

the low priority of the military in the Four Modernizations. Since power in China is exercised by the Party in symbiotic relationship with the military, the result of the original action is not yet in sight.

Destabilizing side effects can amplify

even more unpredictably in a sea of ferment. The increasing incohesion of Chinese society disturbs in turn the very unity of Deng's power network by alarming the "old guard" who are ever ready for a pullback to the illusory security of more

orthodox positions. Given the developing mood of China, however, retreat can be as dangerous as advance and will no more assure stable continuity than the current floundering efforts to chart a new course. □

Allan C. Carlson

RADICAL LIBERALS, ILLIBERAL FAMILIES

The Pro-Family Movement has begun to fight back against the social engineering of the last twenty years, but despite the Republican resurgence it remains on the defensive.

Polite society has greeted the "pro family" movement, a political development unique to the past half decade, with a mixture of ambivalence, panic, and discomfort. A minority of liberal voices, including the venerable *New Republic*, have counseled a bemused toleration of this latest example of small town Babbitty. Left-leaning clerics, civil libertarians, and other politicians of more excitable disposition have nurtured a media image of pro-family advocates as Bible-thumping, jack-booted, moral zealots trampling on human freedoms, modern lifestyles, pluralism, and the Constitution. They have conjured up visions of the Spanish Inquisition and the Salem witch trials, and have regularly invoked the whispered words, "Moral Majority" or "Phyllis Schlafly," to scare young children or frighten wayward parti-

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sans back into the fold. Traditional business-oriented Republicans, in the flush of victory, have found the pro-family elements of the Reagan coalition to be an embarrassment—something like the visit of distant cousins without proper education or the social graces—and have advised placing the "social issues" on the back burner, lest the new administration squander its opportunity for necessary economic initiatives.

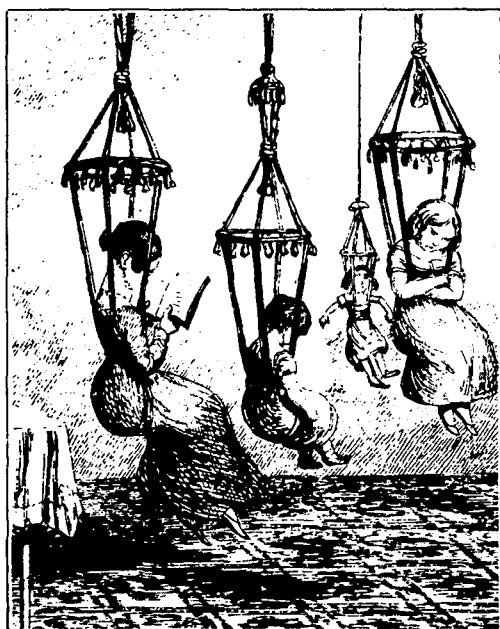
Similar confusion reigns among the national media, as journalists strain to define the composition and agenda of the pro-family coalition. The movement has been sometimes portrayed as a monolithic effort to force a tired moral code down the collective American throat. Borrowing a page from Joe McCarthy, commentators have delighted in ferreting out the supposed interlocking directorates of pro-family and other "New Right" groups. Yet the pro-family label has also been attached at various times to individuals or groups drawn from widely disparate and historically hostile religious traditions, including Roman Catholicism, fundamentalist Protestantism, Mormonism, and Orthodox Judaism. Even refugee Methodists, Presbyterians, and Lutherans have been known to confess publicly to pro-family sentiments.

Meanwhile, the movement's agenda has normally been characterized as constituting a rigid opposition to a litany of liberating causes—abortion rights, contraceptive rights, women's rights, gay rights, children's rights, and federally funded day-care—girded by simple-minded support for prayer in public schools and an inferred hostility to diversity, change, and all things intellectual and urbane. In sum: a coalition of hayseeds, housewives, the Pope, and preachers sporting leisure suits and Southern drawls, doing battle with the

forces of enlightenment, pluralism, refinement, and liberty.

