

JAC NEWSbreak

VITAL NEWS & RESEARCH INFORMATION FOR JAC LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

June 23, 2011

On my mind this month...



Gail Yamner

Bible quoting, Constitution toting, anti-abortion pledging and Obama deriding mark the kick-off the 2012 Republican primary season. The current contenders for Republican standard-bearer loudly proclaim their conservative credentials and denounce anyone who does not fall in lock step.

Former Senator Rick Santorum said recently on Meet the Press “I believe that life should be protected at the moment it is a human life....And at conception it should be a person under the Constitution.” He cites God’s will and the Bible to support his claim that abortion is murder.

Representative Michele Bachmann (R-MN) uses the Bible and the Constitution to draw tea party members and evangelical Christians. She signed the Susan B Anthony 2012 Pro-Life Presidential Leadership Pledge to:

- Nominate judges “who are committed to restraint and applying the original meaning of the Constitution, not legislating from the bench.”
- Select pro-life appointees to key cabinet positions.
- Advance legislation to end taxpayer-funded abortions “in all domestic and international spending programs” and to defund Planned Parenthood.
- Advance a “Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act,” sometimes known as a “fetal pain” bill.

Newt Gingrich, Ron Paul, Tim Pawlenty and Rick Santorum also signed the pledge. Herman Cain and Mitt Romney did not.

The battle lines are drawn. “Obamacare” is the rallying cry. Social issues dominate. We must hope more reasonable voices will enter the fray for the good of the country.

JAC NEWSbreak, for JAC Leadership Circle, is a monthly publication of JACPAC.
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Israel

President Barack Obama, speaking at a fundraiser hosted by Americans in Support of a Strong U.S.-Israel Relationship, told those in attendance that “his goals are the same as theirs – a secure Jewish state living in peace with its neighbors – even if there might be ‘tactical disagreements’ along the way....One inviolable principle will be that the United States and Israel will always be stalwart allies and friends...Israel’s security will always be at the top tier of considerations of how America manages its foreign policy.” (*Huffington Post*, 6/20/11)

Earlier this month, the US House defense appropriations subcommittee approved increasing missile defense funds to \$235.7 million in 2012, up from \$217.7 in 2011. The aid would go to the Arrow 2, Arrow 3 and David’s Sling, all jointly developed missile defense programs. The US also plans to help Israel buy four more Iron Dome interceptors. The system successfully intercepted a rocket from Gaza in April and several intercepts have followed since then. According to the head of the Pentagon’s Missile Defense Agency, Israel is the only country employing operational missile systems capable of intercepting rockets and missiles of different sizes and ranges. The Arrow and Iron Dome systems were developed with American aid and in cooperation with American security companies.

Fatah and Hamas leaders canceled a unity meeting where they were to announce a new government. The two sides cannot agree on a prime minister. PA President Mahmoud Abbas wants Prime Minister Salam Fayyad. Hamas has rejected Fayyad and says the PM should come from Gaza.

The *Jerusalem Post* (6/20/11) reported that the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), including its Muslim member countries, called on Hamas to recognize the Quartet’s conditions for a peace agreement between Israel and the

(Israel, continued on page two)

United States

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Anti-abortion billboards targeting minorities have been appearing recently in a number of communities across the country. Last week the billboards, which read “Black & Beautiful,” showed up in Oakland, CA. They are a product of the Radiance Foundation and the California-based Issues4Life Foundation. This is an integral part of a campaign to “expose Planned Parenthood’s racist and eugenics-based history.” The Radiance Foundation says that it “illuminates the intrinsic value each person possesses...and educates audiences about pressing societal issues and how they impact the understanding of God-given purpose.” The Issues4Life Foundation is part of the National Black Pro-Life Union, an organization founded to “serve as a clearing house to coordinate the flow of communications among all African American pro-life organizations.” The Foundation is a nonprofit organization, based in California, “dedicated to protecting human life from our biological beginning until death and works directly with African-American leaders, nationwide, to strengthen their stand against abortion.” The foundation’s president, Walter B. Hoye II, says that “the impact of abortion in the African-American community is the Darfur of America.” Similar campaigns have taken place in Georgia, Florida, Illinois and New York, sponsored by Heroic Media and its sister organization, Life Always. The billboards in Georgia claimed “Black Children are an Endangered Species.” Brian Follett, head of Heroic Media, called Planned Parenthood’s efforts tantamount to “genocide.” In response, Planned Parenthood called the billboards, “a condescending effort to stigmatize and shame African-American women.”

At the same time that this campaign is going forward, there have been many successful efforts to defund Planned Parenthood, the latest in Indiana and North Carolina. Only 3% of Planned Parenthood’s budget is

(Reproductive Rights, continued on page two)

Research & Races

2012 OUTLOOK

It is still too early to discuss House races. Only eight states have finished the redistricting process, making it difficult to know in what districts our supported incumbents will be running. In Michigan, which is losing a district, Gary Peters and Sander Levin may be thrown into the same district. In California, population shifts have put Howard Berman in the same district with Brad Sherman. Republicans control the majority of state legislatures that will draw the lines. They picked up so many seats in 2010 that they have to shore up sixty-one districts won by President Obama in 2008.

