

The American Christian Right Women's Advocacy Groups and US Foreign Policy

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Abstract—The paper examines two women advocacy groups of the American Christian Right, namely: Concerned Women for America (CWA) and Eagle Forum. Focus will be placed on their interests in American foreign policy and global social policy particularly during the George W. Bush administration. It examines the organizations' historical backgrounds, and study their agendas, issues and forms of international engagement which relate to American foreign policy. The paper shows that the Christian Right movement is not a monolithic movement in term of its focus, objectives or activism. Despite their diversity, various actions of these advocacy groups have strengthened the role of the Christian Right in exerting its influence on US foreign policy. Finally, it contends that, although traditionally the Christian Right advocacy groups' motives for activism are strongly based on the Bible and Judeo-Christian values, the arguments and ideas behind their present struggle are presented in a very nationalistic, secular and pragmatic vein.

Keywords—Christian Right, Concerned Women for America, Eagle Forum, Global social policy, US foreign policy.

I. INTRODUCTION

HISTORICALLY, the traditional goal of the Christian Right movement was to transform the American public policy to become more socially and culturally conservative, based on Judeo-Christian traditional values. Thus, the movement centered its activism on social conservative issues such as pro-family, abortion, gay marriage, feminism, prayer at school and home schooling. As a result, the active role of the Christian Right, in contributing to the decision making process, especially in influencing and shaping number of social issues policies in the US, is highly recognized since the 1980s [1]. However, in the early 21st century we have witnessed the Christian Right widening its focus of activism from social conservative issues to foreign policy issues of the United States. Moreover, the Christian Right movement has widened its activism by articulating its religious vision for American foreign policy [2]. During the two terms of the George W. Bush administration, showed that the Christian Right movement has given considerable attention to some pertinent international issues. The paper examines two influential women interest groups of the Christian Right, namely: Concerned Women for America (CWA) and Eagle Forum. It explores the organizations' historical backgrounds, and study their agendas, issues and forms of international

engagement which relate to American foreign policy. Focus will be placed on their interests in American foreign policy.

II. CONCERNED WOMEN FOR AMERICA (CWA)

A. Historical Background

Historical Background Concerned Women for America (CWA) is one of the oldest Christian Right interest groups in the United States. It was founded in 1979 by Beverly LaHaye, the wife of Tim LaHaye, co-founder of the Moral Majority [3] and author of the bestselling dispensationalist apocalyptic book series *Left Behind: A Novel of the Earth's Last Days* [4]. Historically, the establishment of CWA was a reaction to the radical feminist groups in America who were, according to Beverly LaHaye, openly expressing wrong views about the rights of women and claiming them to be the views of the majority of women in the US [5]. Steven Gardiner, who studies CWA dynamism, concludes that the politics of Concerned Women for America are the politics of reaction. He believes that the CWA agenda moves beyond anti-feminism, and it is impossible to understand its "special role" in the Christian Right movement without understanding its position as the right-wing foil to feminism as it has developed its own pro-active rhetoric such as pro-life, pro-family, pro-chastity and other conservative values [6].

Since its establishment, CWA has been considered the largest Christian Right interest group targeted at women [7]. Generally, it describes its organization as "the nation's largest public policy women's organization" which has "a rich 25 year history of helping members across the country bring biblical principles into all levels of public policy" [8]. During my interview in May 2009, Janice Crouse claimed that CWA was "800 pounds gorilla in Washington DC" because its membership exceeds 600,000 members [9]. Interestingly, the *Right Web*, a website that monitors the development of the Religious Right movement in America, reports that the membership of CWA is not limited to women only as more than 10% or 6,000 of the total members are men [10]. Due to its large membership, Crouse asserted that CWA was the real mainstream representing the women of America as compared to the National Association of Women (NAW), whose total membership is less than 250,000 [11].

CWA is a staunch proponent of the inerrancy of the Bible and it believes that the standard given by God in the Bible is unquestionable. CWA claims that its movement and stands are totally informed and directed by such belief [12]. Hence, the organization concentrates on protecting Christian traditional values in American society, especially regarding support for

biblical teaching and the design of the family. It has identified and focuses on six core issues, mainly derived from biblical teachings and a Judeo-Christian worldview. The six core issues are: the sanctity of human life, religious liberty, definition of family, pornography, education and national sovereignty. Accordingly, the movement is pro-family and pro-life, and opposes feminism, gay rights, comprehensive sex education, and drugs and alcohol education in America [13]. In addition, it also believed that politics should be mixed with religion. In 1987, LaHaye expressed this belief in an interview by stating: "Yes, religion and politics do mix. America is a nation based on biblical principles. Christian values dominate our government. The test of those values is the Bible. Politicians who do not use the Bible to guide their public and private lives, do not belong in office" [14]. However, it worth noting that, though CWA was founded by, and its activism is based on, biblical teaching, it denies being involved in any end-time theology or anything to do with what Tim LaHaye's *Left Behind* series propagated. As argued by Janice Crouse:

We are not necessarily theological...we do not deal with that kind of issue at all. We are evangelical, but we do not argue theologically beyond saying some basic principle in the Bible. For example when it comes to public policy, we anchored the public policy position on the scripture. But we do not argue theologically. Dispensationalism, end time are not related to our mission... but Tim LaHaye did [15].

