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THE **BATTLE** FOR THE FAMILY, II

Archie

We have seen that Humanism begins with a presupposed denial of God. Scripture makes it clear that this is a foolish desire (Ps. 14:1; 53: 1), as does an examination of its creation-ordained consequences. Without the Triune God who infallibly reveals Himself in all of Holy Scripture (1 Tim. 3:16), man is left with a meaningless universe and nothing better than his own finite, fallen word of flux, his changing word of questioning, wishful thinking, hopeful guessing and despair about the nature of things and the knowledge of objective standards of conduct. Having no objective ethical standards, humanistic man redefines freedom to mean the ability to do what one wills, but this definition can provide the individual with no protection against the sins of individuals or groups, in or out of political power. Ideas do have consequences, and the consequences of antinomianism are not only eternally but also temporarily laden with anxiety, fear, pain and judgment.

The humanist rebels against his Creator and against His order of creation; so he rejects God's law and God's ordained institutions. Attempting to establish himself as the infallible standard of judgment, he then attempts to redefine God's created order of things, especially of good and evil (Gen. 3:5): as if the word of man could re-create the universe! But his very attempt is predestined to failure, for it is inherent in the created order of things (as Clark, Van Til and Rushdoony have pointed out) that the man who excludes the God of Scripture from his philosophy cannot, in his own terms, know that he knows anything about himself, his surroundings or standards for his action.

Humanism Has Consequences

Having rebelled against biblical absolutes, humanistic man tries either to replace them with his own set of moral absolutes or to replace them with general, relative standards of action; or he simply says that there are no standards of ethics. If he takes the first course, the impossibility of his task eventually drives him to admit that his supposed absolutes are really relative, and thus ultimately intellectually and morally groundless. If he takes the second course, honesty must force him to admit that his "ethics" are without foundation and hence useless as standards. The third course impels him to leap immediately into the Hobbesian "state of nature," in which each man is at war with every other man, over the "right" and the means to gratify his boundless desires. As Hobbes noted, this war of each against all must be a war unto death, which renders the individual's life "solitary, nasty, poor, brutish and short." In a world with no objective moral standards and no Judge of men's actions, life becomes a Machiavellian struggle of power, deceit and calculation, in which powerful and crafty individuals and groups dominate the weak, the ignorant and the honest. In such a world, all individuals and groups are threatened with personal harm, loss, theft and death.

It is such a world into which Humanism leads us. All three of its fundamental courses merge into their lowest common denominator. He who undermines God's law paves the road to fear and death, for without God's immutable law man has no authority for ethical knowledge or standards.

In a world devoid of moral absolutes, it is not surprising that men seek to impose their relative (and intellectually baseless) wills on others. Nor is it surprising that they resort to the means of that prince of modern humanists, Machiavelli: force, deceit, and the manipulation of men's ideas, via control of religion and education. Force, of course, has its uses. But, as Machiavelli clearly implies, deceitful control of men's minds is the most effective tool for imposing one's will on others.

Consequences of Humanistic Education

Humanists have long sought control of education, religion and the media, both as a means of inculcating humanist doctrines into the populace and as a means of overthrowing the influence of Christianity on American culture (Cf. Rushdoony, *The Messianic Character of American Education*; Connaught Coyne Marshner, *Blackboard Tyranny*; and Onalee McGraw, *Family Choice in Education: The New Imperative*), and are increasingly assertive in their activities. Applied Humanism requires the replacement of parental control of education by governmental control and manipulation of education. What better way to nullify the influence of parental "ignorance," "prejudices," etc., than to have compulsory, ostensibly "free" schooling provided by the state? "Free" "public" (read: governmental) education places the covetousness and slothfulness of many parents on the side of government planners, and avails its proponents of the myths of majority will, objectivity, benefit to the poor and—greatest of all—quality.

