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EDITORIAL

The task for Christians in an age of disenlightenment

The U.S. Supreme Court’s ground-breaking decision on June 24 to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, and to rule that there is no constitutional right to abortion, is not only tremendous news for the future prospects of the unborn in the U.S., but also an enormous source of encouragement for pro-lifers, not only in America, but across the world.

This victory for life is reminiscent of a major turning-point for the Allies during World War II. In November 1942, General Bernard Montgomery defeated the hitherto invincible Germans in the second battle of El Alamein in North Africa. Britain’s wartime prime minister Winston Churchill observed after this victory: “This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.”

Ever since the U.S. Supreme Court passed *Roe v Wade* in 1973, the lives of more than 60 million American unborn babies have been terminated. We should be grateful for the court’s new ruling, but at the same time we must acknowledge that pro-lifers in American and elsewhere will need to fight — and win — many, many battles in order to establish an enduring culture of life. The defeat of *Roe v. Wade* is only “the end of the beginning”.

Across much of the Western world, and especially in Australia, a preponderance of politicians and law-makers still seem hell-bent on enacting laws which threaten the unborn, the elderly and the terminally ill, and simultaneously curb religious conscience rights and free speech.

Sexual orientation and gender ideology (SOGI) has allowed state groomers to destroy childhood innocence. British commentator Peter Hitchens once famously said of modern sex education:

“If a man in your street started trying to talk to your small children about their genitals, you’d call the police and he’d be in the segregation wing in prison and on the sex offenders’ register before you could say ‘paedophile’.

“But if the Government say they want to talk dirty to primary school pupils and groom the young for sex, this is praised as enlightened social policy” (*Mail on Sunday*, UK, October 25, 2008).

Since Mr Hitchens wrote those words, the bizarre transgender cult has made vast inroads into the school syllabus and even many public libraries where “Drag Queen Story Time” for infants is now *de rigueur*.

Worse by far is the fact that many members of the medical profession have been more than willing to cater to the more extreme demands of the transgender lobby. The puberty-blocking medication, Leuprorelin (also known as Lupron), which so many paediatricians have been prepared to prescribe for gender-confused youngsters, is the same medication used to

chemically castrate sex-offenders. And this is allowed to be used on *children!*

Christians in Australia can no longer rely on governments to do the right thing, since our major political parties have been more or less infected by our decaying culture.

Cultural Marxism and “woke” ideology have robbed the young of a proper preparation for adulthood. The social media and smart phones have shortened their attention spans. A biblically and historically illiterate generation is therefore destined within a couple of decades to inherit what’s left of our country’s precious heritage.

How best to describe the mad age in which we live? The late English philosopher, Sir Roger Scruton, coined the term “culture of repudiation”. The late French-American historian Jacques Barzun called it the “age of disenlightenment”.

We may no longer be able to look to our major political parties to represent our interests, but we must not succumb to despair. We must each of us turn again to God and seek His kingdom and His righteousness.

We must re-discover the time-honoured Christian vocation of educating society and set about establishing a Christian culture that celebrates truth, beauty and goodness. For too long we have been content to out-source the education of our children to government experts who seldom share, and are often hostile to, Christian values.

Christian parents, church leaders and other people of goodwill therefore should commit themselves to teaching the young generation what schools and universities are no longer prepared to teach — that is, Christian values, the history of freedom, and the price our forebears have paid in defending civilisation. □

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Laying siege to the institutions

by Christopher F. Rufo

Why do I say that we need to lay siege to our institutions? Because of what has happened to our institutions since the 1960s. The 1960s saw the rise of new and radical ideologies in America that now seem commonplace — ideologies based on ideas like identity politics and cultural revolution.

The leftist dream of a working-class rebellion in America fizzled after the '60s. But the leftist dreamers didn't give up. Abandoning hope of a Russian-style revolution, they settled on a more sophisticated strategy — waging a revolution not of the proletariat, but of the elites, and specifically of the knowledge elites.

It would proceed not by taking over the means of production, but by taking control of education and culture — a strategy that German Marxist Rudi Dutschke, a student activist in the 1960s, called “the long march through the institutions”. This idea is traceable to Italian communist Antonio Gramsci, who wrote in the 1930s of “capturing the culture via infiltration of schools, universities, churches and the media by transforming the consciousness of society”.

This march through our institutions, begun a half-century ago, has now proved largely successful. Over the past two years, I've looked at the U.S. federal bureaucracy, the universities, K-12 schools and big corporations. And what I've found is that the revolutionary ideas of the '60s have been repackaged, repurposed and injected into American life at the institutional level.

Most Americans are shocked to discover this. We've all seen the outrage of parents over the past two years as they learned that their young children were being divided according to their skin colour and deemed oppressed or oppressors in public school classrooms.

The lesson I've drawn from reporting on institutions that promote ideologies such as critical race theory and radical gender theory is that they have been captured at the structural level and can't be reformed from within. So the solution is not a long *counter*-march through the institutions. You can't replace bad directors of diversity, equity and inclusion with good ones. The ideology is baked in. That's why I call for a siege strategy.

This means, first, that you have to be aggressive. You have to fight on terms that you define. In responding to opponents of the Florida bill, for instance, don't argue against “teaching diversity and inclusion”, but against sexualising young children. And don't pull your punches.

We will never win if we play by the rules set by the elites who are undermining our country. We can be polite and lose every battle or we can be impolite and actually deliver results for the great majority of Americans who are fighting for their small businesses, fighting for their jobs, fighting for their families.

Second, you have to mobilise popular support. This requires ripping the veil off of what our institutions are doing through real investigation and reporting so that Americans can make informed choices. We live in an information society, and if we don't get the truth out, we will never gain traction against the narratives being constantly refashioned and pushed by the Left.

Less than two years ago, an infinitesimal number of Americans knew about critical race theory. Through investigation and reporting, we've brought that number up to 75 per cent.

The public now opposes critical race theory by a two-to-one margin, and it is being hounded out of schools and other places. This kind of action is a model for dealing with every ideology and institution that is undermining the public good and America's future.

Remember that institutions don't choose these ideologies democratically — they don't ask people or employees to vote for them. They impose them by fiat, through bureaucratic, not democratic rule. So it isn't surprising that the institutions lose big when we force their agendas into the political arena.

What politician or campaign manager in their right mind would ignore an issue that is supported by a two-to-one margin? So-called conservative politicians who do ignore such issues — or who oppose bringing them up out of a false sense of decorum — aren't on the people's and the country's side.

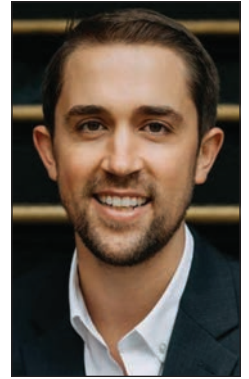
With public institutions like K-12 education, another crucial step is to decentralise them. It is centralisation and bureaucratisation that makes it possible for a minority of activists to take control and impose their ideologies.

Decentralising means reducing federal and state controls in favour of local control — and it ultimately means something like universal school choice, placing power in parents' hands. Too many parents today have no escape mechanism from substandard schools controlled by leftist ideologues. Universal school choice — meaning that public education funding goes directly to parents rather than schools — would fix that.

Conservatives have for too long been resistant to attacking the credibility of our institutions. Trust in institutions is a natural conservative tendency. But conservatives need to stop focusing on abstract concepts and open their eyes. Our institutions are dragging our country in a disastrous direction, actively undermining all that makes America great.

What is needed is to build alternative or parallel institutions and businesses in all areas. Even those of us who are temperamentally predisposed to defence must recognise that offense — laying siege to the institutions — is what is now demanded.

Christopher F. Rufo has directed four acclaimed documentaries, including most recently *America Lost*, which explores life in three “forgotten American cities” — Youngstown, Ohio; Memphis, Tennessee; and Stockton, California. The above article is an excerpt from his essay in the April/May edition of *Imprimis*, a publication of Hillsdale College, Michigan, and is reprinted by permission of the publisher. □



Christopher Rufo

To mobilise popular support requires ripping the veil off of what our institutions are doing through real investigation and reporting.

Babette Francis's Order of Australia

by John Ballantyne, editor

Mrs Babette Avita Francis, founder of Endeavour Forum, was named a Member (AM) of the Order of Australia (General Division) in the Queen's Birthday 2022 Honours List on June 13. The citation for her honour reads: "For significant service to the community through a range of roles".

Her roles, both in Australia and overseas, are too numerous to be summarised adequately in a single article. She has been a writer, broadcaster and advocate for the unborn, and spoken in many forums, including sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) at the United Nations.

Babette is originally from India, where she was born in 1930 and lived for the first 22 years of her life. She completed Honours in a Bachelor of Science degree, specialising in microbiology and chemistry. She vividly remembers the painful 1947 Partition of the sub-continent into India and Pakistan.