Senate Update

Connecticut -- It looks as if there could be primaries in both parties for the seat of Joe Lieberman (I), who is retiring. Three Democratic candidates have declared: Sec. of State Susan Bysiewicz, U.S. Rep. Chris Murphy, and

st. Rep. William Tong. Bysiewicz and Tong do not have voting records and JAC has not received position papers from either. Murphy has good votes on JAC's issues. Republicans have only one declared candidate, attorney Brian Hill. 2010 candidate Linda McMahon is considering another run and former U.S. Rep. Chris Shays is often mentioned.

Hawaii -- Two Democrats have declared for this open seat: former U.S. Rep. Ed Case and current U.S. Rep. Mazie Hirono, with several other names mentioned. No Republicans have declared. This seat will be in the solidly Democratic column, unless former Gov. Linda Lingle (R) opts in.

Massachusetts-- An excellent campaigner when he won the special election for the late Sen. Ted Kennedy's seat, GOP Sen. Scott Brown has the

advantage. Five Democrats are considering, none of whom has the top tier status or name ID to give Brown a challenge. That is likely to change.

Ohio -- The GOP primary challengers to JAC-supported Senator Sherrod Brown (D) are former state Senator Kevin Coughlin and Treasurer Josh Mandel. Since his days in the House, Brown has had an excellent record on Israel, choice and separation. Mandel, who is Jewish, attempted to pass the nation's most restrictive abortion law that would ban abortion if a fetal heartbeat can be medically detected.

Washington -- JAC-endorsed Senator Maria Cantwell (D) looks "safe" today, with no primary challengers and no declared GOP candidates at this time. Washington is a state that was solid for Obama in 2008, making this an uphill battle for any Republican challenger to Cantwell.

Right Wing Watch

With the primary season for the upcoming 2012 Presidential election underway, the declared and even the rumored Republican candidates have begun reaching out to the ultra-conservative flank of the party. The GOP field has embraced social conservative groups and tea party activist networks, seeking to personify their values and earn their favor for the primary campaign season. While the candidates are working to appeal to the religious right base, political activists working for such organizations are using this moment to launch their efforts to bring conservative political movements to the forefront of the campaign cycle, highlighting their growing influence. Notorious conservative political activist, Ralph Reed, has launched a new organization, the Faith and Freedom

Coalition, which will likely bring him back into national politics as this wave of radical right political fervor continues. The coalition is attracting increasing attention for its potential to provide the infrastructure for a grassroots conservative movement that brings together social conservatives and tea party activists. In an interview, Reed explained the organization saying, "I guess the best way I would describe it is sort of a 21st century version of the Christian Coalition on steroids, married with MoveOn.org with a sprinkling of the NRA." Over the weekend of June 10-12, the coalition held its second Faith and Freedom Conference, counting almost 1,000 attendees united behind the mission to bring conservative ideals – staunch religious right values – back into the

government. The conference featured countless faces from the conservative right, including almost all of the Republican Presidential candidates: Mitt Romney, Michele Bachmann, John Huntsman, Tim Pawlenty, Rick Santorum, Herman Cain, and Ron Paul. At the conference, the aspiring candidates spewed conservative rhetoric on issues from choice to marriage equality to small government ideals. Romney declared, "We're united in our belief in the sanctity of human life." He went on to discuss the "importance and significance of marriage between one man and one woman." The parade of candidates eager to attend the conference and address the coalition highlights the growing force of Reed's influence in conservative grassroots politics.

Israel, continued from page one

Palestinians. MK Majallie Whbee, Deputy Knesset Speaker, said all the countries attending the meeting in Croatia, including Egypt, Morocco, Tunis and Algeria, and the Palestinian

Authority, voted for the resolution. The assembly, which has 23 member states and aims to foster cooperation among Mediterranean countries, called upon Israel and the Palestinians to resume

negotiations. Egyptian Deputy Foreign Minister Ashraf Hamdi said his country remains committed to all previously signed international agreements, including the peace treaty with Israel.

Reproductive Rights, continued from page one

used for abortion services. The organization serves as a much needed health facility for several million low income women across the United States, with a high percentage of African American and minority women benefiting from

those services. *Roe v. Wade* is still the law of the land, but in five states the procedure is banned after 20 weeks. In South Dakota, a woman must wait 72 hours and visit an anti-choice pregnancy clinic before having her abortion.

And in late May, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to ban teaching health centers from using federal dollars to train doctors on how to perform abortions. (*American Independent.com*, 6/16/11) (*AP*, 5/26/11)