The massive exodus from the "public" schools is ample evidence that the fraudulent nature of humanist arguments is becoming steadily more apparent. When longtime CORE leader Roy Wilkins writes an article in the *Lincoln Review* (Spring, 1979) urging black support for a tuition tax credit bill to enable parents to have their children taught basic skills and to "send their children to educational institutions that support rather than subvert the goals and standards of their household," we know that the failure of the humanistic schools is substantial, and that Humanism is in for some political trouble on this issue.

The difficulty is not just the failure of government-run schools to teach the "3 R's." It is even more the pervasive anti-scriptural world-view and its immoral ethical relativism which dominates so many public schools and texts. And the ethical corruption of the young is increased by the fact that the contemporary Humanism which dominates the schools, while a logical outcome of earlier humanistic philosophies—

philosophies which at least (though without basis: see C. Gregg Singer's *From Rationalism to Irrationality*, and Van Til's *A Christian Theory of Knowledge*) taught that man can know objective moral principles—views earlier philosophies as outmoded.

Humanism eschews biblical law, teaches relativism, and exalts the desires. Is it any wonder that crime, drug use, alcohol abuse, sexual promiscuity and suicide are so rampant today? In public schools each year there are thousands of rapes, scores of thousands of assaults on teachers, unnumbered assaults by students on students. There are bars on windows, policemen patrolling the halls. Can anyone argue that these things—absent in Christian schools—are beneficial to students, teachers, education, or to the worried parents who must send their children almost daily into these institutions?

And what of drug use, alcohol abuse, and rampant sexual promiscuity? These so-called “victimless crimes” take their toll on both individuals and families: worry, distress, money, anguish, disease, suicide, death. And the actions of the licentious also affect those beyond the homes of the criminals: the victims, the potential victims, the families of actual and potential victims, those taxed for both the rehabilitation of and protection from the antinomians loosed in our midst by public “education.”

It is not just that humanists mount overt assaults on the family, such as the attempt to redefine the family through the White House Conference on Families. For decades, centuries, humanists have subverted and attacked biblical law. Naturally, a prime target of attack was the scriptural teaching on male-female sexual relationships. That commandment having been undermined, it was also natural that relativists would take the next step and declare homosexuality and lesbianism to be legitimate “lifestyles.” (An interesting word, “lifestyles.” It is as if one could simply hop in the sack with anyone and everyone—male or female, animal, vegetable or mineral—without any more affect on one's mind and soul than lengthening one's hemline or buying wider ties.) As if these bits of applied humanism were not enough anguish to the family, it follows that if the homosexual “lifestyle” is “legitimate” then homosexual “families” or groupie “families” are “legitimate.” (Here we are, back at the WHCF!)

And if any babies result from all this promiscuity, then we must have the “right” to murder them before they are born (abortion)—or, as many hospitals do now, after they are born—lest they interfere with our social or financial status, “emotional health” or other such desires. And no good, mainstream humanist would insist that these “poor, unhappy” sinners be required to pay for the consequences of their actions. Roosevelt forbid! That would face people with fear, with want! And it is the aim of modern humanism to free men from these things.

Now, we should note that freedom defined as the ability to gratify one's desires frees all men, individuals and groups, to do likewise—at the expense of others. We should also note that “legitimizing” the desires of people to murder their inconvenient babies not only strikes at the heart of the family purpose and relationship, but also establishes the principle that groups of individuals may determine, via the political process, that some “inconvenient” individuals may be murdered for the

convenience of others. The logic of the pro-abortion argument leads inevitably to “euthanasia,” “mercy killing” of “defective” individuals, and thence to Auschwitz, the Katyn Forest and Cambodia. What began as a movement by Mom and Pop to murder Junior leads logically to the murder of Granny, and to the similar eradication of Mom & Pop themselves, when they become too old to be useful.”

