AMERICA blog
A GREAT NATION DESERVES THE TRUTH

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Far Right Using Pulpit For Politics

by Michael in New York on 8/05/2005 01:05:00 PM

A scary story in USA Today about how the far right continues to organize among evangelical Christians and uses the pulpit for politics -- especially to organize attacks on the freedoms of Americans they don't like. You wouldn't think these fringe radicals could get more organized, but apparently they have only begun to network. And the religious voice on the left? Muted and scattered. Some disturbing details:

> Pastor Russell Johnson paces across the broad stage as he decries the "secular jihadists" who have "hijacked" America, accuses the public schools of neglecting to teach that **Hitler was "an avid evolutionist" and links abortion to children who murder their parents**....

> The Ohio effort isn't unique. Johnson's project -- which he says has signed up more than 900 pastors in Ohio during its first 10 weeks in operation --? has helped spawn the Texas Restoration Project in Bush's home state. The fledging Pennsylvania Pastors' Network has signed up 81 conservative clergy so far. Similar efforts are beginning to percolate elsewhere....

> John Green, a political scientist at the University of Akron, calls the networks a new chapter in an effort to organize conservative clergy that began with the Moral Majority a quarter-century ago, then faltered....

> "We as **Christians need to take a stand** as to what our beliefs are," Linda Stoffer, 50, a bank loan officer, says after the service in Canton. **Her top concerns are gay marriage and abortion**. "And life issues," adds her husband, Dave, 54, who works in a cabinet shop. "Like, what was her name? Terri Schiavo."

> "We sit back and let it happen," Jean Wuske, 77, says. "We need to be more vocal --? **let God back into places he should be, like in the schools....**"

> Tax-exempt churches and organizations can't endorse candidates or be formally tied to a political party. Johnson notes that the Ohio Restoration Project aims to do more than register voters. Each pastor who joins also promises to sign up 100 "Intercessors" to join an e-mail prayer chain and 200 "Minutemen Volunteers" to work in community projects.

> "I like to say **I'm not a Republican or a Democrat, I'm a Christ-o-crat**," declares Pastor Rod Parsley, a supporter of the Ohio Restoration Project and head of a similar venture called Ohio Reformation.

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