecution of Christians in China, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan. Christian right activism played a significant role in the passage of the International Religious Freedom Act in 1998 (see Hertzke). The religious persecution issue is not as closely linked to unilateralism as the issues discussed above, but it is worth noting that remedies pursued by the Christian right—such as the International Religious Freedom Act, sanctions against Sudan, and the denial of U.S. trade benefits to China—all involve unilateral U.S. action against violators of religious rights rather than reliance on international organizations to define and defend those rights.

Finally, the Christian right's unilateralist inclinations are rooted in its reading of biblical prophecy. From the 1970s, when Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth* was the decade's best-selling nonfiction book to the current success of Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins's *Left Behind* series, works of biblical prophecy have enjoyed enormous popularity among the Christian right's supporters and beyond.⁷ Details vary, but most accounts feature the rapture of believers, a period of war and natural disaster marked by the emergence of the Antichrist, and finally the second coming of the true Christ. Critically important for the purposes of this paper is a theme common to many such accounts, the creation of a one-world government, a “New World Order” led by none other than the Antichrist himself. The Antichrist's reign is said to feature attempts to impose a single world currency and a single world religion. The UN does not fare well in these accounts.

The role of the UN varies over the course of Hal Lindsey's many books on biblical prophecy. In some of his accounts, the European Union is the confederation headed by the Antichrist (Buss and Herman 26). The UN, however, is the more common villain in recent evangelical end-time writings. In the *Left Behind* series, the Antichrist, Nicolae Carpathia, is head of the UN. In Pat Robertson's *The End of the Age*, Antichrist Mark Beaulieu supplants the UN with a new and even more powerful world body, the Union for Peace.⁸ In all these writings the basic message is clear: multilateral governmental bodies will be the instruments used by the Antichrist to attain world domination. These end-time accounts fuel resistance to perceived attempts to submit the United States to the authority of any regional or international governing body. The exact impact of end-time prophecies is difficult to measure. Not surprisingly, Washington representatives of Christian right organizations are hesitant to acknowledge prophetic motivations behind their groups' actions. However, given the popularity of end-time publications, including those produced by major Christian right figures such as Pat Robertson and Tim LaHaye, it is hard to believe that they do not have a significant impact.⁹

The inherited unilateralism of the anticommunist right, opposition to the UN's perceived social agenda, and biblical prophecy combine to create a movement resolutely opposed to multilateralism. The exact nature of that opposition varies from group to group. Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum and the Concerned Women for America are hostile to virtually any form of multilateral authority, while the Family Research Council and the World Congress of Families are somewhat more open to compromise. All of these groups, however, endeavor to steer U.S. foreign policy in a more unilateral direction.

II. Building Alliances: How the Christian Right Came to Be a Player in Foreign Affairs

Although the Christian right's unilateralism is not new, its proximity to power is. Three developments have helped make the Christian right a significant player in U.S. foreign policy: the election of a president with close ties to the movement, the growth of the Christian right's grassroots organizational strength, and the development of an alliance with neoconservatives, who have come to play a crucial role in the present administration.

A. A Sympathetic President

The Christian right played a supporting role in the Reagan administration's war on Central America, particu-

larly in funneling aid to the Nicaraguan contras (Diamond, 1989, chaps. 5 and 6). However, its activism in the 1980s was primarily on the domestic front. The administrations of George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton provided few opportunities for Christian right influence, at least at the presidential level. A committed multilateralist, Bush Sr. set off alarm bells in the Christian right with his talk of a “new world order.” For many elements of the Christian right, that phrase tapped into a long history of right-wing demonology, symbolizing a world government—perhaps Satanically inspired—threatening American sovereignty.¹⁰ And antagonism toward Bill Clinton was even stronger.

Demonized by a Christian right that vigorously fought to have him impeached, Clinton had little incentive to grant its leaders access to foreign policy decision-making.