God on Humanism

The Apostle Paul noted the logical development of all this humanistic philosophy and practice with special clarity in the first chapter of Romans (vs. 18-32):

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; . . . Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

The inspired words of the writer will bear much study, but we should note several pertinent points which they raise. Obviously, ungodly premises lead to queer conclusions! But we must also note that the perverse consequences of apostasy are willed by men and ordered by God. And, significantly, the rebellious thoughts and actions of apostate men are fraught with judgment and death. Such is the ultimate end of the relativistic attack on the family, for the individuals and the culture which practice and reward these things.

PLANNING AND PRAGMATISM

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The idea of central planning, which is at the root of our central government's ludicrous and painful attempts to regulate our energy production, is founded on the impossible dream of man to be as God. The would-be central planner necessarily presupposes that he (or they) is, or can become, omniscient; he seeks to become omnipotent.

He can become neither. Especially not in the sort of “universe” which he posits as the logical basis for his departure from God's word and law, an evolving “universe” of chance

and flux. In this supposedly evolving “universe,” the would-be planner seeks to be scientific and pragmatic. He seeks to manipulate the lives of individuals and the shape of institutions (the economy, the family, the school, the Church) via governmental power, deceit (“Federal aid to schools will not mean federal control.”) and coercion. In Machiavellian manner, he seeks not only to centrally manipulate the lives and views of individuals living under his rule, but also to conduct scientific experiments on them. “Scientific” social experi-

ments are necessitated because the humanistic planner presupposes an evolving, changing "universe." A "universe" of flux necessarily requires man to continually adapt himself and his institutions to it (especially if there are no moral universals which endure amid the flux); it continually confronts man with new situations, with new sets of circumstances in which he must discover the "laws," the relationships of things, at that particular time.

Pragmatism consists in adjusting one's actions—and those of one's subjects—to the "currents of history," to the current realities, or to the expected "wave of the future." But having denied God and His created order of things, together with His providential sustenance and governance of His creation, the would-be planner is left with a chance "universe" of flux, in which there can neither be universal laws nor any knowledge of them. In terms of his own assumptions, the planner can have no true knowledge of present, past or future. He can have no objective criteria in terms of which to plan. He cannot have the Constitution, for not only is that a human (and therefore fallible) document, but also because it both claims that there are moral and political principles which are not affected by the changes of time and forbids him to do what he most fondly desires. On a deeper level, he cannot have any abiding principle because he has rejected the Triune Creator and Author of history. We all know what the word "assume" can do to you and me. It has—because of the nature of his assumptions—really done it to the planner, and the more grandiose his attempts to plan the more manifest does this become. The idea of central economic and social planning, whether done according to some "grand design" or to piecemeal pragmatism, is at bottom the attempt of the planner to impose his subjective desires on others.

Problems of Pragmatic Planners

The difficulty which confronts planners in America and the more or less free, "democratic" nations of the world arises from the nature of the very "democratic" institutions which most planners laud, and which have been the chief instruments of their accession to power. For to acquire a position of political power in America one must either get himself elected or attach himself to an electable politician. Since our Constitution clearly forbids the sort of central planning activity which planners desire, the Constitution must be "progressively" abandoned and with it its restraints on political action. The problem faced by would-be planners was—and is—this: How do you realize your own radical desires and yet get yourself (or your pet politician) elected. . . and re-elected? In order to accomplish this, planners were faced with the task of influencing enough voters to abandon both their inherited institutions and their institutionally-supportive beliefs.

The "solution" to this problem was (and is being) worked out over a long period of our history, and involves at least four things. First, it involves a succession of like-minded, influential men over time. Second, it involves the use of deceit, as every politician knows: Folks won't vote for you if they think you're dangerous, or if they know that your views differ radically from theirs. Third, it involves opportune times: crises, or supposed crises—depressions, wars, rumors of wars, energy shortages or supposed shortages, etc.—which establish, in a people of weak or nonexistent Christian faith, a desire for a human solution to pressing difficulties. Fourth, crucially, it involves a yielding, to some degree, to the desires of a majority of the voters.