In 1953, she met her future husband, Charles Francis (1924–2009), when, in Bombay, she boarded the ship on which he was sailing from Australia to England. Charles was then a returned serviceman and an up-and-coming barrister, who would later become a QC and sit as MP in Victoria's state parliament. In 2003, he too was honoured with the Order of Australia.

Within a fortnight of meeting, Babette and Charles were engaged to be married. The wedding took place not long afterwards at the Brompton Oratory in London.

Because of the then White Australia policy and Babette's Indian birth, Charles could only initially obtain a five-year entry visa into Australia for his new bride, who has now been here for almost 70 years. Charles and Babette later named their Toorak family home *Stratheden* after the P&O liner on which they met.

Charles and Babette raised eight children (four girls and four boys). Today, Babette has more than 20 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. In January this year, one of her daughters, Professor Prue Francis, received the Order of Australia in the Australia Day Honours for her pioneering work in oncology and medical education.

As well as raising a family, Babette worked as a part-time freelance writer and for 10 years hosted a program on Radio Australia entitled "Australian Diary", which was broadcast to Asia and the South Pacific. Her articles have appeared in Australia's *Quadrant* magazine, *News Weekly*, *AD 2000*, *Family World News*, *Fidelity*, Melbourne's *Herald Sun*, and America's conservative online journal, *Public Discourse*.

In 1979, Babette founded Endeavour Forum, Inc. (originally called Women Who Want to be Women), a pro-family, pro-life non-government organisation (NGO) with special consultative status with the Economic & Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC). For decades Endeavour Forum has held annual NGO "Parallel Events" on pro-life issues at the UN in New York, until March this year, when, along with other pro-life NGOs, it was barred from further participation in sessions of the CSW.

Babette remarked at the time: "I look back with pride on Endeavour Forum's long history of involvement at the United Nations, and I am outraged at this assault on our rights and our legacy."

Over the years Endeavour Forum has hosted many distinguished guest speakers, including churchmen such as

Cardinal George Pell, Bishop Peter Elliott, the Rev. Dr Mark Durie and American pro-life advocate Pastor John Anderson; important Australian identities such as John Howard, Tony Abbott, Tim Fischer, Peter Costello, Kevin Andrews, Eric Abetz, Matt Canavan, Denise Cameron, Anne Lastman, Bill Muehlenberg, Mrs Jan Kronberg, Cory Bernardi and Prof. Augusto Zimmermann; and, from overseas, Dr Allan Carlson and Don Feder (of the World Congress of Families), Steven Mosher (of the Population Research Institute), David and Linda Schlueter (law lecturers at St Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas), Nikolas Nikas and Dorinda Bordlee (of the Bioethics Defense Fund in the USA), Rebecca Hagelin (American social commentator), Denise Mountenay (founder of Canada Silent No More, and a key figure in Together for Life Ministries), and Alex Schadenberg (international head of the Canadian-based Euthanasia Prevention Coalition).

It is noteworthy that Babette's guest speakers have included people of the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faiths.

Babette herself has been a regular speaker at America's Eagle Forum, Human Life International world conferences in the USA and Canada, and the World Congress of Families in Prague and Geneva. In October 1995 she was invited by the Pontifical Council for the Family to chair the English language group's discussion at the Third World Congress of Pro-Life Movements, held in Rome. She is also the Australian representative of the Coalition on Abortion/Breast Cancer.

Her international awards include receiving the U.S. Eagle Forum's "Homemaker of the Year" for Australia (1988), the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation's "Motherhood Award for 1991", and the World Congress of Families Lifetime Achievement Award in 2013.

Many women have acknowledged that, but for Babette, they would never have got involved in public life. One of her oldest friends, Mrs Margaret Butts, recalls the occasion she and the late Mrs Prue Oldham first met Babette. She said: "We went along to hear her speak at a meeting, and we were so enthralled at what she was doing. And, because she had eight children, we thought, 'Well, gosh, she needs help.' So we decided we'd go and ask her if we could do her shopping and maybe do some work for her around the house.

"No, she didn't want that! She wanted some others to be with her. And so, before we knew it, we were ordered to go overseas and take her place after two weeks that she had been there.

"We were really young bunnies. But it's just been a wonderful experience for me. It's opened the whole world of other meetings."



Babette Francis (right) with her long-time friend and role-model, the late Phyllis Schlafly, founder of the Eagle Forum, at its HQ in St Louis, Missouri, 2016

U.S. Supreme Court win for the unborn

by Bill Muehlenberg

June 24, 2022 will go down in American history as Independence Day — freedom for Americans, at least for the unborn. After some 60 to 70 million American unborn babies were killed since the U.S. Supreme Court passed *Roe v Wade* in 1973, now we have the very real hope that far fewer babies will be killed in this way. That has been terrific news. Let me say a bit more about this ground-breaking decision.

First, as to the actual decision, the full title is this: *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. This had to do with an abortion-provider challenging the state of Mississippi's 2018 law that banned abortion after 15 weeks (with some exceptions). Thomas Dobbs is the state health officer.

What the June 24 *Dobbs* decision did was uphold the Mississippi law, and declared that there is no constitutional right to abortion, thus overturning two previous U.S. Supreme Court decisions: the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* case and the 1992 *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* case.

Dobbs has simply returned things to the way they always were: the citizens of 50 U.S. states — through their elected representatives — will decide how abortion is done in each state. No longer will a handful of unelected justices make those decisions for the American people.

This is, in other words, all about democracy in action — quite the opposite of what the raving pro-aborts are saying, claiming it is an assault on democracy. Lefties are even saying this is a “rigged” court! Translation: If the conservatives win in a ruling, it is rigged; if the lefties win in a ruling, it is “democracy in action”.

Abortion policy is now going to be determined by the American people as it should be, especially given that this is all about important life-and-death decisions.

And let me clarify some confusion as to the decision. Some media reports spoke of a 6-3 decision, while others spoke of a 5-4 decision. So which is it? Well, it was sort of a 5-1-3 decision. Those in the majority were Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett. Donald Trump, during his term as U.S. president, of course appointed the last three judges.

Those in the minority — and who wrote a dissenting opinion — were Stephen Breyer, Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor. John Roberts in fact wrote a separate concurring opinion in which he basically agreed with the majority but argued for “a more measured course”.

Speaking of who voted how, we can of course dismiss the foolish claim made by the radicals and pro-aborts that a bunch of old white men make these abortion decisions. Um, while none of the justices are spring chickens (Amy Coney Barrett is the youngest at age 50), we had both a Black (Thomas) and a woman (Coney Barrett) voting to overturn *Roe*. And if the feminists do not like men voting on such matters, will they dismiss the vote of Breyer who voted their way?

And given all the hate the conservative justices have been getting over the past month or two, including the attempted

murder of Justice Kavanaugh at his own home, this was a very courageous decision indeed.

Robert P. George, a Princeton law professor, put it this way: “Please take a moment to appreciate the courage of the justices who overturned *Roe v Wade*. In doing what they did, they took their lives into their hands.

“Each knew that for the rest of his or her life he or she will have a target on his or her back. They and their families have witnessed the ugly scenes in front of their homes. They’ve heard the abusive chants. They know that an armed man came to the home of Justice Kavanaugh intending to murder him.

“Life for the justices will never return to normal. There is no going back. The campaign of intimidation against them failed, but they will never again be safe. They know that. They knew it when they decided the case and authorised the release of the decision. It took guts.”

And with the pro-aborts taking to the streets and threatening even more violence and bloodshed, all pro-lifers will need the same sort of courage. Indeed, this is not just flesh and blood we battle against, but the very forces of spiritual darkness.

The ironic thing is this: the biggest and baddest protests have been in leftist states like New York, Illinois and California where abortion will never be made illegal any time soon. Moreover, a majority of Americans prefer a ban on abortion after 15 weeks. So we have already seen some states move towards life.

Bans on abortion went ahead after the decision in states such as Oklahoma, South Dakota, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana and Missouri. Around a dozen U.S. states had such “trigger laws” in place, awaiting the U.S. Supreme Court decision. And places like South Dakota are putting the penalties for violating the new laws on doctors providing the abortions, NOT on the women seeking to get them.

But the pro-aborts are enraged nonetheless. Just imagine people being so irate that they are happy to riot and tear our cities down all because it will be easier and safer for babies to be born. What sort of people think and act this way? And, even more bizarre, most of these angry protesters just a month previously could not tell you what a woman is!

It is also quite amazing to hear all the angry pro-aborts whining: “What about poor people?” What about them? Does being poor give you a right to kill babies? Besides, poor folks will be able to kill babies now just as easily as they could during the past 50 years.

As my friend Mark Rabich put it: “‘Do not murder’ is not qualified by economic status or the availability of free stuff. Some people don’t realise they openly broadcast their selfishness. Sex is not a licence to murder.”



Robert George

The pro-aborts are so irate that they are happy to riot and tear our cities down all because it will be easier and safer for babies to be born.

