

CARTER AND CLINTON'S "NEW BAPTIST COVENANT" SCAM

By Don Feder

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Its rhetoric notwithstanding, the left loathes diversity.

Dissent drives it nuts. It's forever scheming to eliminate, co-opt or undercut alternative institutions.

It controls three of the four major networks, but obsesses about Fox News. It has The New York Times and the rest of the dominant print media, but agonizes over talk-radio and conservative websites.

Even though the mainline Protestant churches are safely in its vest-pocket, it's threatened by the success of conservative denominations.

Hence the latest assault on the Southern Baptists, led by ex-Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton – both raised in the denomination – under the guise of a "New Baptist Covenant."

Carter quit the Southern Baptists after their 2000 "Baptist Faith and Message," which repeated the instruction of that old misogynist St. Paul about wives submitting to their husbands. As president, Clinton attended a Methodist church with Hillary, when he wasn't holding ecumenical services with Monica.

At a January 9th news conference at Atlanta's Carter Center (next time you're there, be sure to visit the Ayatollah Khomeini room), Carter and Clinton announced an alternative Baptist movement to counter the supposedly negative image of the Southern Baptist Convention.

With typical Carter-esque modesty, Little Jimmuh proclaimed it “a (*sic.*) historic event for the Baptists in this country and perhaps for Christianity.” Clinton said their joint venture “is an attempt to bring people together to ask, ‘What would our Christian witness require of us in the 21st. century?’”

Joining the ex-presidents were 40 leaders of liberal Baptist churches (yes, they have them too). Over the next year, they will cultivate this arid soil to bring forth a conference of 20,000 like-minded “Baptists” on January 30-February 1, 2008, dubbed a “Celebration of A New Baptist Covenant.”

William D. Underwood, president of Atlanta’s Mercer University, and another organizer of the Covenant, explained: “We’re not against any other group of people of faith. We’re against the fact that 100,000 people died last month of malaria. We’re against the fact that hundreds of thousands of Africans face starvation each year.”

Does that mean Southern Baptists favor malaria-carrying mosquitoes, and delight at the prospect of another famine in Africa – including the 2,000-plus SBC churches which describe themselves as “African-American”?

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported that Carter and Clinton want to “counter concerns that Baptists have been ‘negative’ and ‘exclusionary’ and promised an inclusive organization willing to debate openly on all issues.”

When liberals starts tossing around words like “inclusive” and “open debate,” reach for your hip-boots. When was the left ever interested in debating anything?

For the past three decades, the mainline churches have crushed internal dissent from liberal dogma. “To be a good Christian, you must embrace the worldview of the National Council of Churches,” they told all and sundry.

Inclusive? Open debate? At the 1992 Democratic Nominating Convention, the Clinton Democrats wouldn't allow pro-life Robert Casey Sr. (then the sitting governor of Pennsylvania) to address delegates. That's how much the left wants to facilitate a dialogue and let every voice be heard.

Neither ex-president has ever indicated an interest in any voice that doesn't echo his own. That aside, it's hard to imagine less worthy mentors for a new religious movement.

As president, Clinton:

- Appointed two of the three most liberal members of the Supreme Court -- Stephen Breyer and Ruth Bader Ginsburg.
- Stocked his cabinet with feminists from hell, including: Surgeon General Joycelyn (schools should teach kids to masturbate) Elders and Attorney General Janet (the butcher of Waco and scourge of 6-year-old Cuban refugees) Reno.
- Repeatedly vetoed a ban on partial-birth abortion – four-fifths infanticide.
- Committed adultery (in the Oval Office), perjury (to cover it up) and sexual harassment – while lying repeatedly to the American people.
- Spent eight years asleep at the national-security switch – witness his failed bribery of North Korea to deter its nuclear program and the pre-9/11 refusal to accept Osama Bin Laden from the Sudanese.

- Sold presidential pardons in the waning days of this thoroughly venal administration.
- Left the White House with a haul of “gifts” worth \$180,000 (according to Dick Morris in his book “Re-Writing History”).
- And demonstrated his commitment to Christian charity by taking a tax deduction for used underwear donated to the Salvation Army.

And then there’s our 39th president, the Sage at Plaines – or sap.

- No Supreme Court appointments (God be praised!), but loaded the federal bench with judicial activists who think God is a four-letter word.
- By withdrawing U.S. support from the Shah, bequeathed to us an Iran ruled by homicidal mullahs, soon-to-be armed with nukes.
- His “uncompromising stand” on human rights only applied to authoritarian regimes of the right, never totalitarian regimes of the left. Thus, as president, he helped engineer the ouster of the hapless Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines. But visiting Poland, he toasted communist boss Edward Gierak, proclaiming “our concept of human rights is preserved in Poland” and received Romania’s Stalinist madman Nicolae Ceausescu with the surreal declaration “Our goals are the same, to have a just system of economics and politics...”
- His weakness and post-Vietnam gutting of the U.S. military encouraged Soviet aggression, including the invasion of Afghanistan, proxy wars in Africa and guerrilla wars in Central America.
- His Justice Department went after church schools (allegedly for discrimination), thus – ironically – giving

impetus to the Evangelical political alignment with Republicans.

