

TO FIGHT “FASCISM,” NEW YORK TIMES AUTHOR WANTS TO BAN RELIGIOUS RIGHT

By Don Feder

Posted January 22, 2007

Breezing through the bookstore at Reagan National Airport the other day, I came across a new volume with the unsubtle title, “American Fascists – The Christian Right and The War on America” by former New York Times’ correspondent Chris Hedges. But, as the saying goes, tell us what you really think.

No hyperbole here. In the introduction, Hedges makes it clear that he actually is comparing evangelical opponents of abortion and gay marriage to the monsters who burned books, ran death camps and plunged humanity into a world war that left 63 million dead.

Except it’s Hedges who wants to burn books and gag his opponents – but we’ll get to that shortly.

The author begins with a quote from one of his distinguished professors at the Harvard Divinity School (where Christianity disappeared decades ago): “‘The Nazis,’ he said, ‘were not going to return with swastikas and brown shirts. Their ideological inheritors in America have found a mask for fascism in patriotism and the pages of the Bible.’” Apparently, everything Hedges learned in the intervening years confirmed that grotesque judgement.

Hedges’ screed is the latest in a long, long, line of hysterical tracts denouncing what the secular left calls the Religious Right. The past year alone has seen such saliva-specked exposes of alleged Christian extremism as:

- “Religion Gone Bad: Hidden Dangers of the Christian Right” by Mel White.
- “Why The Christian Right Is Wrong” by Robin Meyers
- “The Left Hand of God: Taking Back Our Country from The Religious Right” by Michael Lerner
- “Theocons: Secular America Under Siege” by Damon Linker
- “American Theocracy” by Kevin Phillips
- “The Baptizing of America: The Religious Right’s Plan for The Rest of Us” by James Rudin
- “Piety and Politics: The Right Wing Assault on Religious Freedom” by the *Reverend* Barry Lynn and
- “Kingdom Coming: The Rise of Christian Nationalism” by Michelle Goldberg.

The objective of all of this Chicken Little squawking is to convince us that the Constitution is falling.-- that conservative Christians intend to abolish the Bill of Rights, outlaw sin and replace democracy with a theocratic state that will make Calvin’s Geneva look like Hugh Hefner’s bachelor party.

Such sentiments are endlessly repeated as an article of faith by politicians, journalists and entertainers.

Colorado Senator Ken Salazar has called Dr. Dobson and Focus on the Family “the Anti-Christ of the world” (for demanding that he vote to end the filibuster of Bush judicial nominees). Senator Tom Harkin (D, Iowa) labeled Christian broadcasters “sort of our homegrown Taliban.”

Howard Dean asks rhetorically, “Are we going to live in a theocracy where the highest powers tell us what to do?” No, we’ll live in a Dean-ocracy where radical feminists, global-warming

whack-jobs and the Brokeback Mountain Brigade tell us what to do.

In a profile piece in *The New Yorker*, Al Gore compared the faith of George W. Bush to Saudi Whabbism. In its May, 2005 issue, *Harpers Magazine* ran a cover story titled “The Christian Right’s War on America.” (The left demonstrates its commitment to the environment by recycling smears.)

And, last fall, seminal political thinker Rosie O’Donnell instructed viewers of ABC’s “The View,” that “Radical Christianity is just as threatening as radical Islam in a country like America where we have (*sic.*) separation of church and state.”

Speaking of fascists, when it comes to conservative Christians, the left takes a page out of the playbook of Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels, who confessed, “If you tell a big lie enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it.”

Hedges does more than lie. In the name of fighting fascism, he wants to institute censorship and punish political incorrectness with prison sentences. Irony is always lost on the left.

I’m tickled pink (no pun intended) when the left starts casually throwing around charges of fascism. Look in their closets, and you’ll find jackboots shined and ready to wear.

Need proof?

Ask yourself: Over what institution does the left exert the greatest control (even more than over Hollywood and the news media)? Answer: academia. Now, what institution most closely resembles a police state in its posture toward dissent? Same answer.

At American colleges and universities, Christian student groups are being told to renounce their principles or lose official status.

Conservative newspapers are burned. Conservative speakers are shouted down or assaulted with impunity. Students who vigorously challenge leftist dogma are suspended or expelled. Professors are denied tenure for failure to parrot party line.

If you'd like a preview of an American fascist state, look at higher education. If Hitlerism ever comes to America, it won't be marching with crosses and Bibles, but mouthing the platitudes of multiculturalism (cultural Marxism), while goose-stepping to the beat of Sgt. Pelosi's PC Band.