The disputed election of George W. Bush provided the Christian right with a far more sympathetic president. Bush’s personal history helps cement his ties to the movement. Although his father was clearly uncomfortable with the movement’s style of mixing religion and politics, the current president, saved from the sin of alcoholism by his own born-again experience, has long understood the nuances of the Christian right’s religious constituency and speaks its language. Recognizing this back in 1988, Bush Sr. gave his son the task of reaching out to that constituency for him in his presidential campaign. Campaign aide Doug Wead worked with George W. Bush as part of an effective effort to woo evangelical leaders.¹¹ George W. Bush’s White House reflects its occupant’s comfort with evangelicalism. The first words heard by Bush speechwriter David Frum when he arrived at the White House were “missed you at Bible study” (see Frum).

B. A Grassroots Network

The personal inclinations of the current president are reinforced by the development of the Christian right’s grassroots electoral capabilities. Prior to Pat Robertson’s 1988 presidential campaign, the Christian right had very limited experience with precinct organizing. Robertson’s nomination campaign failed in its immediate objective, but it laid the groundwork for the emergence of the Christian Coalition. That coalition’s grassroots network, in turn, played a significant role in the Republican congressional victories of 1994. In the run-ups to the 1996 and

2000 campaigns, the Christian Coalition’s annual convention became a required stop for GOP presidential aspirants. Early on, George W. Bush hired former Christian Coalition Director Ralph Reed as a consultant for his nomination campaign. After Bush lost the New Hampshire primary, strong support from the Christian Right, especially in South Carolina, helped him beat back a serious challenge from Senator John McCain.

With the Christian right now a central part of the Republican electoral coalition, presidents of that party must take the constituency’s concerns into account. And

the change goes even deeper than that. When Christian right activists entered party politics during the Robertson campaign in the late 1980s, the distinction between these activists and established Republicans was clear. For many party regulars, the Robertson activists were alien interlopers who had somehow descended on the party. In the words of the president’s brother

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Neil Bush, they were “cockroaches” issuing “from the baseboards of the Bible-belt.”¹² Though tension between the Christian right and other party factions continues, the Christian Right is now an established component, and in some areas even a dominant feature, of the party coalition. John Green provides an insightful analysis of the evolution of the “collective identity” of the Christian right: from sectarian religious identities in the early 1980s to a pro-family identity that helped unite Christian right members across religious lines to the current era of “evangelical Republicans,” in which partisanship is central to movement identity. Ralph Reed, former executive director of the Christian Coalition and now chair of the Georgia Republican Party, exemplifies this trend. As Christian rightists become party activists, Christian right organizations may suffer, as the Christian Coalition has since Reed’s departure, but their influence within the party grows. In a Republican Party dominated by conservative Southerners such as George W. Bush, Tom Delay, and Dick Armey, Christian right activists are no longer interlopers; they are insiders.

C. Neoconservative Ties

Finally, the Christian right’s access to power has been greatly aided by the ties it has developed with neoconservatives influential within the present administration. Neoconservative intellectuals, many of them Jewish, may

seem unlikely allies for the Christian right, but this partnership has developed across several issue areas. The most important basis for this partnership is a common support for Israel or, to put it more accurately, for the Likud Party's vision of Israel's interests. The Christian right's support for Israel harks back to the movement's beginnings in the late 1970s, but it has risen to a higher level in the last few years. The 2002 annual convention of the Christian Coalition culminated in a rally for Israel, and Ralph Reed and Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein recently founded a new group, Stand for Israel. Meanwhile, throughout Christian right media, criticism of the Palestinians and support for hard-line Israeli policies has grown more intense.

The Christian right's support for Israel is closely interrelated with prophetic concerns discussed earlier in this essay. In the words of Christian right author John Hagee: "Israel is the only nation created by a sovereign act of God, and He has sworn by His holiness to defend Jerusalem, His Holy City. If God created and defends Israel, those nations that fight against it fight against God."¹³ At a recent Christian Coalition gathering, a speaker even suggested that the September 11th attacks were God's punishment for America's insufficient support of Israel (Arab News, 2003).