One final thought: none of this would have happened were it not for Donald Trump becoming the 45th president of the USA. His appointment of three pro-life justices (and hundreds of conservative lower-court judges) made all the difference. With *Roe* aborted, Trump will go down in history as America's most pro-life president. "God made the decision" is what Trump said when asked if he played a role in the decision with his three conservative Supreme Court appointees.

So, where to now?

As I said in a previous piece on *CultureWatch*, the war is definitely not over. We may have won an important battle, but the fight for life continues. The other side will NOT just roll over and play dead. They will intensify their pro-death crusade, including even more violence and hatred in the public arena. So we must keep on standing up for life.

And, as George Grant put it in on the day of the Supreme Court decision, we must keep standing up for the gospel as well: "The primary conflict in temporal history always has been and always will be the struggle for life by the church against the natural inclinations of all men everywhere. This was the case long before *Roe* and it will be long after, for as long as the Lord tarries.

"So after *Roe*, what's our job now? It is the same as always: we must be gospel advocates of all that is right and good and true. We must care for the poor, the hurting, and the marginalised. We must speak the truth in love. We must remind our magistrates of their responsibilities. We must disciple. We must be unflinching in the proclamation of the good news, which changes everything.

Our intercessions and labours must be unceasing.

"Our local crisis pregnancy centres need our support like never before. Our pulpits need to ring out with practical, pastoral, and prophetic urgency like never before. And we need to remember God's glorious promise like never before: 'Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.' (Isaiah 43:19)."

And two concluding quotes from pro-life Christians on the June 24 U.S. Supreme Court decision can be shared here: Eric Metaxas said this: "Unconstitutional *Roe* is overturned! Praise the Lord!!! Anyone who thinks prayer doesn't work — or that America's best days are over — needs to think again."

And pro-life activist Scott Klusendorf has said: "Tomorrow: If your church says absolutely nothing about the monumental striking of *Roe* and *Casey*, you are most likely in a church that cares little about applying biblical ethics and a biblical worldview to its Christian witness."

Quite so. In fact, if you belong in a church which is silent on this issue or, worse yet, is condemning the *Dobbs* decision, you clearly are in the wrong church. You need to get out now. Life really is that important.

Bill Muehlenberg is an American-born Christian apologist, ethicist and cultural commentator, who lives in Melbourne. The above book review is reprinted, with his permission, from his website, *CultureWatch*, at: BillMuehlenberg.com



Why the Morrison government fell

by John Morrissey

As millions of Australians watched the Liberal seats falling like ninepins that evening on May 21, it was not the defeat but its scale which was the surprise, after predictions of a close result. The Coalition had trailed in the polls, two-party preferred, for two years after narrow squeaks in 2016 and 2019 and surely could not expect another miracle.

Labor's hollow victory, with a record low base vote, was partly the result of an electorate which had tired of listening to Scott Morrison, as it had John Howard in 2007; but there were many factors contributing to what became a rout.

To many traditional Liberal voters it seemed that the party had deserted its base, by rolling over to compromise on progressive policies, especially on climate change and energy. This had also alienated some who had been allies in 2019, and splintered the centre-right vote. Along with the relentless character assassination that Morrison had suffered for over two years and the rise of supposed independents, the perception of a tired and flawed government took hold.

From the time of Morrison's ill-fated family holiday late in 2019, coinciding with serious bushfires, he has been unfairly beset with accusations of dereliction of duty, regardless of where responsibility lay, and members of his ministry have also been targeted, with the departure of some becoming prize scalps for their opponents in the parliament and the media.

As journalist Chris Kenny of *The Australian* put it, "Morrison made his mistakes but was torn down largely by concocted attacks about events beyond his control — bushfires, floods

or even alleged sexual assaults." To make matters worse, Attorney-General Christian Porter and Education Minister Alan Tudge were lost to his front bench by the same agency of #MeToo, which had already brought down other prominent men, regardless of "no proven guilt".

To a government which had protected the nation from the pandemic with the early closing of external borders (against the advice of the World Health Organisation), saved a million Australians from unemployment with JobKeeper, and provided a raft of supports for business, this rejection must have seemed like the ingratitude of a feckless electorate.

Yet the formation of a National Cabinet was a singular error. There ensued a breakdown of Australia's federation, with state premiers and their chief health officers going their own way, and the Commonwealth seeming powerless to do anything but pick up the bill.

Although the Labor opposition seemed sidelined, its approval of government action to address the pandemic, with only occasional sniping, allowed it to remain a small target. Meanwhile, Labor premiers used their constitutional power over health matters to make disproportionate responses to the pandemic, which damaged livelihoods and infringed on the liberties of citizens in a myriad of ways. The Morrison



Scott Morrison

government was to bear the blame for neither standing up for the Australian people by curbing these excesses, especially the closing of state borders, nor explaining the division of powers under the Constitution which tied their hands.

In 2019 it had been the northern Queensland vote, and swings in seats where workers in mining and energy had put their trust in the Coalition, which had saved the government. Clive Palmer had spent over \$80m in what was essentially a negative media campaign against Labor and the Greens, and Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party had also implicitly supported the Coalition. With the advent of a professed Evangelical in PM Scott Morrison, Christians also had high hopes for legislation to protect freedom of religion from a raft of anti-discrimination laws enacted under the Gillard Labor government.

After the Coalition's failure to delete Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act in 2014-15 and during the same-sex marriage campaign, it became evident that human rights legislation threatened the freedom of faith-based schools and other institutions to operate according to their respective ethos.

When in early 2022 the Coalition's much delayed and quite restrained legislation to protect religious freedom was withdrawn on account of opposition in the Senate and dissent among Liberal MPs, many felt a sense of betrayal after the undertaking by the Coalition government to keep faith with believers. In the event, the Australian Christian Lobby encouraged its supporters to vote against five Liberals who opposed the Bill, which may have contributed to them all losing their seats.

However, the key event occurred in October 2021, when the Liberal party room decided to embrace the target of net zero emissions by 2050, without resiling from its Paris commitment to a reduction of 28 per cent by 2030. This was in response to global financial pressures and what appeared to be an electoral imperative.

Thus the Prime Minister, who as Treasurer had brandished a lump of coal in Parliament in 2017, was seen to have surrendered to climate change activism when he committed Australia to this benchmark while attending the UN Climate Change conference (COP26) held in Glasgow. In spite of this late conversion, he was depicted as a pariah in much of the local media while attending this hypocritical gathering, with its hundreds of private jets and other extravagances. Labor then neatly trumped this concession by announcing a goal of 43 per cent emissions cuts by 2030.

While the National Party held all its seats, the Liberals certainly suffered from the revenge of Clive Palmer, Craig Kelly (marginalised by the party for his views on Covid treatment) and probably Pauline Hanson as well. The billionaire Palmer spent even more than in 2019 on a media storm, damning the Liberals along with Labor and the Greens. His United Australia Party gained very little from its campaign, but received nearly 800,000 votes across the nation, without any strong preference flow to the Liberals, unlike the Greens whose disciplined preferences allowed Anthony Albanese's Labor Party to govern in its own right.

After starting 2022 with two adverse redistributions and the WA Premier Mark McGowan factor rendering Coalition losses in that state unavoidable, the Morrison government struck further trouble in NSW.

It started with Liberal Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells questioning Scott Morrison's truthfulness. Then the polarisation between the party's conservatives and so-called moderates

became obvious. It transpired that the selection of Liberal candidates had been delayed in up to 12 seats, so that, with only weeks to go, candidates could not be elected by the membership, as decided at an earlier state conference.

The "moderates" had succeeded in this; but Morrison forestalled their plans by installing a number of his own candidates, giving rise to allegations of "captain's picks". Then we had the glaring spectre of disunity displayed when "moderate" NSW Deputy Premier Matt Kean attacked one of these picks, endorsed Liberal candidate Katherine Deves, for her principled defence of women athletes against unfair competition from transgender "women" (i.e., biological men). The damage done to the party by this factionalism has more recently been highlighted on ABC television (*Four Corners*, July 4).

An interest rate rise in the final weeks of the election campaign did not help either. But for the Morrison government, the "teal" phenomenon of a handful of apparently cleanskin professional women, posing as independents, was the final straw, as it deprived the Liberals of a number of blue-ribbon seats.

Well resourced by Simon Holmes à Court's Climate 200 fund and local activists, these women received heavy support from female voters, who embraced their slogans on trust, in lieu of actual policies, and responded to the misogynist

image of Scott Morrison cultivated by his opponents. We should be thankful that this group does not hold the balance of power which it sought in the House of Representatives.

In all, the fall of the Morrison government was a result of the implacable opposition of those who believed that they had been cheated of victory in 2019, the distractions of the pandemic which cost them their strongest suit in better economic management, and their failure to hold the line on issues such as climate change, energy and religious freedom.

Furthermore, throughout the election campaign the Coalition leaders merely stood on their record of achievement relative to other nations, which fell on deaf ears, no matter how unjust this seems. In contrast, the Labor opposition claimed to have a vision, conveyed by the assurance that "We have a plan ...", improbable as their published policies appeared to thinking Australians.