Since four years in the White House wasn't enough time to ruin the Republic, he's spent a quarter-century out of power undermining America's national interests, fronting for communist and Islamacist regimes and uttering inanities that make the Reverend Al Sharpton sound like a serious political thinker.

- The title of his latest book (“Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid”) is an implicit comparison of Israel to South Africa's former racist government. In any conflict, Carter automatically favors those who claim to be “dispossessed.” If they've expressed undying hatred for America, so much the better.
- He opposed the first Gulf War, the liberation of Iraq, doing anything meaningful about North Korea's and Iran's mad rush to nuclear weapons, the American embargo on trade with Castro's Cuba, U.S. support for anti-communist insurgents in Nicaragua and the effort to thwart a communist-takeover of El Salvador.
- Carter is sublimely indifferent to the fact that the regimes and movements he favors – North Korea, Cuba, the Palestinian Authority – invariably persecute Christians .

Now, Carter and Clinton have trained their sights on the Southern Baptist Convention. Why? Because the SBC's policies are true to Scripture. It opposes abortion, gay marriage, cultural degeneration, anti-family policies and government expansion in the name of compassion.

The New Baptist Whatever is designed to undercut the Southern Baptists. Once it's up and running, henceforth and forevermore, whenever the media is looking for “Baptists” to

endorse the left's latest social lunacy, they will turn to the Carter/Clinton Baptists for the desired response.

There's also the hope of capturing a greater share of religious voters (not the Democrats' most reliable constituency), by convincing the more gullible among them that authentic Christianity is reflected in the pronouncements of Barack Obama.

It's coincidental that the "Celebration of A New Baptist Covenant" conference will come approximately nine months before the next presidential election – an election in which Hillary just announced her candidacy. (New York's junior senator has hired a consultant to advise her on reaching out to religious voters – surely, another coincidence.)

By the way, there's nothing wrong with the image of Southern Baptists.

A Zogby International poll shows most adults have a favorable opinion of the SBC, on par with their views of Catholics and United Methodists. Carter may do photo-ops with Habitat for Humanity, but the Southern Baptists take the Biblical injunction to feed the poor seriously.

Last year, Southern Baptists distributed millions to combat world hunger, and served over 5 million meals in the United States alone. In response to Hurricane Katrina, they mobilized more than 1,000 volunteers and 100 mobile Disaster Relief units in the Gulf states – which beats the heck out of donating used underwear.

If that old-time religion has such a bad rep, why are evangelical and charismatic churches growing, while the Old Line, liberal Protestant denominations continue their 30-year decline?

Between 1994 and 2005, the Southern Baptist Convention grew by 7% to 16.5 million members. The Assemblies of God, America's largest Pentecostal church, grew by 20%. The Catholic Church and the Mormons grew by 13% and 24% respectively.

At the same time, the Episcopal Church, United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – jointly, the Democratic Party at prayer -- have all lost members.

The only place conservative denominations have an image problem is in the tortured psyche of Jimmy Carter and other religious leftists.

In a November 15, 2006 interview with CNBC's Tim Russert, Carter compared conservative Christians to al-Qaeda and the Saudis.

All are “fundamentalist,” which is to say “authoritarian males who consider themselves to be superior to others,” who believe “they are right and that anyone who contradicts them is ignorant and possibly evil” (so unlike the left, whose six-year refrain has been – Bush is evil; Bush is stupid), “who are often angry and sometimes resort to verbal and even physical abuse against those who interfere with the implementation of their agenda” (so unlike the campus left, whose modus operandi is shouting down and assaulting conservative speakers) and who “have an overwhelming commitment to subjugate women.”

The latter deserves elaboration. In his book, “Our Endangered Values” (the one before his current masterpiece, comparing Zionists to Nazis), Carter repeats his favorite calumny of the Southern Baptists, that they “keep women in their place.”

And this, the Sage at Plains informs us, tacitly supports the subjugation of women in the Muslim world: “Women are greatly abused in many countries in the world, and the alleviation of their plight is made less likely by the mandated subservience of women by *Christian fundamentalists*.”

In other words, the Baptist belief in gender differences and opposition to abortion is comparable to female genital mutilation and chadors in Prophet-land.

And not just Southern Baptists get the treatment in Carter’s little gem of a book. Of the late Pope John Paul II, Carter squeaks, “I disagreed with him on the perpetuation of the subservience of woman.”

There you have it – no women priests is morally equivalent to societies where women are stoned to death on suspicion of having sex outside marriage.

On the other hand, apparently Carter thinks the conduct of Clinton, his colleague in the New Baptist Covenant project– serial adultery over the course of decades, sexual harassment, fondling, groping and (in the case of Juanita Broddrick) credible allegations of rape – does not make it more difficult to address the abuse of women in many countries in the world.

The Carter/Clinton scam should be seen as part of the establishment’s on-going war on real Christianity -- their motto: If you can’t demonize them (a la Chris Hedges “American Fascists”) or marginalize them (as “fundamentalists”), co-opt or subvert them.”

Ronald Reagan’s words to Carter, in the second presidential debate of 1980, come to mind here: “Well, there you go again.”

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