

# JAC NEWSbreak

VITAL NEWS & RESEARCH INFORMATION FOR JAC LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

August 25, 2011

## On my mind this month...



Gail Yamner

Hallelujah and amen are the rallying cries for Michele Bachmann and Rick Perry. According to their campaign rhetoric, they heard the call

from their Gods and their spouses and answered by entering the Republican Presidential primary field. They see themselves as saviors of America who will firmly establish Christian values to root out the evils of the twenty-first century.

Bachmann often cites the works of Francis Schaeffer who proposed “Christians, and Christians alone are Biblically mandated to occupy all secular institutions until Christ returns.” After *Roe vs Wade* became law of the land, he published a guide for the violent overthrow of the government if the decision wasn’t overturned. Today one of the leading followers of Schaeffer’s vision is Nancy Pearcey (Bachmann has cited her) who cautions readers to be careful of ideas from non-Christians.

Perry showed off his Christian credentials by hosting a prayer rally sponsored by the American Family Association. The list of ultra-conservative speakers included many who follow the New Apostolic Reformation. John Hagee of “the Jews brought the Holocaust upon themselves” fame took part in the day that showcased the philosophies of those who might guide Perry.

For them there is no separation of religion and state. Their religion guides their state and their Bible is the law of the land. For them Israel is a place for the Jews to gather so the Messiah can come. For them there is no place for non believers in Jesus. For them there is no place for me.

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## Israel

Israel started the month worrying about the tent city protests, the upcoming Palestinian statehood vote in the U.N., settlement building discussions, the Arab Spring, and the crumbling relationships with Turkey and Egypt. The conversation unfortunately turned to terrorism August 18th when a barrage of 100 rockets were fired from Gaza into all areas of Israel. Palestinian militants carried out attacks in Southern Israel, killing Israeli citizens as they went to the beach, work and camp. Over one million Israelis are now in the range of Gazan rockets according to a spokesman from the IDF. These rockets were shot into Israel in clusters in order to avoid the new Iron Dome Defense system and although many rockets were deflected, unfortunately 8 Israelis perished in the attacks. The attacks were carried out by the Popular Resistance Committee which is the terrorist arm of Hamas. (*JerusalemCenter* 8/19/11) In retaliation, Israel performed airstrikes aimed at militant groups within Gaza, attacking weapon warehouses, arms-smuggling tunnels and senior leaders of the terrorist attacks. (*YNET news*, 8/11) PM Netanyahu instructed the military to “make pinpoint surgical attacks, adding that every possible effort must be made to avoid harming Gaza’s civilians who are not our enemies.”

Although Israel’s borders were breached by terrorists, the Palestinians immediately blamed Israel for the deaths of the attackers. Mark Regev, PM Netanyahu’s spokesman said “The Palestinians leadership’s failure to condemn the attacks against civilians raises serious questions about their readiness for independence, and their commitment to fight terrorism.” He added, “Their silence was deafening.” (*JPost*, 8/22/11)

A fragile cease-fire between Israel and Hamas took hold on August 22nd after days of intense rocket fire following diplomacy between the

(Israel, continued on page two)

## United States

### RELIGION-STATE SEPARATION/ RIGHT WING WATCH

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution guarantees religious freedom to all citizens; and the first clause of that amendment prohibits Congress from passing a law “respecting an establishment of religion.” Known as the Establishment Clause, this passage has been interpreted generally to prevent Congress from establishing a national religion or the federal government from showing preference for one religion over another. This separation of church and state has benefited Jews and other minority religions since the Constitution was written and adopted. The 2012 Presidential election is 15 months off, but the discussion of religion appears to be playing an unduly large role.

Two of the prominent candidates, Rep. Michele Bachmann and Gov. Rick Perry, belong to “a generation of Christian conservatives whose views have been shaped by institutions, tracts, and leaders not commonly known to secular Americans, or even to most Christians.” (*New Yorker* 8/14/11). Their platform, cloaked in moral/religious garb, is the newest expression of hardball radical right politics.

- They encourage our education system to reject science instead of teaching it. In Texas, Perry appointed people to the powerful state board of education who agree with his faith-based world view. He says evolution and global warming are “only theories,” not recognizing that in science a “theory” is an accepted and tested set of principles. Bachmann believes Intelligent Design should be taught alongside evolution.
- They are proponents of a new American theocracy that claims allegiance to Christianity and the Bible.
- They both promise to repeal the health care reform law. In the process they will deny women their reproductive rights and preventive health care.