After his underwhelming performance during the campaign, Anthony Albanese appears to be growing into the role of Prime Minister in his appearances overseas, at least through the lens of the local media, which are giving the new government a honeymoon period seldom enjoyed by the Coalition.

At home the story is different, with a downturn in the economy, while Labor charges ahead with its climate-change policies, imposing contradictory demands on base-load energy-providers and ignoring signals from overseas that it is time for a rethink.

John Morrissey is a retired secondary school teacher who has taught in government, independent and Catholic schools. He lives in the Melbourne suburb of Hawthorn.



**Simon Holmes
à Court**

***To many traditional
Liberal voters it seemed
that the party had
deserted its base.***





The paramount importance of election integrity

In the 2020 U.S. presidential election, 158 million votes were cast. More than 100 million of these votes were cast before Election Day by early voting or mail ballot.

This represented the highest turnout as a percentage of eligible voters since 1900. Covid-19 had led many state legislatures, courts or election officials to greatly loosen the rules for early voting and mail-in votes, in some cases in violation of express provisions in state constitutions or statutes.

Reports of chaotic vote counting and vote fraud led President Trump and his allies to charge that the election was stolen.

Whatever the full merits of the charge of a “stolen election”, the election revealed serious problems, which some states have sought to address in subsequent legislation. Republicans last year pushed through 33 laws creating new voting rules in 19 states, while other states have bills pending to improve ballot security.

What happened in the 2020 election

State legislatures — some Republican-controlled — courts and election officials expanded mail-in voting in 2020, even though there were ample reasons to worry about this expansion. As early as 2005, a bipartisan commission co-chaired by former President Jimmy Carter found absentee balloting constituted the biggest source of potential fraud in American elections.

The commission warned that large-scale absentee balloting, ballot harvesting and unsupervised drop boxes all presented opportunities for voter fraud. Furthermore, the commission report worried about privately funded ballot management; the need for cross-listing of registration rolls to prevent deceased persons or non-residents from voting; and a range of other potential problems.

These warnings proved all too prescient in the 2020 presidential election. In their rush to safeguard public health, state legislatures or election officials pushed through measures for unrestricted mail-in voting, unsupervised drop-boxes, and little oversight for ballot harvesting by third parties. Most of these states had little experience with widespread mail-in voting, and their staffs were unprepared to handle the volume of ballots received. Charges of fraud and a stolen election were inevitable in this environment.

Both the Republican and Democratic parties mobilised voters for unprecedented turnout in the 2020 election. Access to voting by mail encouraged people to vote, but the results of the vote raised concerns about the counting process and the integrity of the votes.

A recent analysis by economist John R. Lott compared Democratic-dominated areas to Republican-dominated areas over the past two presidential elections. Looking at six swing states, he determined that voter turnout in Republican areas increased from 2016 to 2020 while voter turnout among Democrats dropped — *except in places where voter fraud was alleged*. That accounted for 255,000 “excess” votes for Biden above what would be expected.

In Nevada, 42,000 people voted more than once, 1,500 dead people voted, and 19,000 did not have a Nevada residence.

Other 2020 election problems identified by Lott’s paper, which has been accepted for publication in the peer-reviewed journal *Public Choice*, include the following:

- Georgia, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin did not match signatures on the outer mail-in envelopes to the official registration records. Some states, including Pennsylvania, accepted ballots that were not enclosed in outer envelopes. These acts are in violation of the laws in many states and make it impossible to verify a vote’s legitimacy.
- Trump’s absentee ballot share in the Fulton County, Georgia precincts was depressed compared to adjoining precincts. The largest estimate of depressed Trump votes was more than Biden’s margin in Georgia.
- In Pennsylvania and other states, numerous voters trying to vote in person were told they had already voted absentee, suggesting that someone else had voted using their name.
- In Nevada, 42,000 people voted more than once, 1,500 dead people voted, and 19,000 did not have a Nevada residence.
- In Wisconsin 28,395 people voted without identification.
- In Georgia, Nevada and Pennsylvania, the rejection of improper absentee ballots in 2020 was only a small fraction of those rejected in 2016.

Lott stated that his intent was not to contest the 2020 election, but to “point out that we have a real problem that needs to be dealt with. Americans must have confidence in future elections.” The most serious problem was the 2020 changes made to absentee



**Facebook CEO
Mark Zuckerberg**

and mail-in voting procedures in many states.

Big Tech's involvement in the 2020 election raised other issues. Silicon Valley felt regretfully complicit in Trump's 2016 election to the White House. At a Google company-wide meeting shortly following that election, Kent Walker, Google's senior vice president for global affairs, said that Trump's victory was a result of "xenophobia, hatred, and a desire for answers that may or may not be there".

At Facebook, there was a similar response: Trump must be stopped from re-election. In December 2016, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg adopted a new policy of combatting "fake news" by paying media outlets to "fact-check" news on its site.

An internal document circulated called "The Good Censor" that declared, "Free speech has become a social, economic, and political weapon." Twitter and Facebook, through their "fact checkers", began banning users who posted what was considered misinformation or inflammatory comments about public health (Covid-19) or political/social issues. Flagrant censorship came when Big Tech banned the *New York Post*, which had broken the story on Hunter Biden's notorious abandoned laptop computer in October 2020.

More direct Big Tech influence on the 2020 election came through Mark Zuckerberg and his wife, Priscilla. The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, an organisation led by Priscilla, donated more than \$400 million to influence the 2020 election in favour of the Democrats. "Zuck Bucks" were funnelled through the Center for Tech and Civic Life and the Center for Election Innovation and Research to fund voter outreach efforts — which turned out to be largely in Democratic districts.

The progressive response

The progressive response to the 2020 election has been to double down, as evidenced by H.R. 1, a bill that passed the U.S. House of Representatives last year, but was filibustered in the Senate.

H.R. 1 is an effort to arrogate the power of states to regulate voter registration and the voting process. The bill would force states to implement early voting and automatic voter registration including same-day and online registration. Same-day registration prevents election officials from verifying the accuracy of voter registration information or voter eligibility.

The bill mandates that states automatically register individuals from state databases including state motor vehicle, correction and welfare offices, as well as from federal agency databases such as the Federal Bureau of Prisons. The bill even requires states to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to register to vote.

H.R. 1 would require states to count ballots cast by voters outside of their assigned precincts; to allow absentee ballots for any reason; and to accept absentee ballots received up to 10 days after Election Day. It bans requirements for witness signature or notarisation for absentee ballots and prevents states from using the U.S. Postal Service's national change-of-address system to detect multiple state registrations by an individual. In addition,

states would be compelled to restore the ability of felons to vote.

As radical and constitutionally suspect as this bill appears, it still does not fully satisfy the far-left wing of the Democratic Party, which wants to mandate universal mail-in voting and bar states from passing certain voter-identification requirements.

Ballot security in Georgia

Following the disputed 2020 presidential election, a number of states, most notably Georgia, Texas and Arizona, passed legislation to improve election integrity, often while encouraging voter participation.

The Georgia law, signed by Governor Brian Kemp in the spring of 2021, addresses many of the issues raised in the 2020 presidential election. Georgia's 98-page election act placed new restrictions on absentee voting, while expanding early voting opportunities.

The act establishes an identification requirement for absentee voting, sets strict rules for drop boxes, and requires more oversight by state and local election officials. Specifically, the act requires at least 17 days of early voting, including two Saturdays of early voting, with a county option of offering voting on Sundays as well. Counties must operate early voting from at least 9 am until 5 pm, and may choose to expand the hours to 7 am until 7 pm.

Voters requesting and returning ballots by mail must submit a driver's license or state ID number. If a voter does not have a state driver's license or state ID number, a photocopy of a different form of identification including the last four digits of the voter's Social Security number may be submitted. Ballot applications may be requested up to 78 days before an election, which shortens

the previous 180-day request period. State government officials are forbidden to send unsolicited ballot request forms to voters. The law mandates at least one drop box per county, but restricts where the box may be placed and accessed.

To ensure quicker election returns, the law requires counties to report returns from absentee ballots by 5 pm the day after Election Day. Certification of results must occur within six days, rather than the previous ten days. Food and drink distribution to voters by non-poll workers is prohibited, but "self-service" water stands are allowed. Voting opportunity is expanded by requiring precincts with more than 2,000 voters to add more precincts or add more resources to reduce waiting times.

Reform in Texas

In September 2021 Texas Governor Greg Abbott signed an election integrity bill. The Republican-led legislature approved this bill during a special session, after Democrats had blocked a previous version of the measure by fleeing the state for weeks to deny the House a quorum to conduct business.

The act codifies into law that poll watchers should be able to "see or hear" any activity happening in a polling place. Poll watchers are required under the law to take online training and have to affirm under oath, "I will not disrupt the voting process or harass voters in the discharge of my duties."