Links with neoconservatives have also been forged around the issue of religious persecution. Michael Horowitz, a neoconservative senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, and Nina Shea of the Puebla Institute, were instrumental in mobilizing evangelicals around the issue of religious persecution.¹⁴ Elliott Abrams, then head of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, wrote extensively supporting the cause and, along with Nina Shea, was later appointed to the commission created by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, eventually serving as its chair.¹⁵ Abrams has moved on to human rights and Middle East policy positions at the National Security Council.

In 1997, when the Project for the New American Century was born, it united conservative leaders around a call for a much more aggressive U.S. foreign policy (including forceful action against Iraq's Saddam Hussein). The group's Statement of Principles declared: "Such a Reaganite policy of military strength and moral clarity may not be fashionable today. But it is necessary if the United States is to build on the successes of this past century and to ensure our security and greatness in the next." Among the 25 signatories were leading neoconservatives and future players in the Bush administration including Elliott Abrams, Dick Cheney, Frank Gaffney, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz. Also on the list were Gary

Bauer, long-time head of the Family Research Council, and author William Bennett.¹⁶

A sympathetic president, grassroots electoral strength, and ties to influential neoconservatives have given the Christian right influence in American foreign policy, providing support for a militant unilateralism and unwavering backing for Israel. The Christian right has been rewarded with appointments on delegations to UN conferences and supportive administration action on its international social agenda (see Butler), and it has been heartened by the president's use of religious language to justify his policies. The religious right does not dominate foreign policymaking in the current administration; for example, it lacks key posts at the State and Defense departments. However, the Christian right has provided powerful grassroots support for the unilateralist forces that currently dominate American foreign policy.

III. A Progressive Response

How should progressives understand and respond to the Christian right's foreign policy influence? One of the most common approaches adopted by opponents of the Christian right and its predecessors has invoked the language of extremism. Extremists, such as members of the radical right, are seen as distinct from the reasonable world of normal or mainstream politics. They are viewed as irrational, psychologically disturbed people who do not accept the rules of the democratic game. This approach has a long, intellectual history from Daniel Bell, Seymour Martin Lipset, and Richard Hofstadter's analyses of McCarthyism and the John Birch Society to later interpretations of the Christian right (see Bell 1955, 1963, Lipset and Raab, and Crawford). Although this approach has been much criticized by academics, it is the analysis that guides major lobbying groups that attempt to counter the Christian right.¹⁷ People for the American Way's very name implies a distinction between the normal politics of the "American way" and the dangerous extremism of the group's opponents, "the radical right." The Interfaith Alliance describes itself as an "organization of people of faith and goodwill" engaged in the process of "promoting mainstream values" and "shining the light on extremism." (see Interfaith Alliance). Painting oneself as mainstream and one's opponents as extreme and un-American can be an effective political strategy. Elements of the Christian right's approach to foreign policy, equating the UN with the Antichrist for example, certainly are extreme and should be pointed out by its opponents. Nonetheless, understanding and countering the Christian right's foreign policy influence by using the language of extremism is a mistaken approach for several reasons.

The extremism approach has particular dangers for those critiquing the Christian right from the left. The analysis of extremism is inherently one that upholds the “responsible” center against both extremes. Michael Rogin provides a powerful account of the ways in which such an analysis was inaccurately used not only to attack the radical right but also to link it to—and thereby discredit—progressive movements involving populists and the student activists of the 1960s.¹⁸ An analysis that contrasts the pragmatic and responsible leadership of, say, Colin Powell and George Bush Sr. with the extremism of Christian fundamentalists can also be used to contrast such leadership with the extremism of antiglobalization protesters.