Admittedly, the pro-family movement is difficult to demarcate. At last year's White House Conference on Families, for example, virtually every delegate present—whether "straight" or "gay," "parent" or "family professional," "married" or militantly "single," "traditional" or "life styled"—claimed to be pro-family. Even a more restrictive label seems applicable, in some respects, to politicians as different as Jesse Helms and Daniel P. Moynihan; religious figures ranging from Jerry Falwell to Michael Novak; assorted research organizations, such as the American Family Institute, the Heritage Foundation, and the Rockford Institute; and dozens of grassroots organizations spanning most ethnic and religious distinctions.

Yet among these diverse elements can be found four recurring attitudes which, I



suggest, essentially define what it means today to be pro-family:

To be pro-family is to reject most recent effusions from the social sciences concerning the family. During the past two decades, the normative American family structure served as a favorite target for a series of highly politicized intellectual movements bent on transforming or destroying the existing social order. New Leftists, feminists, cultural relativists, populationists, and sexual libertarians lashed away at family life as the cause of poverty, violence, imperialism, inequality, the oppression of women, overpopulation, and mental disorders of all sorts. The large majority of publishing family sociologists, revealing a pitiful lack of objective standards and their own subservience to ideology, seemed to take special pleasure in challenging the prevailing social framework.

A few more memorable examples of this intellectual catharsis should suffice. Consider sociologist Merwyn Cadwallander, who declared in a 1966 *Atlantic* article that "marriage is a wretched institution," where beautiful romances are translated into dull matrimony and where relationships inevitably become "constrictive, corrosive, grinding, and destructive." Or ponder a 1972 contribution to the *Family Coordinator* by psychologist Janis Kelly which, after noting that women "cannot develop fully in a heterosexual context," offered the corollary that conditions allowing women "to love fully and without fear are at present met only in a homosexual setting." Or meditate on the vision presented in a 1971 article by family-counselor Robert Harper, which included a call for abortion-on-demand to avoid inflating America's "already pathologically swollen population" and suggested a "blockbuster intensive therapeutic" federal program to help children and youth "overcome the contamination and crippling of their sexual

beings by our culture. . . ." Harper urged parents to "encourage, help, and foster" sexual play among their preadolescent children. "To prevent sexual hang-ups in interactional as well as masturbatory sex," he concluded, "we have to start when children are barely toddlers."

Unfortunately, in this instance, Marx was wrong about the impact of the intellect on events. For ideas related to those cited above, despite their transparent foolishness, had an influence on political developments in the 1970s. The Supreme Court's 1973 abortion decisions; the diffusion of ideological feminism through the academy, the media, the federal bureaucracy, and even the armed services; the emergence of homosexuality as a legally protected lifestyle; the tax-subsidized celebration of International Women's Year; and the distortion of the White House Conference on Families into an assault on traditional families, can all be traced, in part, to this decay of intellectual standards displayed in contemporary discussions of family life.

The pro-family coalition's demand for definitional clarity springs from the same rejection of recent phrenic legerdemain. Since the mid-1960s, sociologists have systematically stripped the word, "family," of intelligible meaning, preferring instead the dual concepts of "changing families" and "a pluralism of family forms." The Forum 14 Report of the 1970 White House Conference on Children, for example, defined family as "a group of individuals in interaction," while the American Home Economics Association, an occasional fount of obscure sociology, views family "as a unit of two or more persons who share resources, share responsibilities for decisions, share values and have a commitment to one another over time." Such expansive definitions, designed to offend no one, arguably extend the "family" label to everything from group marriages and homosexual couples to a pair of winos sharing a boxcar and a

bottle. Pro-family activists, on the other hand, support a less sweeping, more historic definition, limiting the "family" designation to two or more persons related by blood, heterosexual marriage, or adoption.