The law requires voter ID for people casting mail ballots, rather than just signature verification. Much like the Georgia law, this requirement allows a wide variety of forms of identification, including driver's licenses, passports, government documents that show the voter's name and address, a utility bill, paycheck,

***Virtually all of Europe
and almost all
developed countries
require in-person
voters to use photo
ID to vote.***

bank statement, birth certificate, the last four digits of Social Security numbers, and other forms of photo ID. Moreover, the voter may affirm that he has not been issued any of the above documents and he may still vote.

The Texas law bars “ballot harvesting”, in which partisan operatives gather dozens to thousands of mail ballots from voters. Individuals providing voting assistance to seven or more people are required to fill out a form.

Drive-through voting is outlawed. Hours for polling places are limited to no earlier than 6 am and no later than 10 pm. The law prohibits sending out mail ballots to those who did not request them. However, the law permits candidates and political parties to distribute mail ballot applications to people who did not request one.

New requirements are placed on those assisting people with disabilities. The person providing assistance may only help with reading the ballot to the voter and, if asked, may mark the ballot. The state is charged with making a monthly review to keep non-citizens off the voter rolls.

Like the Georgia act, the Texas act was assailed by Democrats who charged that it was another attempt by Republicans to suppress the minority vote. James Slattery, an attorney with the progressive Texas Civil Rights Project, said the act was an attack on “voters of colour”.

Slattery’s caricature of the legislation expressed the perennial progressive response to election reform: It’s all about racism under the guise of election integrity.

In a speech given in Atlanta in January, President Biden pumped up the racist charge by again attacking the new Georgia voting legislation as support for segregation. (See the May 2021 *Mindszenty Report* for earlier denunciations of the Georgia law by Biden and others.)

The president went over the top by asking Georgia legislators if they wanted to be on “the side of Dr King or George Wallace? Do you want to be on the side of John Lewis or Bull Connor? Do you want to be on the side of Abraham Lincoln or Jefferson Davis?”

Overheated rhetoric

Biden went on to claim that the new Georgia law “actually makes it illegal — think of this — I mean, it’s 2020, and now ’22, going into that election — it makes it illegal to bring your neighbours, your fellow voters food or water while they wait in line”. The absurdity of this claim was quickly pointed out by Republicans. The law prohibits outside groups or people from

distributing anything that could be seen as a gift to voters, and is far from unique to Georgia.

Failed presidential candidate Hillary Clinton upped the race rhetoric by writing an op-ed for *Democracy Docket* in July 2021, warning that Republican-led election integrity laws in Georgia, Florida and Arizona represent a “clear attempt to move away from a pluralistic, multi-racial democracy and toward white supremacist authoritarianism”.

She blamed the Supreme Court and Trump’s nominees to the Court as being “more hostile to voting rights today than when it gutted a crucial provision of the Voting Rights Act in 2013”. She went on to say that white supremacists and conspiracy theorists were emboldened by Trump and “the international movement against liberal democracy”.

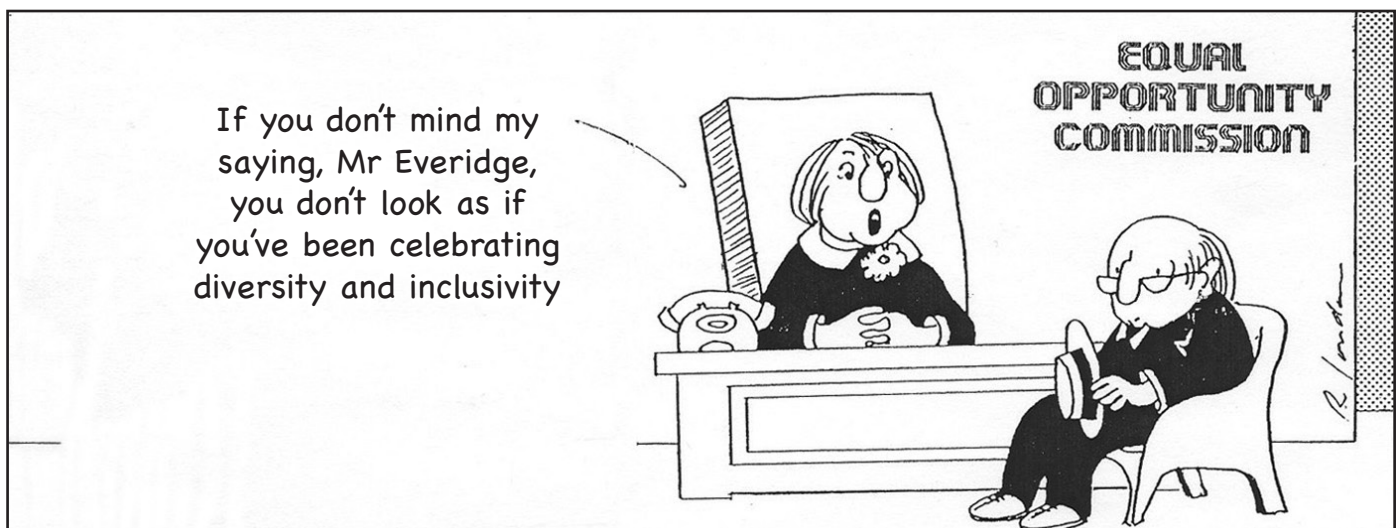
Such rhetoric set the stage for the Department of Justice under Biden’s Attorney General Merrick Garland to file suit against Georgia’s Election Integrity Act. Other state voting laws came under similar attack by progressives. Meanwhile, a March 2021 presidential executive order entitled “Promoting Access to Voting” is making its way through the federal agencies with secretive planning and dubious constitutional authority.

Demagoguery and reality

Progressives who charge that proper voter identification is racist do a disservice to the truth and the nation. Requiring proper identification to vote is necessary for maintaining trust in the democratic process. John Lott has pointed out that virtually all of Europe and almost all developed countries require in-person voters to use photo ID to vote; and the vast majority ban absentee ballots for people living in their country. The fierce debate over voter ID in the U.S. political arena and the courts, with frequent attempts to equate photo ID requirements with racist motives, manifests partisanship at its worst, an attempt to gin up base voters.

This debate continues. In the end, common sense should prevail. Average Americans understand that fair elections are the foundation of American democracy. Ballot security should not be a partisan issue. Voting is a precious gift, not found in every country. Like all things precious, our votes need to be protected.

This article is published by the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation in St Louis, Missouri, USA. The original article, complete with references and footnotes, is available from the foundation’s website: www.mindszenty.org. The *Mindszenty Report* is not copyrighted, and readers are invited to forward copies to their local bishops, priests and pastors.



C.S. Lewis's fantasy is our reality

by William Kilpatrick

The British writer foresaw a few things that weren't on Orwell's radar.

George Orwell's prophetic novel *1984* has often been invoked for its ability to predict the increasingly arbitrary and tyrannical nature of our present society.

But three years before the publication of *1984*, another dystopian novel which was in some respects more prescient than Orwell's appeared in English bookstores.

Like *1984*, only on a smaller scale, C.S. Lewis's *That Hideous Strength* describes a descent into tyranny that bears an eerie resemblance to our current situation. However, Lewis foresaw a few things that weren't on Orwell's radar.

When Orwell reviewed *That Hideous Strength* shortly after its publication in 1945, he warned that "we are within sight of a time when such [monstrous] dreams will be realisable". But Orwell also criticised Lewis for bringing "supernatural elements" into the story because "they offend the average reader's sense of probability".

But if there are supernatural forces at work in the world, wouldn't one be remiss not to mention it? The dystopian society depicted in *1984* was based partly on Nazi Germany and partly on Soviet communism. Yet, both regimes took a deep interest in the supernatural. The Nazis hoped to replace Christianity with an occult religion centred on Hitler as saviour. And the Leninists and Stalinists wished to stamp out belief in God altogether. They slaughtered tens of thousands of priests and nuns in the process.

Many Christians and some agnostics, as well, view our present culture wars in similar terms — as a conflict between those who believe in God and those who think that humans can shape their own destiny without any reference to God or his laws.

In bringing in the supernatural, Lewis may have been more prescient than Orwell. The members of the power-hungry National Institute for Co-ordinated Experiments (N.I.C.E.) are now a very recognisable type. Increasing numbers of our social elite seem to think that science has replaced God. And like the leaders of the N.I.C.E. Institute, many of our leaders think that science has all the answers to life's problems — including the problem of crime and the problem of death.

Indeed, for the top brass at N.I.C.E., belief in progress through science has become a religion — to the point that they are willing to call down supernatural forces that they do not understand to aid them with scientific experiments that they do not understand. Tellingly, Hingest, the only really accomplished scientist in the Institute is murdered by his colleagues for fear that he will betray their plans.

At first, their plans go well. Before long, N.I.C.E. controls Bracton College, then the University of Edgestow, and then, the whole town. Nothing, it seems, can stop them from seizing control of all of England.