Yielding to the desires of the majority, however, is not exactly what the planner desires to do. After all, doing what the majority wants is not necessarily consistent with planning, especially in a regime in which the old, inherited ways and beliefs are strong. So the planner's yielding to the desires of the majority necessarily involves promising and giving (to some incomplete degree) to the voters those things which will induce them to abandon the old order, the old ways, the old views. "Yielding" thus involves gradualism, deceit and welfareism. Or, as the immoral Harry Hopkins said, "Tax, tax; spend,

spend; elect, elect." "Yielding to the desires of the electorate" really means, for would-be planners, controlling the desires of the electorate, to the degree that that is possible.

The Institutional Answer & Its Problems

The institutional answer to this problem of control involves two changes, each of which has a long history. First, changing the views—and so the desires—of the majority involves an educational transformation: the replacement of private, locally controlled, parentally chosen, (largely) biblically-grounded education by governmentally controlled, coercive, humanistically-grounded "public" education. Second, changing the views of the majority involves a political transformation: the replacement of a limited, constitutional, federal, localized government working in terms of basically Christian moral principles by an essentially unlimited, unconstitutional, centralized humanistic "welfare state."

The political transformation was not only to provide would-be planners with the powers and institutional mechanisms requisite for the planning state, but also to provide planning politicians with the means necessary to entice voters with tangible, short-run economic and social gains, to allure visionary and unthinking voters with promises of man-made secular utopias and programs, and to coerce recalcitrant voter-taxpayers into financing the whole system. Although erected in the name—and often with the intention—of alleviating temporal suffering, the planners' "welfare state" has never been divorced, nor is it divorcible, from the idea so accurately termed by the Christian thinker Frederick Bastiat as "legalized plunder." Government under such a system, said Bastiat, becomes "the great fiction, by which everyone attempts to live at the expense of everyone else." God, of course, has an even better term by which to describe the attempt of people to live at others' expense: theft.

Theft is at the very foundation of the planning "welfare state." Theft is inseparable from the egalitarian and socialist ideal of redistribution of wealth to produce a social and economic equality of condition among individuals and families in society. Theft, and hence injustice, is at the very foundation of the planning state. There is also another manifest violation of biblical law (which we shall discuss in "The Battle for the Family") inherent in the attempt by humanistic planners to transfer the duty of charity and the provision of welfare from the individual, the family and voluntary associations such as the Church to the state. But it is good to know that injustice has its consequences, for the very inclusion of legalized theft as a foundation of the "democratic" "welfare state" involves the planner in a further difficulty: in establishing a system of legalized plunder, he erects an influence system.

The Influence System

Now an influence system is one in which those with the greatest (or greater) power, prestige, organization, articulateness and other tools of the will both exert the most influence on the governmental process and acquire the most material rewards from the legalized plunder process. It is a system in which government planners and bureaucrats, being in positions of power and influence, stand to gain at the expense of ordinary, unorganized, citizens. And all the evidence of salary comparisons, bureaucratic endurance and the growth of bureaucracy and taxes, of course, is that they do.

But an influence system also allows citizens to benefit at the expense of others—and at the expense of the plans of the planners. The very "democratic process" which allows planners to acquire power through appeals to the appetites of the majority also allows the majority—or, more likely, the organized, articulate and powerful minority—to influence politicians to favor their particular groups' interests, at the expense of others, in a manner contrary to the planners' plans.

Key aims of planning advocates, for example, have been, first, to replace the workings of the market economy with the

commands of planners and second, to redistribute wealth via taxation and welfare programs to create social and economic equality among individuals. Among the means used to achieve these ends have been "antitrust" laws and "anti-poverty" programs. Both have been clear failures, even by the reckoning of the humanists. Antitrust laws were desired from the first, by large corporations, to protect themselves against their actual and potential competitors. They have served their purpose well, for it is precisely those being regulated who (partly out of the necessity of survival, partly out of the desire to thrive at others' expense) have exercised crucial influence on the policymaking process. So-called anti-poverty programs are riddled with corruption, spend about a quarter of their allotted money on the poor, and provide quite well for numerous bureaucratic drones. According to planning advocates, these results were never intended to be among their goals.