Pitting a rational center against irrational extremists also blinds everyone to the irrationality of the center and the rationality of the extremes. It is a serious mistake to think that the extremes of the Christian right are the only places where dangerous nationalist myths take root. The ideology of American unilateralism draws on a variety of sources from mainstream popular culture and civil religion (see Jewett and Lawrence). It is also a serious mistake to underplay the rationality of the Christian right. Dismissed again and again as an irrational, reactive movement lashing out against the modern world, the Christian right has continually confounded its critics by behaving in an effective and politically astute manner, building its institutions, forging alliances, and working pragmatically to advance its agenda.

Finally, and most importantly, the Christian right is no longer an extreme separate from the foreign policy mainstream. Seeing the Christian right as an extreme fringe element that has somehow wormed itself into the realm of responsible mainstream foreign policymaking is simply mistaken. With its grassroots strength, the Christian right is a major component in the electoral coalition of the country’s dominant political party. It enjoys close relations with the president and his neoconservative advisers, and, for the moment at least, the Christian right is a significant element in a unilateralist alliance that dominates American foreign policy. This stature must be taken into account by those who would attempt to counter the influence of the religious right.

If the Christian right is part of a dominant foreign policy alliance, how should those who oppose it proceed? The most obvious and effective countermeasure would be the electoral defeat of the party and administration with which it is allied. Over the last quarter century, the Christian right has become ever more closely intertwined with the Republican Party. Its potential for influence closely tracks that party’s electoral fortunes. Of course, this solution begs the question—how is this electoral defeat to be accomplished? I have no magic bullet to offer, and the question is beyond the scope of this paper. However,

I would suggest that those looking to organize against the Christian right, and the unilateralist alliance of which it is a part, begin by examining the inherent tensions and contradictions within that alliance and within the Christian right itself, a few of which I will now enumerate.

A. Economic Globalization

Thus far, our account of the Christian right and institutions of international governance has focused upon the United Nations, the primary target of Christian right unilateralism. However, elements of the Christian right have also aimed their fire at institutions of international economic governance, such as the World Trade Organization and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Although the Bush administration is willing to cast off multilateral constraints in some areas, neither the White House nor the business allies so crucial to its success are interested in a unilateralist rejection of the neoliberal economic order. Christian right resistance to neoliberal economic globalization could potentially pose a serious threat to the current corporate-friendly foreign policy coalition. That threat loomed large in the 1990s, when Christian right groups were found among the opponents of NAFTA, the extension of fast-track trade authority, and the granting of favored trade status to China. In these battles, Eagle Forum, Concerned Women for America, and the Family Research Council found themselves at odds with GOP leadership and their normal allies such as the Heritage Foundation. Gary Bauer denounced “the giddy globalism of corporate Republicans,” and Christian right activists found themselves in uneasy alliances with labor unions, human rights advocates, and antiglobalization organizers.

The Bush administration’s exploitation of September 11th, the “war” on terrorism, and the war in Iraq have effectively displaced controversies surrounding economic globalization. As E.E. Schattschneider, among others, has pointed out, determining the issue is among the most potent of political powers. The Bush administration, with its plans to tie in the 2004 Republican convention to the third anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, certainly has taken that lesson to heart. Progressives need to bring the issues of economic globalization back to the fore, not only to highlight their concerns, but also because a focus on this topic exposes serious contradictions within their opponents’ foreign policy coalition.

B. Religious Persecution

The subject of religious persecution poses potential problems for the GOP-Christian right coalition, through the issue’s link to the conflict between Christian right and business interests discussed above. Christian right opposi-

tion to favored trade status for China was closely tied to that country's treatment of its Christian citizens. Both the International Religious Freedom Act and appeals by Christians for sanctions against Sudan have further raised the specter of a clash between trade promotion and the right of religious expression. Even more serious are the problems that the issue of religious persecution poses for the Bush administration's conduct in its war on terrorism. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the White House has shown little inclination to raise human rights matters involving regimes willing to cooperate with its antiterrorist campaigns. Yet many key U.S. allies in the war on terror, such as Pakistan, are precisely the countries of most concern to religious persecution activists associated with the Christian right.

