

FAMILY BULLETIN ALERT

Faith, Freedom & Citizenship Class

April 2, 2006

Kempsville Presbyterian Church

The views expressed herein are the views of the Editor, Vernon Fix. FBA on the Web at <http://hrcc.exis.net>

FAMILY

"As we spread freedom around the world, I think there is concern, judging from much of what we see going on at home, that we're losing a sense of what the pillars are that hold our own free society together. If we're losing our compass at home, can we really spread the word abroad? This is a subject blacks know well. It's why the marriage issue struck as responsive chord as it did in this community. We know from what we have seen in our own communities that when core traditional values collapse, when the integrity of families collapses, when life becomes cheap, when property has no meaning, there is no freedom." —Star Parker in the FEDERALIST

LIBERTY

"Since October 2001, approximately three hundred Americans have been killed and another eight hundred have been wounded in Afghanistan. The overthrow of the Taliban was about more than denying a base of operations to al-Qa'ida—it was also about liberating the people of Afghanistan from a brutal theocracy. All of this makes recent news from Kabul all the more ironic—and outrageous. Abdul Rahman is on trial for his life in a Kabul court. His crime? Converting to Christianity... While the Taliban no longer rules the country, conversion from Islam to another religion, called apostasy, is still punishable by death. The prosecutor offered to drop the charges if Rahman converted back to Islam, but Rahman refused... The irony is inescapable: This is the country that we rid of the Taliban because of its religious oppression. This is the country in which we have spent at least \$70 billion to establish a free democratic government. This is the country whose freedom cost us three hundred American lives and eight hundred casualties. And this is the country that is preparing to execute a man for becoming a Christian after he witnessed other Christians caring for his countrymen. Is this the fruit of democracy? Is this why we have shed American blood and invested American treasure to set a people free? What have we accomplished for overthrowing the Taliban? This is the kind of thing we would expect from the Taliban, not from President Karzai and his freely elected democratic government." —Chuck Colson in the Federalist.

SOCIALISM EXAMINED

"Enough generations of socialist policies have now passed for us to judge their effects. They are bleak. Socialism undermines the character of a nation and of its citizens. In simpler words, socialism makes people worse... Socialism teaches its citizens to expect everything, even if they contribute nothing. Socialism teaches its citizens that they have a plethora of rights and few corresponding obligations—except to be taxed. And that is why the citizens of less socialist—and more religious—America give more charity per capita and per income than do citizens of socialist countries. That is why Americans volunteer time for the needy so much more than citizens of socialist countries do.

That is why citizens of conservative states in America give more charity than citizens of liberal states do. The more Left one identifies oneself on the political spectrum, the more that person is likely to believe that the state, not fellow citizens, should take care of the poor and the needy. Under socialism, one is not only liberated from having to take care of oneself; one is also liberated from having to take care of others. The state will take care of me and of everybody else... The socialist idea sounded altruistic to those who began it, and it sounds altruistic to the naive who believe in it today. In practice, however, it creates self-centered individuals and a narcissistic society. So while it may have begun as a way to help others, it has come to mean a way of evading responsibility for oneself and for others." —Dennis Prager

Enough Is Enough

"Working at a convenience store is one of the more dangerous jobs in America. In fact, four times as many store clerks are killed on the job as firefighters," write John Stossel and Frank Mastropolo. "Crime is down in America, but there is still an average of 100 convenience store robberies every day. Some clerks like Eric Piva are getting fed up." - *ABC News*

Safe! - For Now

Abdul Rahman, the Afghan Christian that we've been following for the last week, is reportedly safely out of Afghanistan. Charges against Rahman were dropped over the weekend, not because he was found innocent of the charges of converting to Christianity from Islam, but because of a technicality. The prosecutor said there was a lack of evidence in the case. There is both good news and bad news in these reports. The good news is that Abdul will not be beheaded in Afghanistan for being a Christian. This would not have happened without the attentiveness of the Bush Administration to religious freedom concerns. Both the President and Secretary of State Rice made very strong statements regarding Rahman and the bigger issue of religious freedom. That is the bad news; the resolution of Rahman's case does not resolve the threat to other Christian converts in Afghanistan. Compass Direct, a California-based advocacy group for persecuted Christians, reports that at least two other Afghan Christians have been arrested. One was reported to have been severely beaten. This is the daily reality inside the Muslim world. Americans have a special reason to decry such outrages in Afghanistan and Iraq. Our soldiers have fought and died to bring freedom to these peoples. While we celebrate Abdul's release there remains much work for this Administration to do. Freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq must mean religious freedom, too. Otherwise, our efforts there will ultimately be futile. From FRC.

"GET THE U.S. OUT OF THE U.N."