One who adheres to biblical ethical teachings could never advocate the "welfare state" or its programs, even if they did succeed. For theft, deceit, envy, covetousness, the delusions of human pride and ungodly coercion are the very warp and woof of the "welfare state." And it is not only the ends, but also the means of the "welfare state" which are unjust. The influence system, which is the mechanism of the "welfare state," is a case in point. The influence system is a mechanism for legalized theft. Its very purpose is unjust. In fact, it multiplies the injustice by creating a competition for government largesse. The very nature of government as an influence system violates the biblical standard for government: rulers are to act in terms of God's law, to protect the good and punish the evil, to be a terror to evil works, not to act as conduits for the transmission of pressure and the receipt of benefits for the influential—nor, for that matter, for planned redistribution of wealth (Rem. 13: 1-6). Christian relativists to the contrary notwithstanding, biblical ethics has a content: the law of God. Both the ends and the means of the influence system are evil.

Humanistic planners, of course, are not immediately concerned with either the fact or the long-run consequences of their violation of God's law. But they remain faced, in a popular government, with their original problem: Planners want to plan others' lives. But in order to plan either planners or their politicians must get elected and reelected, and to do this must, to some degree, submit to the desires of the majority (or influential minority) of their voting and politically active constituents. Establishment of the influence system enables planners and their politicians to buy and attract votes. But the influence system also enables people to gratify their desires at the expense of thwarting or distorting the planners' plans. Thus the pragmatists' plans are disrupted not only by the inherent irrationalism of their philosophy, but also by the inherent injustice of their revised American governmental system.

The only way that the pragmatic planner can retain a system of "democratic" government and hope for a greater efficiency of planning is to control the minds of the populace, or of a sufficient number of them. His solution to the problem of the influence system must therefore be first to establish governmental, "public" education, and then to establish central government control over all "public" education. Federal "aid" to education and the new forthcoming disaster, the Department of Education, are practical applications of this philosophy. Government—and especially central government—control of education, however, means that all education must be controlled by government. There can be no escape from the desired influences on individuals' ideas (therefore the D. O. Ed. is hiring 2,200 lawyers). Private education, familial education, and especially Christian education, must be discouraged or obliterated. Competing sources of ideas must be eliminated, for people must be given the planners' desired ideas, if the influence system is to produce the results desired by the planners. Economic control requires educational control. The planner plans to produce paradise: no individual, no family, no church, no local or state government must be allowed to interfere with the "creation" of the new humanist utopia,

But the humanistic government schools are and must be failures, in terms of the planners' purposes (as we note in "The Battle for the Family," in this issue). For government schools teach humanistic dogma, and humanism exalts the desires, implies and preaches moral relativism and nihilism (the denial of the existence of moral norms), and relativism and nihilism yield ungodly self-seeking (as opposed to godly self-love), the perversions of hedonism and crime of all sorts. The rotten fruits of humanism are poisonous to the individual, the economy and society. Though the power of the humanist state will increase, its essential educational system will produce lawless teachings and lawless fruits (literally!), who will, precisely because they impose no restraints on themselves, be all the more ungovernable. As Zach. Montgomery noted in 1886, the loss of parental authority and home influence over children produced by a state-controlled educational system, together with its divorce of religious and moral training from "education" has manifestly yielded greatly increased rates of crime and suicide wherever it has been practiced,

The more planners seek control of our economic and social life, the greater will be their simultaneous push for universal government control of schooling. And the more they achieve their institutional aims, the more the results of the application of their antinomian religion will thwart the fulfillment of their dreams. Scripture clearly teaches (Rem. 1: 18-32; Gen. 11: 1-9) that God's judgment on apostasy entails not only His Last Judgment, but also His ordinance that apostate premises be allowed to work themselves out to their perverse and logical conclusions. It is no wonder, then that the Lord's judgment on those who flaunt their disobedience is a judgment unto death and destruction.