

THE MOVEMENT TO DESTROY THE FAMILY

By Jeff Calkins

May 1980 Plain Truth Magazine

You would be shocked to learn what is being done right now to destroy the family unit.

Are you aware that the family under deliberate assault by some of the highest and most influential elements of our society?

Are you aware of the role of government in the steady, sustained attack on the family as we have traditionally known it?

The assault on the family is deliberate. The attack is not an accident. It is held together by a whole body of prejudices. These prejudices reflect an animosity toward the laws of God.

They emphasize sexual license over God-given restraints. Sexual equality over God-given distinctions and roles. Family "democracy" over the parental authority which God created. And alternatives to the nuclear family as God ordained it.

Four Crucial Areas

Of recent date, these prejudices have reared their head in four crucial areas. First, some social activists and commentators are proposing a new definition of the family—a definition that would allow for all sorts of permissiveness and sexual license. Second, the same kind of people are pushing the idea that human civil government — not parents — should have the responsibility for children. Third, in the legal arena, there is a concerted movement to downgrade the family unit, and in particular, to give children legal rights against their parents.

Finally, there is an effort on the part of officials high in governments to push antifamily prosexual license ideas.

The New Permissive Definition of the Family

An influential element of society, mostly intellectuals and feminists, are pushing an idea of family that includes almost any form of cohabitation.

Lois A. Lund, dean of the College of Human Ecology at Michigan State University, offers this new definition of the family: "Two or more persons who share resources, share responsibilities for decisions, share values and goals and have commitment to one another over time."

And Betty Friedan, the archfeminist "spokesperson," offers a similar definition: "Family is people who are living together with deep commitment and mutual needs and sharing."

An even more liberal definition was offered by a 1976 panel representing one large Protestant body: "A relationship community of more than one person."

Words like commitment, sharing and mutual may have nice, warm cozy rings to them, but they do not hide the truth that these definitions include any number of antifamily and nonfamily relationships.

Thus, two or three or five or ten homosexuals living together could qualify as a "family" under the new definitions of family. So would any reasonably long term "shacking-up," between unmarried heterosexuals. Even affinity groups (say five computer enthusiasts who share the same house) could qualify as a family.

The new definition of family leads to absurd results. It insidiously implies that, to use the language God uses, fornication, adultery, homosexuality and vice all can be dignified with the label "family" if there is sufficient "mutuality" and "sharing." About the only kind of "living together" that the definitions don't call a family would be cohabitation with animals!

To these human definitions God thunders: "Woe to them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20).

But what is God's definition of a family? The nucleus of a family is a marriage between a man and a woman. Heterosexual marriage is the minimum requirement for a family, based on the revelation that God gave to the first human beings after the creation of mankind: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5).

A family will normally include children (see Psalm 127:3-5), and may include relatives, such as grandparents, aunts or uncles. (Consider that the patriarch Jacob's family, as described in Genesis chapters 37-46, included a grandfather, married children and grandchildren, all living as one family) Nevertheless the structural core of the family is heterosexual marriage.

This is the biblical test for family. It corresponds with the traditional family of the Western world.

The Inhuman Wedge

The grossly over-broad definitions of "family" are not the only insidious attack on the family as it was constituted by God.

A far more frightening-chilling development is the attempt to drive a wedge between parents and children. The means by which the wedge is driven is the assertion that human government owns your children.

God asserts that children are His gift (Psalm 127:3). God puts responsibility for proper child rearing squarely on the parents (Deuteronomy 6:7, Proverbs 22:6). A parent is, while not an absolute owner of a child, God's trustee who has the God-given right to care for and train the child as God's steward.

But a different idea is gaining influence today. The idea is government owns your child. The reason behind the idea is that social planners-people who consider it their business to remake society according to what they think is good-will be unable to bring about a "just" or "equal" society unless government is able to control child rearing.

Mark the following frightening words: "... the fact that children are raised in families means there is no equality. In order to raise children with equality we must take them away from families and communally raise them" (emphasis ours).

The statement was made by Mary Jo Baine, assistant professor of education at Wellesley College.

The sentiment is echoed by top government bureaucrats in the United States. "Children do not belong to parents," says Edward Zigler, director of the U.S. Government Office of Child Development.

The 1972 Minneapolis Declaration of Feminism, as you would expect, follows the antifamily party line: "... With the destruction of the nuclear family, children must be seen as the responsibility of the entire society, rather than the individual." (Evidently, the Minnesota feminists don't even recognize the existence of parents, only that of society and individuals).