Then things begin to go awry. Because of their continued communication with the Macrobes — highly intelligent beings from outer space — the N.I.C.E. leaders begin to lose control of their powers of concentration. At one point, Professor Frost — one of the "inner circle" — finds himself unable to speak: "Nothing but nonsense syllables would occur to his mind." Later on, at the long-awaited "victory" banquet at Belbury Hall, things fall apart.

The director of the Institute gets up to speak, but his speech soon turns to gibberish. Unable to help themselves, people in the audience begin to laugh. But old Jules is only a puppet — a figurehead. And he is expendable. John Wither, the Deputy Director, and the real head of N.I.C. E. muses to himself that it might be advantageous if Jules makes a fool of himself: "Jules was in many respects a nuisance, and this might be as good an opportunity as any other for ending his career."

So, Wither who is also old, gets up, firmly forces the smaller man back into his seat, and takes over the podium. Then he begins to speak:

"Tidies and fogleman — I sheel foor that we all — er — most steeply rebut the defensible, though, I trust, lavatory Aspasia which gleams to have selected our redeemed inspector this deceiving. It would — ah — be shark, very shark, from anyone's debenture..."

And then the whole room is thrown into pandemonium: hysterical laughter, a babble of voices, anger, fistfights — and worse. Before the night is over, the forces of N.I.C.E are either dead or scattered.

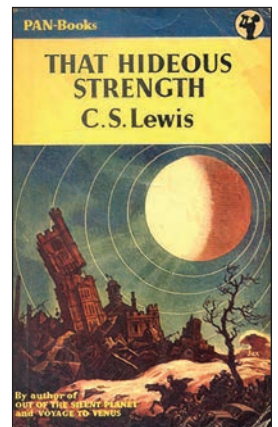
Reading the book again in light of current events, it struck me that Wither's speech is an almost perfect send-up of President Joe Biden's confused speech, and the pretensions of his administration. Yet the fact that the scene was written about the same year that Biden was born, suggests, *pace* Orwell, an almost supernatural prescience.

That Hideous Strength is, in part, a retelling of the story of the Tower of Babel — the story of men going beyond the proper boundaries God has set. In the Bible story and in Lewis's novel, the confusion of tongues is both a punishment and a judgment — a judgment which reveals the absolute futility of man's attempt to remake his nature and become godlike.

Could Joe Biden's obvious confusion, his lapses and his gaffes also be a heaven-sent sign meant to alert us to the emptiness of the promises of the ideological movement which he represents? At times, Biden doesn't seem to have a clue. On one level that can be just a sign of ageing. On another level, God may be trying to tell us something.

Here's what I said a year ago about Biden's confusion: "Is it possible that Joe Biden's deterioration is a sign from God — a sign of what happens to a society that ignores the reality God has created and insists on creating its own?"

Before continuing in this vein, let me assure you that I am not the kind of person who sees signs everywhere. In fact, I'm agnostic about most supposed signs. If someone tells me that the design on the Oval Office drapes is actually a verse from the Koran, my first instinct is to say "Oh, come on!" And if I'm told that when a politician crosses his fingers in a certain way, he's actually sending a signal to fellow white supremacists, I tend to be doubtful.



On the other hand, President Biden's stumbling speech is a clear sign that his mind is confused. No one tries to deny it any more. And the Democrats now realise it's well-past time to replace him.

The situation is reminiscent of the banquet scene when Wither realises that Jules must be replaced. But, as we've seen, that doesn't work out too well. Wither's speech is just as confusing as is Jules'. His mind is just as vacant.

Which brings up an obvious question: Who will replace Biden? The first in line is a woman, Vice-President Kamala Harris, whose ability to conceptualise doesn't seem to rise above the level of "the more we get together, the happier we'll be" (repeated ad nauseam). Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, the next in line, is an 82-year-old who slurs her words and fills in the gaps in her sentences with frenzied gesticulations. Meanwhile, the daily spokesperson for the White House is Karine Jean-Pierre — an individual who seems forever surprised to discover that the press is interested in other things besides the fact that she is a black lesbian woman.

Not only has God sent us a sign. It appears as though he is sending us signs in abundance.

And they are very obvious signs. Jesus said that "an evil and adulterous generation" would be given only one sign. But how about a stupid and gullible generation such as the one we live in? It might take a multitude of signs to wake us up.

Well, it looks like we're getting them. There's the bumbling Biden sign, the hapless Harris sign and the clueless Karine sign. But there's more. There's the "trans friendly" sign on the bathroom door, the "shout out your abortion" sign at the pro-choice demonstration, and the "woman athlete of the year" certificate which was awarded this year to a male athlete. These are signs that are hard to miss.

And, of course, there's the sign of the drag queen. As you may have noticed, drag queens are suddenly all the rage. Libraries have drag queen story hours for kids. U.S. military bases bring in drag queens to entertain the troops; and in Miami, a restaurant recently offered a "kid's brunch" which included a sexually-explicit drag show. Meanwhile, *Salon.com* published an op-ed explaining "How exposing your kids to drag performances can be a good thing".

Lewis anticipated this woke weirdness in *That Hideous Strength*. The top people at the N.I.C.E. Institute are all rather strange ... sort of like the top people in the Biden administration.

Wither, the Deputy Director of N.I.C.E., is lost in a mental fog. He talks in high-sounding but thought-deadening clichés. Frost, who is second in command to Wither, is as cold-hearted as his name suggest. Dr. Filostrato, an Italian scientist and a eunuch has a dirt phobia. He wants to improve the human race by getting rid of breeding, birth and death. He hopes to create a sterile and artificial world to replace the fertile and organic world which he loathes. His experiments centre around what we would now call "transhumanism".

And then there is "Fairy" Hardcastle — the sadistic head of the N.I.C.E. police force. "Fairy" is a 'butch' lesbian who enjoys beating up people and torturing young women.

Lewis, in short, was well aware of the perverted side of human nature. He would not have been surprised by a culture (like our own) which believes that exposing children to drag performance "can be a good thing". Nor would he have been surprised to

learn that well-funded doctors in England and America would one day perform ghastly surgeries in order to turn boys into girls and girls into boys.



Christian author C.S. Lewis

Still, Lewis's odd cast of characters (which includes a re-animated Merlin) might, as Orwell suggested, "offend the average reader's sense of probability". Yes, but probabilities need to be recalculated from time to time. For example, what's the probability that the next president of the United States will be a member of a billionaire family that is investing its fortune in promoting transgender ideology and transhumanism? The answer? Probably higher than you think.

Jay Robert "J.B." Pritzker, the current governor of Illinois is frequently mentioned as a prime candidate for president. And yes, his wealthy extended family — one of the richest in America according to *Forbes* — is deeply involved in engineering what one journalist called "a new way to be human". Given their interest in re-engineering the human race along more efficient lines, one might think of them as a family of Filostratos.

J.B. and his wife Mary Kathryn ("M.K.") have developed a long-term strategy for the J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Foundation which will fund research on early childhood education as well as research on transgenderism and gender nonconformity. In addition, as Governor, Pritzker has issued executive orders and signed education bills which put a heavy emphasis on encouraging children to explore their gender identity. Meanwhile J.B.'s cousin, Jennifer Pritzker (formerly known as James), founded the Tawani Foundation to provide funding for numerous universities, institutes and medical centres which pursue sexual diversity studies or are involved in providing "gender affirmative care" (i.e., hormone treatments and/or surgery) for the gender confused.

A retired Colonel for the Illinois Army National Guard, James ... er, Jennifer also created the first chair of transgender studies at the University of Victoria in the Canadian province of British Columbia. At the transgender studies annual conference in 2016, the featured speaker was Martine Rothblatt, a "renowned transhumanist", who once stated: "We are making God as we are implementing technology that is ever more all-knowing, ever-present, all-powerful, and beneficent."

"Beneficent?" Well, that's okay then. Sometimes the "all-knowing" powers get out of hand. But with all that money, the Pritzker's must know what they're doing. Rumor has it that the next family project will be a giant skyscraper in the form of a ziggurat. The project is said to be code-named B.A.B.E.L II. When asked for a comment, the family spokesman would only say that the project is "sop tecret and — er — striply confusensual".

William Kilpatrick is the author of *Christianity, Islam, and Atheism: The Struggle for the Soul of the West* (2015) and other books about culture and religion. The above article is reprinted, with the author's permission, from *FrontPageMag* (August 17, 2022). For more on William Kilpatrick's work and writings, visit his website, TurningPointProject.com. □

The top people at the National Institute for Co-ordinated Experiments (N.I.C.E.) are like the top people in the Biden administration.

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BOOK SHELF

China's deadly Covid-19 cover-up exposed

Book review by John Morrissey

What Really Happened in Wuhan, by Sharri Markson
(Sydney: HarperCollins, 2021). Paperback: 422 pages.
ISBN: 978-1460760925

We Sky News viewers who in 2021 watched Sharri Markson's one-hour TV special on the origins of Covid-19 in Wuhan were left in no doubt as to its being a human-manipulated virus which had escaped from a laboratory in that city. We also were made aware of the cover-up initiated by the Chinese government, and the motives of those in the West who had supported their blatant lies. What is remarkable is the depth of research in Markson's imposing book, *What Really Happened in Wuhan*, and the impressive array of expert and informed opinion on which she has been able to draw.

