



*Christian Right demonstrators brought their message for America to Washington in 1981.*

stronger. How could a grassroots movement these days even hope to get off the ground? Well, says Starobin, senior writer at *National Journal*, “Cast aside all prejudices, and consider the reaffirming achievement of the Christian Right over the past two decades.”

Look at how—despite the continual scorn of the national press and the academy—the Christian Right “has triumphed in placing its signature concern with traditional moral values and behavior at the center of political and cultural debate.” Its footprints are everywhere, from the emphasis on personal responsibility in the 1996 welfare reform law to the declining rates of abortion and illegitimate births.

The Christian Right, says Michael E. McGerr, a professor of American history at Indiana University, Bloomington, “may well have

done more to revitalize grass-roots democratic action than any other group in the last 10 years.”

Starobin limns some lessons for other groups:

- **Institutions are important.** Despite all the talk of televangelism, “[the] Christian Right could not have become a mighty political player without a network of neighborhood churches.” The Christian Coalition, founded by Pat Robertson in 1989, handed out 46 million “voter guides” in churches across the nation in 1996.

- **Think locally.** “Back in the 1970s, when Jerry Falwell of the Moral Majority and other Christian Right leaders began urging their flocks to become politically active, the GOP was dominated by . . . Main Street and Wall Street. Through organizational work at every level of politics . . . the Christian Right became, within a decade, arguably the most powerful faction in the party.” In 1994, when the GOP won control of Congress, evangelicals cast 29 percent of its total vote.

- **Ignore the national media.** The Christian Right was first ignored by the national news media, then subject to largely scornful and uninformed scrutiny after it proved itself a force in the 1980 presidential elections. “The sneers . . . didn’t hurt the Christian Right at all—because the movement possessed its own media subculture of radio stations and cable-television networks.”

- **Count on small donors.** “The Christian Right’s success also shows that, when motivated, small donors can and will participate in a political movement in sufficient numbers to sustain the cause.” In the 1988 Republican presidential primaries, candidate Robertson raised \$19.4 million in individual donations averaging \$106 per contributor, compared with George Bush’s \$22.3 million raised and an average donation of \$695.

“Fans of popular democracy,” Starobin concludes, “should credit the Christian Right with showing that the American experiment is still—happily—alive to the possibility of achieving change through collective action. And rival groups should be studying its playbook.”

## FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

### *A Superpower’s Hubris*

“The Lonely Superpower” by Samuel P. Huntington, in *Foreign Affairs* (Mar.–Apr. 1999), 58 E. 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, the United States briefly stood astride

the world, unchallenged by any other major power. That “unipolar” moment,

highlighted by the Persian Gulf War, has passed—but Washington doesn't realize it, argues Huntington, the noted Harvard University political scientist.

U.S. officials talk and act as if America rules the world unchallenged, he asserts. "They boast of American power and American virtue," and "lecture other countries on the universal validity of American principles, practices, and institutions." Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, for instance, has called the United States "the indispensable nation" and said that "we stand tall and hence see further than other nations." But the cooperation of other nations is always needed in dealing with major global problems, Huntington writes.

In its misguided effort to exercise benign hegemony over the world, the United States, he says, has used two principal tools: economic sanctions and military intervention. But other nations have grown more reluctant to join in sanctions, costing the United States dearly in dollars when it goes it alone, and in credibility when it fails to enforce the sanctions. As for military action, he says that bombing and cruise missile attacks achieve little, while more serious military intervention would require allied support and a willingness to accept casualties. "Neither the Clinton administration nor Congress nor the public is willing to pay the costs and accept the risks of unilateral global leadership," Huntington writes.

During the Cold War, many countries welcomed the United States as their pro-

sector. Today, however, he says, many of them view the United States as a threat—not a military threat but "a menace to their integrity, autonomy, prosperity, and freedom of action."

On issue after issue, from UN dues and sanctions against Libya to global warming and the use of force against Iraq and Yugoslavia, America "has found itself increasingly alone, with one or a few partners, opposing most of the rest of the world's states and peoples," Huntington says. He quotes an unnamed British diplomat: "One reads about the world's desire for American leadership only in the United States. Everywhere else one reads about American arrogance and unilateralism."

U.S. leaders should rid themselves of the illusion that the rest of the world naturally shares American interests and values, and cease their arrogant boasts and demands, Huntington contends. Instead, they should use American power to promote U.S. interests in the world, taking advantage of America's temporary status as sole superpower and employing its resources to win other nations' help in dealing with global issues.

The U.S. relationship with Europe, in particular, "is central to the success of American foreign policy," the author thinks, "and given the pro- and anti-American outlooks of Britain and France, respectively, America's relations with Germany are central to its relations with Europe. Healthy cooperation with Europe is the prime antidote for the loneliness of American superpowerdom."

## *The Pinochet Perplex*

"The Pinochet Dilemma" by Ricardo Lagos and Heraldo Muñoz, and "The Long Arm of the Law" by Anne-Marie Slaughter, in *Foreign Policy* (Spring 1999), 1779 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036; "Something's Got to Give" by Jeremy Rabkin, in *The National Interest* (Spring 1999), 1112 16th St., N.W., Ste. 540, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Does the case of former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet signal a welcome advance in the rule of international law—or an ominous new threat to democratic self-government?

Slaughter, a Harvard Law School professor, sees it as progress. Thanks to Pinochet's detention in Britain last fall, at

the request of a Spanish magistrate pursuing him for crimes against humanity, she says, ex-dictators "everywhere may henceforth face the prospect of being held accountable for their crimes in office." The case "marks the integration of domestic and international law. Both Spanish and British courts have been willing to inter-