Even more chilling is the fact that such jackboot antifamily sentiments are occasionally found among judges in our society. Judge Lisa Richette of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, reportedly said: "If there is a least detrimental alternative, remove the child and don't worry about the right of the parents. The child belongs to society. The parents were only biological producers."

(Evidently, Judge Richette has never read the decision of the American Supreme Court made in 1925 before the recent attack on the family, which directly contradicts her sentiments. "The child," said the Supreme Court in one of its greatest moments, "is not the mere creature of the state" (*Pierce v. Society of Sisters*).

When you read of the statements of people such as Professor Baine, Mr. Zigler or Judge Richette, you cannot help but be reminded of a book that showed penetrating insight into the modern world. It is George Orwell's 1984.

The book prophesies a horrible, nightmarish future for mankind. Life will be a vast prison-human government will be in control of everything. There will be no freedom. There will be no individuality, and the family will be or made the servant of the state.

The following passage from 1984 practically describes to a tee the kind of world advocated by Ms. Baine, Mr. Zigler and Judge Richette: "Nearly all children nowadays were horrible. What was worst of all was by means of such organizations as the Spies they were systematically turned into ungovernable little savages, and yet this produced in them no tendency whatever to rebel against the discipline of the Party. On the contrary, they adored the Party and everything connected with it."

In George Orwell's nightmare world of 1984, children will be allowed to remain with parents, but the human state will claim their loyalties. Children will certainly "not belong to their parents." They will belong to "Big Brother" (the government). In fact, in Mr. Orwell's prophetic novel, children are encouraged to spy on, turn in and terrorize their parents!

Compare author Orwell's prophecy with the equally prophetic words of Jesus Christ, describing the time before the return of Christ: "... the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death" (Matthew 10:21).

More Abominations

According to the Public Interest, a scholarly journal espousing a generally profamily bias, research has shown that traditionally most of the legal institutions in the Western world presumed as their basis the family as God made it. Thus the common law recognized husband and wife as "one flesh" just as Jesus said (Matthew 19:6).

But the laws are changing. The old common law "one flesh" rule has been abolished. New court rulings even seem almost designed to further weaken the cohesiveness and unity of the family.

Thus, the U.S. Supreme Court has bent over backwards to give a woman the right to abort a child even against the right of that child's father to let that child live! The U.S. Supreme Court has held that, at least in abortion cases, only the woman's "right" has any legal importance. In effect, the Court has said that there is no family unit when it comes to abortion decisions (*Planned Parenthood v. Danforth*).

The Court has further weakened the family unit by declaring that a teenage girl who wants an abortion owes no obedience to her own father and mother. A teenager,

says the Court, has the right to get an abortion without even having to tell her parents. It is as if her parents do not exist (Baird v. Bellotti).

The trend is not confined to the United States. In Britain the position on teenage abortions is very similar and children's rights are much her aided. In Sweden, parents have absolutely no right to spank their children.

Professor Ulla Jacobssen of Stockholm University wants to inhibit parents' God-given right to fulfill Deuteronomy 6:7, which puts on parents the duty of proper religious instruction of children.

Says the Bible: "And thou shalt teach them [the Bible laws] diligently unto thy children" (Deuteronomy 6:7).

Says Professor Jacobssen: "Parents should never force their children to take part in demonstrations, to join in religious communion."

And in West Germany, a whole new legal code has gone into effect concerning "children's rights." According to the Neue Ruhr Zeitung, "The new legislation empowers the court of chancery to take action when it considers that the child's rights are being directly threatened... This new legislation will make it essential for authoritarian parents to rethink their attitudes."

Of course "authoritarian" can mean any parents who desire to rear their child in -a religious heritage in which "sin" means something more than "not caring enough"!

The problem with the children's rights movement is that it is aimed at undermining parental authority. All the "rights" that are vested in children are rights against or claims on parents! Such rights can only be enforced by an outside authority in competition with parents, namely, the courts.

As political commentator Michael Sobran notes, "By conferring on children so-called rights, the state actually alters the structure of the family." Professor Frank Sanders, who teaches law at Harvard Law School, says this about the child's rights movement: "We are coming closer to interfering in the traditional, functioning family... We're going to make being a parent tougher and tougher. We're going to have to explain our actions to the courts. The ultimate absurdity would be if my son, who gets mad at going to bed at 10:30, goes to court and asks for a later bedtime. This is a trend one needs to worry about."