The author begins with earlier clues in 2019 of an impending epidemic, from obscure reports of a mystery SARS-like illness to messages from whistle-blowers in China to their contacts in the U.S. In December Chinese doctors treating early cases, Ai Fen and Li Wenliang, were disciplined for "spreading rumours" and "harming stability". As the cases escalated and the bodies piled up, these voices were "disappeared" by a People's Republic of China (PRC) government which has no scruples, and other health workers were frightened into silence.

China never alerted the World Health Organisation (WHO) or any government about the coronavirus before it was worldwide. In January 2020 newspapers around the world were reporting an outbreak; but China refused offers to help contain it, reporting that it was not contagious, that there was no human-to-human transmission and that it was confined to people who had visited the "wet" market and showed symptoms.

The extent of the death toll was of course not reported: the 3,342 death toll, published when Italy's death count was 21,000 two months later, was used to justify China's brutal lockdown in Wuhan, but convinced no-one receiving reports from contacts on the scene. Perhaps the *Epoch Times* estimate of 21 millions, based on defunct mobile phone accounts, was exaggerated; but it did not deserve the wholesale dismissal which it received in the Australian media.

As for the origin of the pandemic, the circumstantial evidence concerning the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) made questionable all of the Chinese government propaganda and that of fellow-travellers in the West concerning a wet market from day one. This institute boasted the largest collection of viruses in the world, and was the base for "Bat Woman" Shi Zhengli's gain-of-function experiments. Moreover, it had clear links with the People's Liberation Army (PLA), and had been put on notice for apparently lax bio-security. Given that the location of the caves in which the bats associated with the SARS virus are found are nearly 2,000 kms from Wuhan, and that these animals do not feature in the local wet markets, the animal transfer alibi was very tenuous.

Gain-of-function research involves genetically altering an

organ to enhance its purposes. Further support for the virus's WIV origins lies in the institute's likely involvement in biological warfare research. It is significant that the French scientists who had been partners in the establishment of the laboratories had been excluded before 2019, and the author shows that the human transfer denied by the PRC government was a focus of experiments conducted at Wuhan. In spite of the PLA closing access to the institute, heroic Chinese whistleblowers being silenced and websites washed clean, evidence already in the possession of the U.S. State Department revealed the terrifying truth.

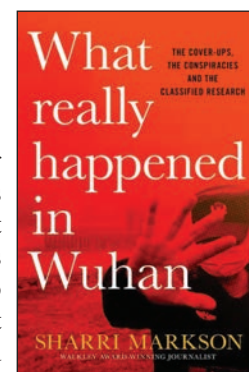
Trump Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's aide, Miles Yu, stumbled across evidence of a Chinese submission to the United Nations Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention in 2011. Topics included "Creation of Man-Made Pathogens", "Population-Specific Genetic Markers" and "Targeted Drug-Delivery Technology Making It Easier to Spread Pathogens", all prone to causing global pandemics, as his report noted.

Yu's work was halted in 2021 when his team was disbanded by the Biden Administration, but research for Markson's book located the original Chinese submission. This acknowledged the dangers of creating these pathogens through gain-of-function research, and their potential for use as biological weapons targeting genetic variations between races. It also claimed that the sequencing of pathogen DNA has helped develop new drugs and vaccines.

Although in 2011 there was mention of the "unforeseeable consequences" for mankind of "accidental mistakes" in laboratories, its subsequent 2016 submission made no mention of compliance issues and even presented Wuhan as a model for biosafety management. As the author comments, if this much was revealed in a public forum, imagine the full extent of this program.

It was the work of Adelaide scientist Nikolai Petrovsky, conducting research for a vaccine against Covid-19, which clinched the case for the pandemic having man-made origins. For background to his discovery, the author explains that for a virus to infect its victim, its spike protein must latch onto the ACE2 receptor on human airway cells, and that SARS-Cov-2 does so 10 to 20 times as tightly as the original SARS spike protein did. These receptors abound in the human airway where droplets enter, and this is why it is so much more infectious.

Using a super computer, Petrovsky uploaded all the genetic sequences for ACE2 of the potential animal hosts (bats, civet cats, monkeys, ferrets, pangolins, etc.) to find that to which the



Adelaide scientist Nikolai Petrovsky understood the implications that this was a man-made virus which had been accidentally released.

new pandemic virus was best suited. Petrovsky had expected that the animal from which the virus had been transmitted would top the list and was unprepared for the result: “The virus spike protein looked like it couldn’t have been better designed to fit the human ACE2”, Petrovsky reported.

The scientist understood the implications that this was a man-made virus which had been accidentally released. This was March 2020 and a lengthy peer-review process followed before final publication of a paper in *Nature Scientific Reports*, June 2021. This paper even canvassed the possibility that the virus was chimeric, resulting from contact between a SAARS bat and a pangolin, but dismissed it, as these animals do not share a habitat. Not even in the Wuhan wet market.

Given what was known early in 2020, Markson asks why international action was so tardy, and looks especially at the WHO and Washington. Her findings are damning for both, and bordering on criminal for the WHO director-general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, and for two high-placed officials, Anthony Fauci MD, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and the Chief Medical Advisor to the U.S. President, and Peter Daszak, a British-born zoologist who was a member of the WHO taskforce sent to China to investigate the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic in China.

Initially, the WHO advised the world against closing external borders, causing a delay which cost countless lives. The complicity of its chief, Dr Tedros, who owed his position to the influence of China among member nations, is easy to recognise. The author tells us that he acceded to the PRC’s demand that the visiting 25 WHO officials in February 2020 focus only on learning how China had (successfully?) responded to the pandemic.

Actually, only three of the delegation were permitted to visit the WIV for two days and were only allowed to speak with their counterparts. Furthermore, China refused to share viral samples and details of the genome with the delegation. It is an irony that in July 2021 Dr Tedros discovered that the decision to set aside the laboratory origins of the virus had been premature, and demanded that China be more transparent, having 18 months earlier praised that nation for its co-operation and transparency.

Washington in an election year was hopelessly conflicted. Wise heads such as Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and the heroic Peter Navarro urged closing the borders against both China and elsewhere, whereas trade officials and those crying racism resisted calls on President Trump to act swiftly and demand the truth from China. An unnamed intelligence officer explained to the author that hatred of Donald Trump and the politics surrounding him was responsible for a refusal to investigate the laboratory origins of the virus and for accusations that he was China-bashing. Yet the evidence is there in the somewhat redacted cables of the intelligence community accessed by Sharri Markson.

In 2020, the image of Anthony Fauci, portrayed in such publications as *The New Yorker*, made him the most trusted figure in America. He was lauded for fighting the pandemic, correcting Donald Trump in public and finally welcoming the incoming Biden administration in 2021. He also resisted calls to shut down the borders, and defended the animal transfer origin of Covid-19, pleading: “It evolved in nature and then jumped species” (*National Geographic*, May 2020).

All the time, however, he had been involved in the diverting of U.S. government medical and even defence funds into research projects at the WIV. His explanation, when called to account in a TV interview, was that research on animal-human

interface transfer was necessary, but that “you don’t want to go to Hoboken, New Jersey, or Fairfax, Virginia”. In other words, Chinese lives are expendable!

Dr Fauci’s colleague, Peter Daszak of the EcoHealth Alliance, is equally responsible for this outrage. He has boasted that Chinese bat research was entirely funded by National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants. EcoHealth Alliance received \$60m in U.S. federal grants alone and, along with other gullible entities, including Australia’s own CSIRO, financed “Bat Woman” Shi Zhengli’s research. Daszak even boasted of being named as co-author of many of her research papers.

In 2016 the Obama administration, alarmed at the dangers lurking in the WIV’s research into deadly viruses — and perhaps its reputedly lax biosecurity — cut off NIH funding. Fauci and Daszak, however, were able to contrive for this to continue for much of the Trump period. It was only in April 2020 that the NIH extramural research assistant-director announced concern at WIV safety standards and suspended funding. This belated action was the basis of Donald Trump’s claim in his interview with Markson that he had stopped it. Again Fauci and Daszak were outraged, claiming that this intervention had not gone through the normal peer-review process.

Overseas, both the media and governments tiptoed around the obvious. The prestigious medical journal, *Lancet*, in February 2020 published a letter from 27 leading scientists, arguing that the virus had its origin in animal transmission. It contained phrases like “strongly condemn conspiracy theories”, yet it transpired that EcoHealth Alliances had been the author of this contention. “Conspiracy” became a favourite word for its chief, Daszak, who used it 97 times in ensuing tweets during the next 12 months. Former MI6 head, Sir Richard Dearlove, described the atmosphere of the time as “suppression of debate”, having been warned off his inquiries by unnamed figures above him in the UK government.