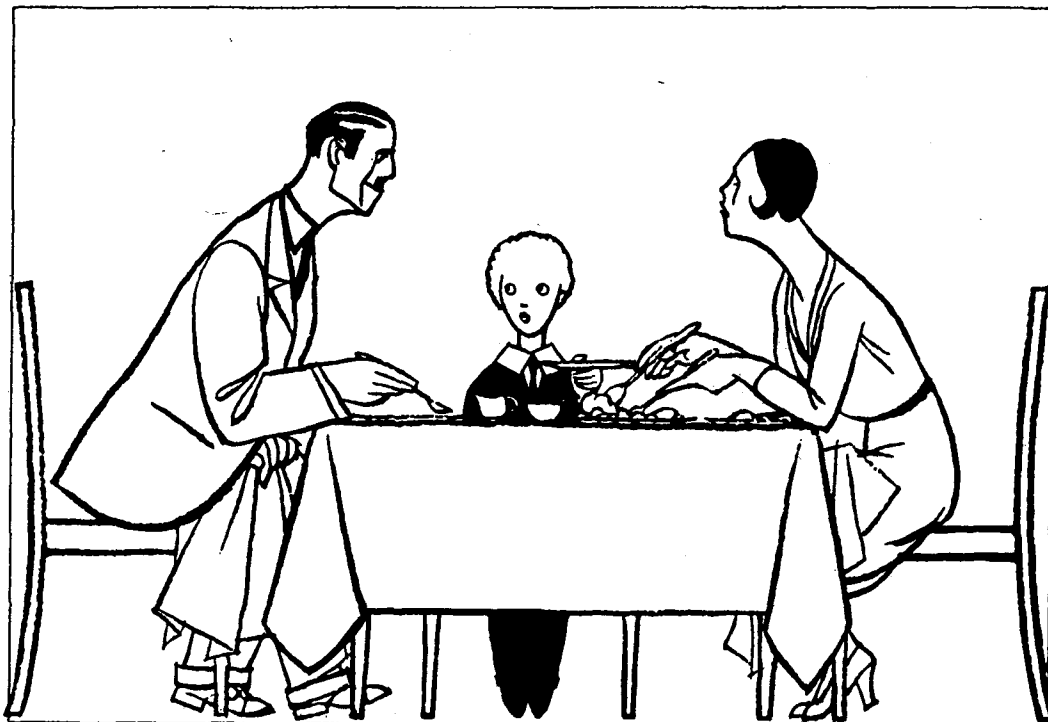
To be pro-family is to war against the cultural death-wish of modern Malthusianism. Just as "pro choice" means more than "pro abortion," so does the "pro life" label encompass sentiments beyond opposition to that particular "medical procedure." Ideologically, the phrase symbolizes aversion to the whole anti-growth, anti-large family, anti-child, and pro-eugenic culture promoted by the modern Malthusians. In a spiritual sense, "pro life" means a struggle against the cool allure of Death and his steadfast companions, narcissism and sterility.

Indeed, the sterile orgasm may be among the most appropriate symbols of the contemporary liberal temperament. Progressive doctrine on family and sexual matters has spread widely, and early and extensive sexual experimentation, the conscious rejection of parenthood, a reliance on abortion to correct sexual mistakes, a dogmatic adherence to the view that there are no differences between the sexes, and the elevation of selfishness to a virtue have reached pandemic proportions, particularly among American youth.

Opposition by the pro-family coalition to the gay rights movement arises from the same revulsion towards the cult of sterility. As Midge Decter has recently pointed out, "the one thing that even the most passionate exponent of, or most ardent sympathizer with, homosexual liberation is bound to admit is that homosexual relations are—and are meant to be—fruitless." When a society views heterosexuality and homosexuality as merely interchangeable forms of sexual release, and considers the birth of a child as but another burden on an already overtaxed environment, then procreation and the nurturing of children have in fact lost all claim to special social consideration. And human life is effectively reduced to a deplorable accident.

In contrast, pro-family activists unashamedly declare that parenthood, birth, and the rearing of children are positive, even superior, social tasks. And without discounting the complex ethical questions that do arise, they give strong preference to life-creating and life-sustaining acts over their life-denying and life-destroying antitheses.

To be pro-family is to oppose the union of educational and family professionals with the coercive power of the state. As incredible as it may sound, many American parents now live with the almost primeval fear that public schoolteachers and family professionals are in a league with the state to take away their children. Not primarily in the sense of expecting their offspring to be physically torn away (although that is



part of their apprehension); but rather in the sense of watching the values and mores within which their children have been raised slowly subverted by the perceived moral vacuum at the heart of the "helping professions."