The child's rights movement is aimed at changing families from being cohesive units to being loose alliances between individuals, each armed with a full armament of rights against the others. Such an idea may preserve freedom in society at large, where freedom is important. But in the family, freedom is not as important as sharing, cooperation and mutual sacrifice.

In the family, children's rights can only come at the expense of parents' responsibility. The enforcement of such rights means substantial outside interference in the home.

As Mr. Sobran puts it, "So-called children's rights mean, in practice, increased state power over parents." Just like 1984.

The Higher Circles

The movement to destroy the family has not only infected the courts and the bureaucracy. It has also infected the American White House.

President Carter has established the White House Conference on Families (WHCF), the purpose of which is to "strengthen the family." However, the official guidelines for the WHCF allow for any definition of "family."

Moreover, the President has appointed people to be in charge of the WHCF who do not believe in the family as God made it! One presidential appointee to the National Advisory Committee to the WHCF, Richard Neuhaus, sums up the tone of

this conference, which is supposed to strengthen the family: "We have no intention of glorifying the bourgeois family. Foster parents, lesbians and gays, liberated families or whatever-all can do the job as long as they provide children the loving and permanent structure the traditional families have typically provided...."

"No intention of glorifying the bourgeois [middle class] family!"

What Mr. Neuhaus is saying is that the people in charge of the WHCF have no intention of strengthening the family whose structural core is heterosexual marriage. What he is saying is that the White House is prepared to promote a society in which many different kinds of human cohabitation, "alternative life-styles," "living together," "adult communes" and other trendy nonsense run rampant!

Another presidential appointee to the National Advisory Committee, Carolyn Shaw Bell, once wrote a Newsweek article entitled, "Let's Get Rid of Families." She was not using sarcasm.

In fact, of the 41 members of the National Advisory Committee, only one, a Mormon, is consistently profamily as God made it. On the other hand, feminists, social workers and liberal political groups are well represented.

The tone of the WHCF is already clear. According to the Religious News Service, at one assembly held under WHCF auspices in New York, "The group made a clear aggressive pursuit of a new definition of family and passed a platform of gay and lesbian rights."

Significantly, an unofficial group working closely with the official WHCF is the "Coalition for the White House Conference." Its membership includes the National Gay Task Force!

Why Family Vital

The family, writes Mr. Sobran, "is the last stronghold of freedom." The family is not the lowest level of the government administrative bureaucracy. It is, rather the institution set up by God for the rearing of children and general spiritual upbuilding of man and woman.

The family is a buffer between the government and the individual. The family as God made it commands its own love and loyalty.

No wonder, in 1984, one of the purposes of the totalitarian state was "to prevent men and women from forming loyalties which it might not be able to control."

Like God, the family is a source of human loyalty that has a stronger claim than that of the government or society. Those who desire to enslave people in the name of "society," or "the people," must first destroy the family. Because of the family, people are different, unequal, individual, unique. If you are an egotistical megalomaniac who desires to remold all of society according to your own utopian schemes, you will want to destroy the family, which will inevitably stand in your way.

God Himself is a Family and His ultimate purpose for man is to bring man into that Family. By destroying the family, men become farther removed in their ability to understand God's glorious divine purpose.

The Immediate Future

There is not a lot of good news this side of God's world tomorrow. The trends detailed in this article are among the reasons why the following biblical prophecy was directed at our modern age: "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be... disobedient to parents..." (II Timothy 3:1-2).

Together with Christ's prophecy about children "rising up" against their own parents-which is so true, in a time of government takeover of children, child's rights

and new definitions of family, the future for the family-the family as God made it does not look good short term.

The world has forgotten God. It also seems unaware of the god of this world-that the whole world is deceived! How? By blindly allowing Satan to lead the world into his false ways.

This conspiracy against the God ordained family structure is Satan inspired.

But the family-based on heterosexual marriage-will win in the end. The turning point is drawing closer. The beauty of God's master plan is that God will allow things to go only so far before He sends Jesus Christ back to stop the monstrous attempts of man to create a brave new world where everyone grows up in a government dormitory.

At an early point in world history, God intervened to stop human planners from bringing to fruition their own grandiose schemes. This was at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:4-9).

God will do it again. He will not allow His cherished institution created by Him to teach man about the God-plane relationship to disappear from human society.