Although religious persecution issues spell tensions for the dominant foreign policy coalition, progressives must be cautious in exploiting those tensions. In the present climate, concern for the treatment of Christians in Islamic nations can easily slide into promotion of a clash of civilizations between the West and Islam. At a February 2003 "Symposium on Islam" sponsored by the Christian Coalition, featured speakers declared that Muslims "want to kill Christians by any means," and some compared Islam to Nazism (see Arab News). Franklin Graham, in a highly publicized statement, recently characterized Islam as an "evil" religion. Though such statements certainly complicate the diplomacy of the Bush administration, these are hardly the sort of complications that progressives want to promote. However, there are more positive ways to leverage the religious persecution issue. Progressives need to bring human rights concerns back to the front burner in a way that explicitly addresses cases of religious persecution and emphasizes multilateral norms and enforcement mechanisms. Raising these human rights concerns is the right thing to do, and such a move holds the potential to create serious divisions between the Christian right and the Bush administration.

C. Global Social Conservatism and Its Inherent Tensions

Serious tensions exist not only between the Christian right and alliance partners in the U.S. but also between the U.S.-based Christian right and potential overseas allies. In recent years, elements of the Christian right have attempted to build an international social conservative alliance, uniting evangelicals, the Vatican, and even some Islamic groups against gay rights, population control policies, and, above all, feminism. The most notable institutional embodiment of this alliance is the World Congress of Families, uniting groups of various faiths in defense of

the "natural family." As this social conservative alliance has made its voice heard at UN forums and resisted UN initiatives, it has often used a strangely progressive language, defending third world autonomy against the meddling of first world feminists and the international institutions that they allegedly control.

This international alliance has always been unstable. Much of the Christian right's base is hesitant to support cooperation with the Vatican, much less with Islamic groups.¹⁹ Although groups from a variety of nations participate in the World Congress of Families, participation is heavily skewed toward the U.S. Christian right. Given the militant nationalism of the Christian right and its belief in the unique U.S. role as a "redeemer nation," it is hardly surprising that such religious nationalists are ambivalent about crafting a truly international coalition. The 9/11 attack, the war on terrorism, and the war against Iraq have heightened this nationalism and further complicated the Christian right's efforts at international coalition building. In the current environment, cooperation with Islamic groups is especially problematic.

These difficulties notwithstanding, we should not underestimate the potential of a worldwide socially conservative alliance and its possible effectiveness in resisting the efforts of international governing bodies to defend women's rights or implement effective AIDS policies. Opposition to feminism and gay rights is widespread around the world. Even if evangelical-Islamic cooperation is unlikely in the present climate, U.S. religious conservatives can look to the explosive growth of conservative Christianity around the globe in their search for potential allies (see Jenkins). The current controversy over gay ordination in the Episcopalian church is illustrative. U.S. opponents of the church's recent decision to ordain a gay minister have forged an alliance with conservative members of the international Anglican community, particularly with members of its massive and rapidly growing African branch.

Progressive internationalism, i.e., utilizing international institutions to promote equitable economic development rather than neoliberalism, poses serious problems for the Christian right's attempts to construct a global alliance of social conservatives and undercuts the unilateral American nationalism of the Christian right. Few of the Christian right's potential allies in other parts of the world are fervent American nationalists, and they are generally more favorably inclined toward the UN (see Buss and Herman). Moreover, a progressive international economic agenda highlights real contradictions between the neoliberalism of the current administration, with which the Christian right is allied, and the economic

interests of prospective third world allies that the Christian right is attempting to win over on social issues.