Malefic motives, not just intellectual muddle-headedness, are suspected. For it is clear that the modern liberal temperament, wedded to a host of anti-natalist sentiments, is likely to produce few babies among its own adherents. Yet no political movement, however hostile towards procreation it might be, can long survive without initiating someone's children into its mysteries. In consequence, family and school professionals can sometimes loom as modern equivalents of the faeries and trolls who, in former times, stole human children away during the night to raise in their own alien ways.

Not unexpectedly, the pro-family ranks are peopled disproportionately by the parents of young children. From their offspring's birth, they sense the agents of the liberal state swarming about them. Social workers, trained to scorn the middle-class values of family independence and personal responsibility, descend on parents with insinuations of child abuse on the flimsiest of evidence. Federally funded family planning clinics provide children contraceptives and referrals for abortions without their parents' knowledge or consent. Public schoolteachers—organized into political cadres by the National Educational Association and directed by the courts and assorted Departments of Education to inculcate secular and historically non-Western dogma in children—mold young minds in a "value free" direction. "Family education," "values

clarification," and sex education courses represent only the most visible forms which this organized erosion of traditional, parent-taught values have taken.

Collective paranoia? Phantasms of Twinkie-besotted imaginations? Regrettably not. One need only look to the humanistic paradise of Sweden, where the modern collectivist state is somewhat ahead in its task of severing children from their parents. Since passage in 1979 of Sweden's notorious Parenthood and Guardianship Code, it has been a criminal offense for parents to spank, strike, intimidate, threaten, ostracize, ridicule, or otherwise "psychologically abuse" their children. "Children's ombudsmen" work diligently to inform the moppets of their "rights," while the Swedish parliament has seriously considered legislation allowing children to divorce their parents. It takes no great leap of imagination to appreciate that it is only a matter of time before Swedish family professionals, given their characteristic adherence to value-free humanism, will show religious indoctrination to be a particularly brutal form of psychological child abuse.

The essentially defensive nature of the American pro-family movement becomes apparent when one turns to the legislative measure most fully embodying its agenda. The Family Protection Act, first introduced in Congress by Nevada Senator Paul Laxalt, has been vilified by critics as a repressive monstrosity. One section of the original bill would confirm the legal point that discrimination against homosexuals would never constitute an "unlawful employment practice," while others would prohibit the expenditure of federal funds to advance homosexuality as an acceptable

way of life or to support divorce litigation.

Yet on closer scrutiny, most provisions of the measure prove to be little more than efforts—admittedly, sometimes clumsy—to protect the rights of parents to raise children within their own value system, free from state interference. Title I, for example, contains provisions that would withhold federal education dollars from states that prohibit voluntary prayer in public buildings, that attempt to exclude parents from visiting classrooms, that refuse to allow parents to review textbooks prior to their use in public schools, or that employ educational materials which belittle women's traditional roles in society. Other sections of this novel proposal would prohibit federal funding of values-clarification and behavior-modification courses, exempt private schools from National Labor Relations Board jurisdiction, allow parents to establish tax-exempt savings plans for their children's education, grant tax deductions to corporations that help fund cooperative employee day-care facilities, and declare a legal presumption in favor of parental supervision of their children's religious and moral formation.

Unless one assumes darker motives, it is difficult to understand why liberals are driven to such apoplexy by this measure. Even if the whole Family Protection Act were approved, liberal progeny could continue virtually undisturbed in their secular-humanistic ways. They might have to tolerate a few voluntary prayers by their classmates, or give occasional notice to the theory that women make the best mothers. But they would undoubtedly survive such experiences with their value systems intact. One does suspect, however, that at least some of the outrage spawned by the



Family Protection Act arises from the consternation liberals feel at seeing their favorite social engineering tool—the coercive threat of withholding federal funds—turned against their most cherished schemes.