Even in Australia, the resolve of Liberal Senator James Patterson and Andrew Hastie MP to keep an open mind on China was derided by the leftist media. Given the pile-on in the U.S. mainstream media against anything espoused by Donald Trump, and an unlikely visit to Australia by Mike Pompeo, it is likely that the then Morrison government’s principled stand, which so enraged China, resulted from the need for an alternative Five-Eyes member to establish credibility for this charge.

When Markson’s work was published, a reviewer in *The Guardian* (October 9, 2021) dismissed her findings, but had to resort to the opinions of Australian virologists Professor Dominic Dwyer, who had been a member of the compromised first February 2020 visit, and Danielle Anderson, who has worked at the WIV and speaks highly both of Zhengli and the WIV’s professionalism.

Although Sharee Markson admits the remote possibility of animal-to-human transfer of Covid-19, and rejects the likelihood of its having been deliberately leaked by the PLA, the evidence which she advances would convince any right-minded reader. This work is of immense value and we cannot submit to so-called authorities which put their reputations on the line against the evidence.

What Really Happened in Wuhan cites the sources for the propositions in every chapter, but is deficient only in the absence of an index. To absorb the contents of the whole 400 pages of Sharri Markson’s work is challenging, but her succinct final chapter is instructive. I pray that this monumental work will not be submerged in the sink-hole of cancel culture. □

News and views from around the world

How China is taking over Hollywood

In 2020, Chinese ticket sales exceeded ticket sales in the United States, making China the number one box-office market in the world. This huge market share means that Hollywood has begun tailoring its casting, story lines and dialogue to fit Chinese — not American — audiences.

In his 2022 book *Red Carpet: Hollywood, China, and the Global Battle for Cultural Supremacy*, Erich Schwartzel exposes China's current system of censoring American films. Chinese censors routinely ask studios in Hollywood to scrub scripts and finished movies of scenes that might somehow damage China's Communist system. China's de facto veto power over Hollywood's films means that most portrayals of China are, in effect, state-sanctioned propaganda.

By the turn of the century, Hollywood directors and producers had learned not to broach subjects (Tibet, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tiananmen) that offend the Communist Chinese. They had also standardised a lobbying process to get China's approval for its films.

Early in the movie's life cycle, international distributors meet with Chinese film bureau officials. American studios have to satisfy layers of Chinese bureaucrats before a movie hits the market.

Excerpt from Robert Carle, *Public Discourse* (USA), April 3, 2022.

We are sacrificing our children on the altar of trans ideology

For someone purporting to be a physician to perform mastectomies, orchiectomy (i.e., castration) and uterus removal on children, to me at least, seems like something worthy of a prison sentence.

Whatever happened to the doctrine expressed by the ancient language as *primum non nocere* — first, do no harm?

The Hippocratic Oath has been replaced by a delusion: a belief that can be summarised as “by blocking the puberty of children, and then surgically altering them, we are only restoring what is theirs by right. A child's feelings are the final arbiters of their reproductive destiny, and any attempt to contest their gender identity risks increasing their proclivity for suicide”.

Lies. Lies. Lies. Then butchery.

Excerpt from Jordan Peterson, *The Telegraph* (UK), June 16, 2022.

Architects of the sexual revolution were ‘groomers’

Many of the architects of the sexual revolution were not only groomers; they were also child-abusers or supporters of paedophilia. They made their case for the abuse of children openly, and they were embraced by the elites, lionised by the press, and heralded as heroic and courageous thinkers. As the sexualisation of children creeps towards the mainstream once again, we must remember that it was progressives who encouraged this last time around, and conservatives who resisted it — and we must not be afraid to call this what it is.

Excerpt from Jonathon Van Maren, *The European Conservative*, June 17, 2022.

Family life financially penalised

“Gender equality”, is based on the firm belief that women ought to go out and earn wages to be fulfilled and that the raising of the next generation is a second-rate task, best farmed out to paid strangers. It suits the state, because it creates millions of new taxpayers. And it suits big business, because it provides a willing new workforce.

And, of course, it suits the minority of women who pursue exciting high-flying careers, and who can afford good nannies. It is not so great for those who must work in call centres and such places, leaving their young all day in dreary childcare. And it is pretty terrible for the children themselves, in my humble opinion.

If a woman (or a man for that matter) prefers to stay at home to bring up and educate the young, conservatives respect them for it and, at the very least, don't get in their way. But look at how the tax breaks and the social attitudes go, if you want to choose this way of life.

The tax and benefits system, and the attitudes of all parts of the state, will help almost any form of childcare — except the one where a parent stays at home to do it and the family has to cope on a single income.

Excerpt from Peter Hitchens, *The Mail on Sunday* (UK), July 24, 2022.

More dystopian than *The Handmaid's Tale*

The idea that employers will pay female employees expenses to go kill a baby, so she can remain at work as a productive employee, is so much more dystopian than any of *The Handmaid's Tale* fan-fiction.

Excerpt from Aimee Terese, *Twitter*, June 24, 2022. [Her Twitter account was subsequently suspended].

The corruption of U.S. medicine

The post-George Floyd racial reckoning has hit the field of medicine like an earthquake. Medical education, medical research, and standards of competence have been upended by two related hypotheses: that systemic racism is responsible both for racial disparities in the demographics of the medical profession and for racial disparities in health outcomes.

Questioning those hypotheses is professionally suicidal. Vast sums of public and private research funding are being redirected from basic science to political projects aimed at dismantling white supremacy. The result will be declining quality of medical care and a curtailment of scientific progress.

Excerpt from Heather Mac Donald, *City Journal* (New York), Summer 2022.

Arizona introduces universal school-choice funding

“Republicans in particular have called themselves the ‘Parents Party’ all across the nation, but in Arizona, the Republicans just proved it,” said Corey DeAngelis, of School Choice Now, following the passage of a bill in Arizona that expands school choice funding to all 1.1 million K–12 students in the state.

“The only way to truly secure parental rights in education is to fund students directly and empower families to choose. If you really want to be the party of parents, here's the way to do it.”

Excerpt from *Fox Business* (USA), June 27, 2022. □

Vale Mrs Prue Oldham

(October 15, 1934 – March 12, 2022)

As the Endeavour Forum Newsletter went to press in March, we learned of the passing of another hero of the Endeavour Forum story in Mrs Prudence Gillian Oldham (*née* Caudwell), who for decades, and until recently, was Babette Francis's mainstay in much of the organisation.

As treasurer, she kept the ship afloat financially and was the first point of contact for our supporters in Australia. It seems that it takes three of us now to carry out the tasks which she had performed by hand, declaring that it was too late to shift to computers for the meticulous records which she kept of our supporters and generous donors.

In the eulogy delivered by one of her sons after her funeral, we heard of the piles of pink paper which deluged the family home every time that the newsletters for the original Women Who Want to be Women organisation — later to be renamed Endeavour Forum — were collated, addressed and mailed by his mother over so many years.

As one of her successors, the writer of this obituary concurs with her son that she was an unsung hero, who deserved far more credit than she received. Even at the regular Endeavour Forum gatherings to hear prominent speakers and honour recipients of awards, she always chose a backstage role.

Prue died at 87 after a painful illness, during which she nonetheless continued to go about her life, with family and friends, and especially the practice of her Faith and her love of the Latin Mass.



As a child of the 1930s Depression, she was made of sterner stuff than most. Prue and her husband Norman, whom she married in 1954, raised nine children in their home in the Melbourne bayside suburb of Beaumaris, and gave them a real family upbringing, with a house full of music and, of course, encouragement to play sport. She had a lovely singing voice herself and was a fine tennis player, also giving her children unobtrusive support in all of their sporting activities.

In later years she developed a love of travel and was able to indulge in a visit to Lourdes, a major Catholic pilgrimage site in south-west France, and even a trip to Russia for a family wedding. At the small get-together after her funeral Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Church, in the Melbourne suburb of Hampton, a collage of photographs was on display, in which travel was a major theme.

Among other celebrated scenes, a shot of Prue at the Kremlin seemed to take pride of place, and the whole collection spoke of her enthusiasm for faraway places.

Upon hearing the news of Prue's passing, Mrs Tanya O'Brien of Helpers of God's Precious Infants, offered the following tribute: "Prue has been a dedicated Helper who prayed at the monthly vigils year in, year out. May the unborn children, to whom she dedicated her life, sing her praises."

Babette Francis and everyone at Endeavour Forum mourn the loss of a wonderful and generous colleague in Prue, and extend their condolences to Norm and the family.

May she rest in peace. Amen.



St Teresa of Ávila (1515-1582) on the mission of every Christian

**Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes with which He looks
Compassion on this world.**

**Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which He blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are His body.**

The words quoted here are popularly attributed to Saint Teresa of Ávila (1515–1582), who was a Spanish noblewoman called to convent life in the Catholic Church. A Carmelite nun, prominent Spanish mystic, religious reformer, author, theologian of the contemplative life and of mental prayer, she earned the rare distinction of being declared a Doctor of the Church.



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