In documenting the perils of incipient totalitarianism in the Bible Belt, Hedges describes his hair-raising adventures at a "Love Won Out" conference (for those born-again who left the gay lifestyle), a Creationism Museum in Petersburg, Ky. (FYI, the Nazis were evolutionists) and one of D. James Kennedy's "Evangelism Explosion," seminars where conferees were taught how to bring people to "the Christian right's version of Christ." Christians evangelizing? Fancy that.

The goal, Hedges breathlessly discloses, is "not simply conversion but also eventual recruitment into a political movement to create a Christian nation," where the Bill of Rights would be repealed and the Constitution replaced by Jerry Falwell's latest sermon.

To prove this absurdity, Hedges quotes evangelist Kennedy: "As vice regents of God, we are to exercise godly dominion and influence over our neighborhoods, our schools, our government"

and “our entertainment media, our news media, our scientific endeavors....”

How successful the religious right has been in exercising “godly dominion” over the news media and Hollywood may be seen by picking up The New York Times, tuning in to CNN or NPR or experiencing the torrent of sex and violence (not to mention the ubiquitous attacks on Christianity) in movies shown every evening on cable television.

Kennedy and his colleagues are saying that Christians have a right and a duty to bring their values into the political arena. Shocking!

The original lie of the left is that America was a nation founded on a secular worldview – one nation under who-knows-what, with liberty and justice for all. The monumental task of historical revisionism started 60 years ago and continues to this day.

To maintain this fiction, the elite relies on intimidation and ignorance of history – one reason American history is no longer taught in our schools.

Alexis de Tocqueville didn’t write for The New York Times. But this early 18th century theorist identified the source of America’s greatness, when he wrote: “In the United States the sovereign authority is *religious* ,...there is no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America, and there can be no greater proof of its utility and of its conformity to human nature than that its influence is powerfully felt over the most enlightened nation on earth.”

Fast-forward 200 or so years.

In his December 22nd address to the Roman Curia, Pope Benedict XVI (in explaining Church's opposition to same-sex "marriage") declared: "If we tell ourselves that the Church ought not to interfere in such matters, we cannot but answer: Are we not concerned with the human being?" In other words, when human life is at stake (as it is with abortion) or the very foundation of society (the family) is threatened, for humanity's sake, the Church must speak out.

Does that make the pope one of Hedges verse-spouting Brown Shirts?

Christian political involvement is more than a moral imperative; it's also a matter of survival. Since the French Revolution, the left has rarely disguised its intention to ultimately abolish religion.

Hedges is chillingly clear when he writes that the Christian right (read: normative Christianity) "should no longer be tolerated" because it "would destroy the tolerance that makes an open society possible."

Hedges echoes New Left philosopher Herbert Marcuse.

Before he emigrated to America in the 1930s, Marcuse was part of the Frankfurt School – Marxists who sought to advance the revolution by capturing the culture.

Surveying the general failure of communist revolutions in the wake of the First World War, Marcuse and his colleagues identified religion and faith-based morality (to which they believed the working class was wedded) as the chief obstacles to achieving a workers' paradise.

In his Sixties book “Repressive Tolerance,” Marcuse describes “toleration” with a twist in the “progressive and humane society” he envisioned. Freedom of expression and assembly would be abolished for all organizations and movements which promote “chauvinism (*and*) discrimination based on race and religion.” To this, today’s left would add gender and what it terms sexuality.

Hedges and Marcuse are intellectual twins separated by a few decades.

The father of political correctness, Marcuse declared: “Certain things cannot be said; certain ideas cannot be expressed; certain policies cannot be proposed, certain behavior cannot be permitted without making tolerance an instrument for the continuation of servitude.”

As Jon Wiener, a historian at the University of California at Irvine, notes in his Los Angeles Times’ review of “American Fascists” (January 7, 2007): “Thus he (*Hedges*) rejects the 1st Amendment protections for freedom of speech and religion, and court rulings that permit prosecution for speech only if there is an imminent threat to particular individuals. Hedges advocates passage of federal hate-crimes legislation prohibiting intolerance, but he doesn’t really explain how it would work.”

Oh, we can guess, can’t we? -- restricting religious radio stations to broadcasting Gospel music, taking “Focus on The Family,” “The 700 Club” and “The Coral Ridge Hour” off the air, padlocking the doors of the D.C. headquarters of Family Research Council, Concerned Women for America and the National Association of Evangelicals, closing religious day schools and Bible camps, and tearing pages from Leviticus out of Bibles. And that’s for starters.

Then comes Kristallnacht for Christians, re-education sessions and finally the concentration camps. And not just for politically active evangelical Christians, but also traditional Catholics, members of various Orthodox churches, Orthodox Jews and Mormons.

The next book Christopher Hedges writes about fascists, should be autobiographical.

*This commentary was originally published at
www.GrassTopsUSA.com*