Shifting the global social conservatism debate to an agenda of progressive internationalism, translating concerns over religious persecution into commitment to a general defense of human rights, and countering economic globalization are obviously not easy tasks. However, if done correctly, pursuit of such goals can trigger a win/win

scenario: it's the right thing to do, and it could create serious problems for the Christian right and the unilateralist alliance now dominating American foreign policy.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ Many works on the Christian right have given scant attention to foreign policy issues. For examples, see Moen (1992), Wilcox (1996), Oldfield (1996), and Watson (1999). A major exception to this trend has been the work of Sara Diamond (1989, 1995). In the last few years the foreign policy activism of the Christian right has been the focus of more scholarly attention. See Martin (1999), Abrams (2001), and, most notably, Buss and Herman (2003).
- ² Opposition to “Red” China, however, remains a significant item on the Christian right’s foreign policy agenda, particularly for the Family Research Council.
- ³ The general trend toward greater involvement in international affairs masks some differences among Christian right groups. Phyllis Schlafly, head of the Eagle Forum, has long been active in international issues. The Christian Coalition has generally avoided international matters, except for issues of religious persecution and support for Israel.
- ⁴ Christian right groups also object to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, seeing it as a potential threat to the authority of parents. Moving beyond a social issues agenda, Christian right groups have raised objections to the U.S. peacekeeping troops serving under UN command in Bosnia. The UN’s Biosphere reserve program, seen as a threat to U.S. sovereignty over its parklands, has also come under Christian right fire.
- ⁵ Interview with author, July 30, 1998.
- ⁶ See Buss and Herman for a comprehensive account of the Christian right’s alliances and activism at the UN.
- ⁷ Several novels in the *Left Behind* series have reached number one on the *New York Times* bestseller list, and overall sales for the series now top 50 million books. Lindsey’s sales were less noticeable to those outside the evangelical community, because until recently the *Times* did not poll Christian bookstores in calculating its sales figures.
- ⁸ Beaulieu is eventually defeated through the leadership of a televangelist who bears a remarkable similarity to Robertson himself and a U.S. general who craftily withholds a segment of the American military from the control of the new world government.
- ⁹ Robertson’s role as a televangelist, Christian right presidential candidate, and long-time president of the Christian Coalition is well-known. LaHaye has been somewhat less visible to outsiders, but he too has played an important role in the movement as an author, cofounder of the Moral Majority, and as the husband of Beverly LaHaye, founder and former president of Concerned Women for America.
- ¹⁰ Robertson (1991) and personal interview with Leigh Ann Metzger, who served as the elder Bush’s outreach director for religious conservatives (August 21, 1994).
- ¹¹ Doug Wead, personal interview with author, May 1989.
- ¹² *Baltimore Sun*, November 25, 1987, as quoted in Campaign Hotline-American Political Network, Inc.
- ¹³ Quoted in Paul Boyer (2003). For more on prophecy and Christian right foreign policy, see Boyer (1992) and Halsell. Although end-time prophecies lead to strong support for Israel, a closer examination reveals that Jews, or at least those who do not convert to Christianity, do not fare well in end-time scenarios.
- ¹⁴ Richard Cizik, vice president for governmental affairs at the National Association of Evangelicals, personal interview with author, July 1998, and Green (2001). Shea’s Puebla Institute was best known for its criticism of Nicaragua’s Sandinista government and, allegedly, had ties to that government’s contra opponents. See <http://rightweb.irc-online.org/ind/shea/shea.html>.
- ¹⁵ See Hertzke.
- ¹⁶ Bauer and the Family Research Council have been closer to neoconservatives than other elements of the Christian Right. Bauer is more supportive of free trade and an activist U.S. foreign policy than leaders at Concerned Women for America and, especially, Eagle Forum’s Phyllis Schlafly, whose isolationist tendencies slot her closer to the paleoconservatives.
- ¹⁷ The Massachusetts-based Political Research Associates is a notable exception.
- ¹⁸ See Oldfield as well as Berlet and Lyons for critiques of the extremism approach to interpreting the Christian right.
- ¹⁹ Darren Logan, Family Research Council, interview with author, July 1998. See also Buss and Herman.

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