Families Leaving San Francisco

Just last week, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom deplored the exodus of families with children from his beautiful city. Children are the future, he said then. Over the weekend, my friend Ron Luce brought lots of young people to the City by the Bay. "Sound the *Battle Cry for a Generation*," Ron told teens who rallied for the Lord. But San Francisco's openly gay Supervisor Tom Ammiano had no words of welcome for the 25,000 youngsters. He authored a Board resolution that *condemned* the youth rally as "anti-choice," and "anti-gay," and one designed to "negatively influence the politics of America's most tolerant and progressive city." Supervisor Ammiano last week wrote a resolution attacking William Cardinal Levada, the city's former Catholic Archbishop. Here he's denouncing Evangelical teens. You've had a busy week attacking Christians, Supervisor Ammiano! Despite this, *USA Today* published a column yesterday taking us to task for Justice Sunday III. There's no "war on Christians," the columnist said. He went on to say that Christians in America are hardly being thrown to the lions. There is reason we want to address the growing hostility now - we are not in favor of waiting to do something until the lions are full grown. From FRC.

THE ARMED CITIZEN

Police say three men broke into a couple's residence with baseball bats and a gun in search of prescription drugs, but all they left with was a lesson from an armed citizen. Two of the men allegedly ordered the couple and their visiting family members to the floor while a third suspect stole the medications. Meanwhile, a family member in another room heard the commotion and armed himself with a firearm. He entered the room and fired several shots at the intruder who was holding the victim's relatives at gunpoint, hitting him once in the torso. Two men fled in a car and were apprehended by police. The wounded man was found collapsed in the street. The trio faces charges of home invasion, robbery and kidnapping. "They were very threatening to the family," said St. Johns County Sheriff David Shoar. "[The man who was shot] had the gun to the wife's head." (*The St. Augustine Record*, St. Augustine, FL, 11/05/05).

Gitmo "detainees"

"War is war, and it has never been the case that when you captured a combatant you have to give them a jury trial in your civil courts. Give me a break." —Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia

German Scientists May Have Found Ethical Source of Pluripotent Stem Cells

By Mark Adams in C-FAM.

Scientists in Germany have discovered another possible source for embryonic-like stem cells that can be obtained without destroying a human embryonic life. Researchers found that stem cells taken from the testes of mice have many of the

characteristics of embryonic stem cells. The scientists were able to take those stem cells and turn them into heart, brain and skin cells and successfully inject them back into mice.

Opponents of embryo destructive stem cell research have long said that if scientists are truly determined and resolved to do so, they can find a way to ethically obtain embryonic-like stem cells, also known as pluripotent stem cells. In May the President's Council on Bioethics released a lengthy report on alternative sources for pluripotent stem cells.

Like much of the research in the field of stem cells, these findings are preliminary and the *nature.com* report quoted an English scientist who urged caution in response to the study. "There needs to be further research before we really get excited about it," said Chris Higgins, director of the Medical Research Council's Clinical Sciences Centre at Imperial College in London.

Comment: This means we don't have to destroy all those embryonic cells and human life. Ed.

Senate Mulls Video-Game Restrictions

from staff reports CITIZEN-ALERTS

Subcommittee hears from victims of those steeped in violent play.

States are passing laws to restrict the sale of violent video games to young people, but the courts are striking them down. That's why the U.S. Senate is getting involved, asking those affected by video-game-related violence to share their stories.

But Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., who chairs a Judiciary Committee subcommittee considering the issue, said legislation is a long way off.

One of those who testified before Brownback's subcommittee was Steve Strickland, who told senators how a teenager "executed" his brother and two fellow police officers.

"They were not just shot," he said. "All three received a bullet to the head after they were on the floor. Devin Moore (the shooter) practiced on this game hour after hour to kill our loved ones. It made him a more effective killer."

Bob Hoose, who writes about gaming violence for *Focus on the Family's Plugged In* magazine, said the sad truth is Americans have grown accustomed to such games.

Since 2001, four states and two cities have passed laws restricting minors' access to violent video games, but the laws have been struck down by federal courts. Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis., said that's wise.

"As in so many areas," he said, "Congress must be careful to consider the constitutional questions related to any attempt to address violence in video games."

Brownback agreed the Senate must tread carefully, but added lawmakers can certainly do something.

"The First Amendment guarantees the right to free speech," he said. "What too many in the media industry fail to realize is that this right is not without limits, particularly when it comes to minors."

Comment: Write to our Senators and ask them to support laws to restrict violent games. Our kids and grandkids will thank you some day. Ed.

Sen. Warner, 441-3079 and Senator Allen at 518-1674. Congresswoman Drake – 497-6859.
Cong. Randy Forbes 382-0080. Cong. Robert "Bobby" Scott - 380-1000