To be pro-family is to accept a common measure of right and wrong. It is here that people who otherwise span the political spectrum commit the single, unforgivable act that finally separates them from the modern liberal temperament. For in the culture which liberal laxism has produced, you can perform virtually any voluntary act of decadence, debauchery, or perversion without opprobrium or guilt. But you may not, under any circumstance, accuse another of hedonism or sin.

This abhorrence of a common moral yardstick had its birth among the social sciences, where a sometimes useful analytical tool was distorted in this century into a philosophical absolute. From the towers of learning, this moral void spread into the law, the courts, the media, and the "main-line" churches and synagogues. The pro-family movement stands on the other side of the moral divide, committed to those traditional moral principles most purely embodied in the Ten Commandments. What Onalee McGraw of the Heritage Foundation has called "an undeclared civil war" has been the result, an ideological struggle between "the Judeo-Christian ethic, based on God-given eternal law, and the secular humanist orthodoxy that rejects God and traditional values."

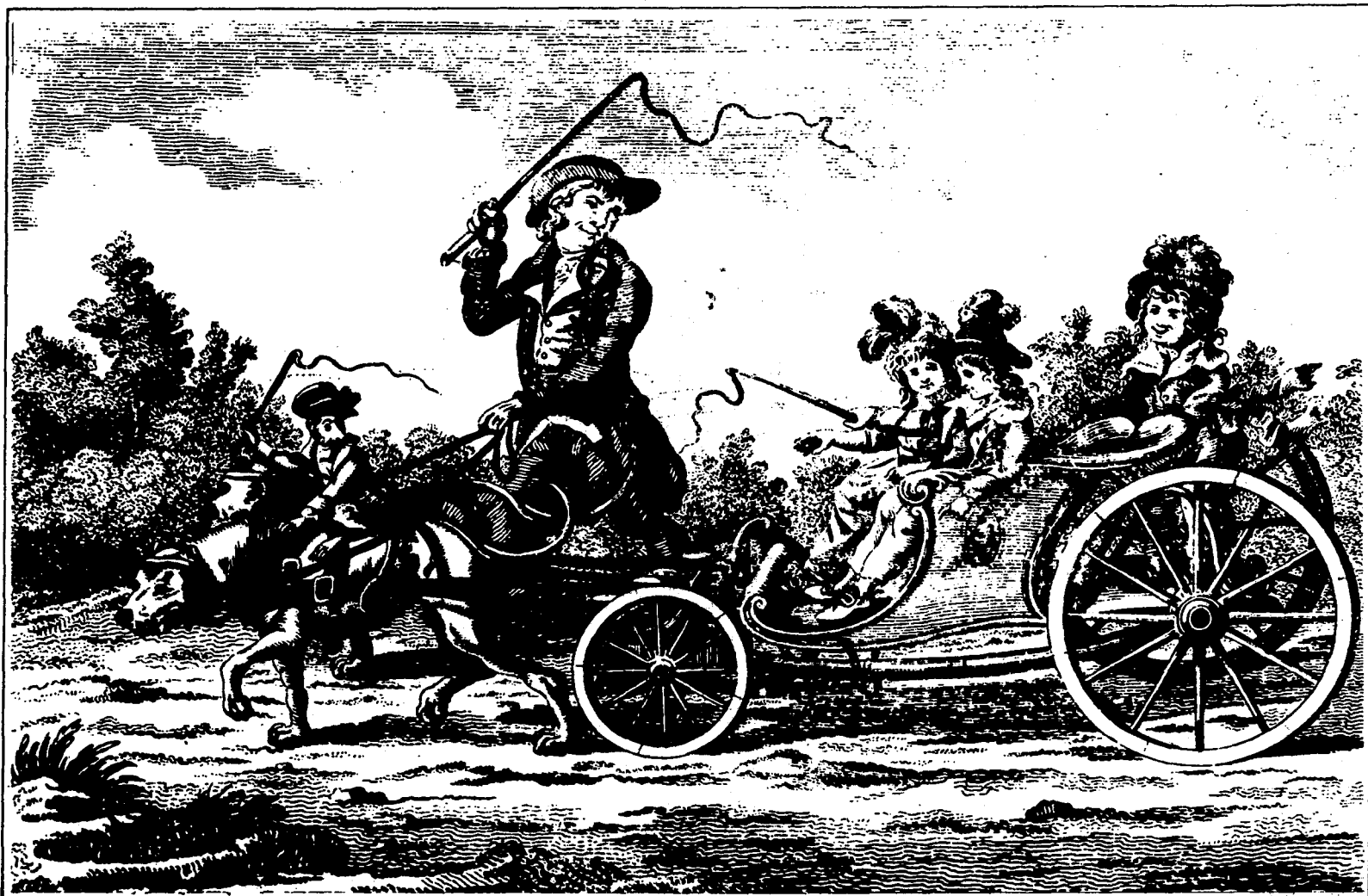
Yet pro-family sentiment goes beyond blind allegiance to an ancient set of moral principles. There is an unsettling recognition that America's current time of troubles—economic, diplomatic, military, and spiritual—is worsening, and suspicion that proposed conservative nostrums, such as supply-side economics or increased defense spending, will not be sufficient to reverse America's decline. There is apprehension that the great eighteenth-century champions of liberty were correct in their belief that a free society cannot exist without strong, internalized moral values, nor without well-defined and commonly accepted social norms. As this century's foremost philosopher of freedom, Friedrich Hayek, wrote in his masterpiece *The Constitution of Liberty*: "It is indeed a truth . . . that freedom has never worked without deeply ingrained moral beliefs and that coercion can be reduced to a minimum only where individuals can be expected as a rule to conform voluntarily to certain principles." The preservation of identifiable social norms and a common moral code may, in fact, be necessary for the very survival of our free society.