(Reproductive Rights, continued on page two)

# Research & Races

The House has two new members elected in special elections, one in upstate New York and one in Southern California. Democrat Kathy Hochul (NY-26) was elected in late spring. Hochul worked on Capitol Hill for Rep. John LaFalce (D-NY) and Sen. Daniel Moynihan (D-NY) in the 1980s. She was the underdog in this contest and her upset win was the result of a strong campaign based on her opposition to the the GOP plan to revise and/or end Medicare, endorsed by her Republican opponent. Democrat Janice Hahn (CA-36) was elected last month to fill the seat of Democrat Jane Harman who resigned to join the S. Daniel Abraham Center for Middle East Peace. Hahn, whose family has been involved in Democratic politics in Los Angeles for many years was a Los Angeles city councilwoman prior to her election. Both women 's views align with JAC's criteria. Two more special elections will take place in the next few months. The first will be held on September 13 for New York's 9th district, formerly represented by Anthony Weiner. This should be an easy win for Democrats but is turning out to be a referendum on President Obama. Polls are showing the Democrat, state assemblyman David Weprin, with only a 6 point lead over Republican Bob Turner, a retired cable television executive running as an opponent of deficit spending. The second special, for the 1st district of Oregon, will

not be held until January. That seat should also stay in the Democratic column, but even Oregon, at least as blue as New York, could present Democrats with a challenge.

## 2012 Senate Update

**Connecticut** -- Former GOP Rep. Chris Shays has entered the race for the Senate seat, currently held by Independent Sen. Joe Lieberman. Lieberman is not seeking reelection. Shays is likely to face a primary against 2010 candidate Linda McMahon, former World Wide Wrestling CEO, who lost the 2010 race to Dem. Richard Blumenthal. There will also be a Democratic primary between Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz, Rep. Chris Murphy and st. Rep. William Tong. JAC supported Shays when he represented Connecticut's 4th district. He was defeated in 2008 by Democrat Jim Himes. In 2009, Shays was appointed to co-chair the Commission on War-time Contracting, an independent, bipartisan legislative commission established to study wartime contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan

**Massachusetts** -- Elizabeth Warren, special advisor to the U.S. Treasury Secretary, and the architect of the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, has formed an exploratory committee to challenge GOP incumbent Scott Brown. Massachusetts has never elected a woman to the Senate or the state house and currently has only one

female representative. The Democratic National Committee considers Warren a top tier recruit.

**Montana** -- Dem. Sen. Jon Tester is stressing his "centrism" in his bid for a second term. He faces GOP Rep. Dennis Rehberg, who is serving his 6th term as Montana's at-large member of Congress. Tester's votes are in line with all JAC'S criteria, on Israel, on choice and on separation. Rehberg's votes on Israel issues have been good, but his votes on JAC's domestic issues are all negative.

**Utah** -- Rep. Jason Chaffetz has decided not to run against 6-term GOP Sen. Orrin Hatch for the Republican nomination. Hatch has always had a conservative voting record, but there was speculation that Chaffetz, who is associated with the Tea Party, would challenge the Senator's conservative credentials. In 2010, Utah GOP Sen. Robert Bennett was defeated by Tea Party candidate Mike Lee, who went on to win the general election.

**Wisconsin** -- Former Dem. Sen. Russell Feingold, defeated in 2010, announced this week that he will not run for the Senate in 2012. Dem. Sen. Herb Kohl is retiring, leaving the seat open and many Democrats hoped that the former Senator would run. Feingold would not rule out a run for Senate or another political office in the future, but not this cycle.

## Israel, continued from page one

United States, Egypt and the United Nations. Despite the truce, rockets continue to rain on Israel.

A by-product of this attack was the inadvertent killing of Egyptian military by Israeli soldiers chasing the terrorists who crossed into Egypt. After a day of Egyptian protests and threats, the Israelis apologized for the Egyptian deaths. An Israeli official said that Israel and Egypt each had an interest in restoring calm and containing the crisis. (*NYT*, 8/21/11)

Elsewhere in Israel, the tent city

protests over rising prices, lack of jobs, and high taxes were called off temporarily to join with the families in mourning. These protests which revolve around the issues of social justice have drawn hundreds of thousands people into the streets. The affluent Rothschild Boulevard in Tel Aviv has grown to more than 500 tents. (*The Guardian*, 8/11) The protests have attracted the support of most of the country and have brought to light issues that have emerged as the country has gone from socialism to a free market economy- with a significant

amount of money going to the military and support of the Orthodox.

It is not known how the attacks and Israel's response will affect the upcoming statehood vote on Palestinian statehood at the UN. As the Palestinians continue acts of terror against Israeli civilians, they argue they need statehood to protect themselves from Israel. President Obama has promised to veto any bid by the Palestinians and is using diplomacy to urge other countries to do the same.

## Separation/Right Wing Watch, continued from page one

- They are determined to shrink the federal government to the point it cannot provide the services we need.
- They are disrespectful toward the President (Bachmann told Chris Matthews on MSNBC that he was "un-American") and hostile to the institutions of government of which they are

an integral part.

- Both claim affection for Israel, which fits their evangelical goals and, politically, it's a mainstream issue they can rally around without offending their base.

While they claim the moral high ground, the solutions they offer for the

future are rollbacks to the less savory aspects of the American past. That was when Jews, blacks, women and gays "knew their place," the environment was being despoiled, and robber barons reigned with impunity. The past they seek to reinstate is a present too frightening to contemplate.