Measured against these four principles, the 1980 Republican platform was a decidedly pro-family document. It acknowledged the political, legal, and moral significance of the Judeo-Christian tradition, ignored fashionable sociological theories of family diversity and change, promised efforts to overturn the 1973 abortion decisions, supported a tuition tax-credit

plan, opposed federal meddling in the governance of private schools, and pledged a preference for the appointment of pro-family judges. Elements of the pro-family coalition, most visibly the Moral Majority, mobilized large numbers of voters behind Ronald Reagan and other friendly—mostly Republican—candidates. Post-election polls suggested that these voters provided a significant share of Reagan's popular electoral margin and may have tipped the balance in a number of senatorial contests, including those in Idaho, Iowa, Oklahoma, and Alabama.

As Reagan's own Family Policy Advisory Board soon made clear, the pro-family coalition expects its reward. In their November 20 report to the President-elect, this panel recommended, among other actions, the appointment of a Special Assistant to the President for family matters; priority legislative attention to the Human Life Amendment; presidential support for the so-called "Helms Amendment," which would limit the power of federal courts over voluntary prayer in public schools; the dismantling of the Department of Education; White House backing for the Family Protection Act; and the appointment of pro-family sympathizers to critical slots in the Departments of Justice, State, and Health and Human Services.

Connie Marshner, chairman of this group and the editor of *Family Protection Report*, expresses faith that Mr. Reagan will abide by his pledge to the Republican platform and remain consistent with his frequent endorsement of pro-family goals.



She suggests quick initiatives on the Family Protection Act, focusing on those tax and education sections that would make an immediate difference in people's lives.

Yet in spite of apparent electoral success, the pro-family forces continue to face a powerful, clever, and implacable foe. In the words of Jo Ann Gasper, editor of the *Right Woman*, "There is a war going on for the preservation of society and the pagans are already within the walls." For it is clear that the modern liberal ethos still

dominates most centers of national power. Outside the loss of some influence with the presidency and in the Senate, its partisans are still effectively in control. The federal bureaucracy, most universities, the relevant professions, the media, the federal courts, and, in some respects, the House of Representatives remain theirs. While currently making conciliatory noises, they will not voluntarily surrender their hold on these institutions.

Pro-family activists have won a political

battle or two. Notwithstanding pretensions to majority status, though, they still remain a distinct and largely unorganized minority. Their agenda demands a reversal of nearly two decades of political, social, and intellectual evolution. However bankrupt and discredited these developments now stand, the difficulty of their task cannot be underestimated. A long and bitter struggle awaits those who defend traditional families before they and their children will again sleep in peace. □

John Nollson

MEN OF LETTERS

Papers filed in the Federal District Court will be the first shot fired in what promises to be a drawn-out battle to eradicate one of the most invidious forms of discrimination—alphabetism. Though it has not been much noticed, there has been a conscious attempt to shrink the alphabetical base of federal appointments, so that today large numbers of letters have been totally excluded. The facts are indisputable. As everyone knows, there are thirteen cabinet departments in the executive branch of the federal government. Though they are usually listed by *age*, a different pattern is revealed when they are listed in alphabetical order:

- 1) Agriculture
- 2) Commerce
- 3) Defense
- 4) Education
- 5) Energy
- 6) Health and Human Services (HHS)
- 7) Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- 8) Interior
- 9) Justice
- 10) Labor
- 11) State
- 12) Transportation
- 13) Treasury

Though there are thirteen departments, only ten letters are represented. Indeed, only three letters account for fully six departments. President Carter's appointments made things worse, not better. In fact, when the cabinet is arranged in the alphabetical order derived from the surnames of the appointees, the list is scrambled, all the better to conceal what is really going on:

John Nollson's book, Washington in Pieces, will be published in April by Doubleday.

APPOINTEE	REVISED NUMERICAL STANDARD	GAIN OR LOSS
1) Andrus, Interior	rises from 8 to 1	+ 7
2) Bergland, Agriculture	drops from 1 to 2	- 1
3) Brown, Defense	stays in 3rd place	0
4) Civiletti, Justice	rises from 9 to 4	+ 5
5) Duncan, Energy	stays in 5th place	0
6) Goldschmidt, Transp.	rises from 12 to 6	+ 6
7) Harris, HHS	rises from 6 to 7	+ 1
8) Hufstедler, Education	rises from 4 to 8	+ 4
9) Klutznick, Commerce	drops from 2 to 9	- 7
10) Landrieu, HUD	drops from 7 to 10	- 3
11) Marshall, Labor	drops from 10 to 11	- 1
12) Miller, Treasury	rises from 13 to 12	+ 1
13) Muskie, State	drops from 11 to 13	- 2

This rearrangement is revealing. Only four units of hierarchical elevation are recorded, whereas the aggregate drop in rankings is 26. Put simply, there is no correlation between a cabinet member's standing by first letter of his department and his ranking by first letter of his surname. Indeed, only Bergland comes close to a one-to-one relation. If his name were Aergland, he would appear first on both lists. As for Brown, he is the only other

Carter appointee who even came close.

Accordingly, we can establish a *prima facie* case that the Carter administration was guilty of alphabetical discrimination. *Not one member of the outgoing Carter cabinet had a surname beginning with a letter drawn from the second half of the alphabet.* Yes, it's a fact: These thirteen people originated exclusively in the first half of the alphabet.

Fortunately, the Reagan administration has moved to correct this, but not all that much. When the incoming cabinet is tabulated by alphabetical standing, the following pattern emerges:

- 1) Baldrige, Commerce
- 2) Bell, Education
- 3) Block, Agriculture
- 4) Donovan, Labor
- 5) Edwards, Energy
- 6) Haig, State
- 7) Lewis, Transportation
- 8) Pierce, Housing and Urban Development
- 9) Regan, Treasury
- 10) Schweiker, Health and Human Services
- 11) Smith, Justice
- 12) Watt, Interior
- 13) Weinberger, Defense

This is not unimpressive; fully five of the names, which is to say five-thirteenths or 38.46 percent, are drawn from the second half of the alphabet. Will the inevitable mid-term purge narrow the gap? The evidence of history is not very encouraging. The alphabetical ax really fell during President Carter's famous July Massacre of 1979. Dismissed then were Adams, Brock, Califano, and Schlesinger. The removal of an A, a B, and a C should have been an opportunity for the more disadvantaged letters, but it didn't happen. And it must be pointed out that, as of this writing,