For the past two decades, CWA has shown an interest in cultivating its conservative moral values at an international level and has indeed already stepped up its involvement in shaping global social policies. The next section highlights CWA's response to, and activism around, American foreign policies and international issues.

B. Pursuing on International Agenda: Priorities and Issues

CWA believes in the concept of American nationalism. CWA emphasizes American national sovereignty as one of the most important goals of the organization. It defines its role in protecting American national sovereignty by advocating that US should not compromise on its independence, sovereignty and right of self-government, by not being subdued to any foreign authority or abiding by any foreign law, including international laws. CWA also supports any effort to develop and maintain the US status quo as the strongest defense system in order to deter possible aggression posed by foreign powers. In addition, CWA sees illegal immigrants to the US as a threat to American sovereignty. Thus, it advocates the US maintaining strong border control and strict immigration regulations. However, CWA makes an exception for immigrants who fled into the US because of religious repression or other human rights issues. As such, CWA claims it honestly serves the nation by protecting from any attempt to jeopardize American sovereignty by international organizations or any foreign powers [16]. In this regard, CWA feels that its religious beliefs and values, founded on Judeo-

Christian traditions, are congruent with the foundation of American values such as freedom of faith, liberty, democracy and capitalism. CWA believes that the combination of those values is part of "American Exceptionalism", by which the US was able to become the greatest nation in the world, thus it has a responsibility to promote and defend those values. Janice Crouse argues:

(The) US never tried to force (any) other country to be a Christian nation, but we promote democracy that we believe will allowing people for freedom. That's why we are in Iraq and Afghanistan, to negate oppression and dictatorship. These are American values. And when you are a superpower, you have to use that for good. So, America needs to be a force for good around the world. (The) US needs to be a force for freedom, (a) force for the little people who do not have anybody else to stand up for them. That's the driving force of our [CWA's] involvement in any international issue [17].

CWA views the United Nations (UN) as an important platform to protect and propagate conservative Christian family values. Moreover, as strongly anti-feminist, CWA sees the expansion of the feminist movement worldwide, especially through their involvement at the UN, as a trend that is dangerous to global traditional values. Beverly LaHaye warned that this phenomenon was more apparent as some pro-feminist organizations have roles at the United Nations and use this platform to spread their agenda globally [18]. In fact, Janice Crouse claims that feminist organizations have dictated some of the UN policies which, according to her, have had a negative impact on global pro-family policies, including American ones to Americans. As a result, CWA sees the only way to curb this trend is by participating at the United Nations. As argued by Janice Crouse: "We worked at the UN because the UN has unprecedented power to coerce nations into following their agenda and over the last 40 years, their agenda has been a left wing radical agenda; pro abortion, pro-homosexuality, secular agenda and beyond secular to radical left" [19].

In 2000, Concerned Women for America was granted UN consultative status, together with other Christian Right organizations such as the Family Research Council and Focus on the Family. CWA claims that, through its presence at the UN, it has not only successfully restrained the influence of the feminist agenda but has also been able to provide a leadership to face the radical feminist movement at the UN. Presently, according to Crouse, CWA still works towards and lobbies for a conservative family values agenda at the UN. It consistently disseminates information and facts to UN delegates to make them aware of the anti-feminist agenda. In addition, CWA regularly arranges experts on particular issues related to the conservative agenda to deliver talks to the delegates at seminars or luncheons at the UN [20].

This progressive women's right agenda initiated by CWA has sparked the emergence of an international coalition of conservative religious and social organizations in the UN. Together with its status as a credential consultative NGO at the UN, and supported strongly by Bush's administration, CWA is seen as "a new sheriff in town" that would oppose any feminist movement's agenda and, at the same time, propagate the Christian Right's agenda at the United Nations [21]. It is believed, due to this coalition led by CWA, that right-wing conservative organizations have gained influence in shaping the US position at the UN regarding abortion, reproductive rights, the AIDS pandemic and other pro-family agendas [22]. As Buss and Herman suggest,

Some examples of successful CR [CWA] impact include providing significant leadership to the anti-UN movement in the United States; injecting an antiabortion ethos into international population policy and aid; maintaining pressure on the US government to remain a non-signatory to international human rights conventions; influencing the content of final drafts of documents, such as the 1995 Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing; monitoring the activities of UN-sponsored bodies such as UNESCO and the World Health Organization; and providing an extensive critique of the perceived "global liberal agenda" [23].

Another international issue of interest to CWA is the introduction of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1999. Though its establishment has been regarded as a great achievement for women's rights, especially by feminist movements at the United Nations, it is seen as a threat against traditional family values by CWA. Describing CEDAW as a "radical feminist agenda . . . to destroy the traditional family structure in the United States" [24], CWA has made the campaign against CEDAW one of its fundamental concerns since 2002. Though the CEDAW treaty was signed by the United States in the 1980s and was approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, CWA continuously opposes the American ratification of the treaty on the basis that it will limit American sovereignty, that is the right to govern and define American culture. In other words, CWA believes the CEDAW treaty would only challenge and undermine the laws and culture of the United States [25]. Claiming the CEDAW treaty as a flawed and a "leftist utopian wish list" [26], CWA has identified various "egregious provisions" of CEDAW which mostly contradict biblical values and could jeopardize American sovereignty. Among others, CWA views CEDAW as nothing more or less than a tool to: undermine the traditional family structure, promote global equal rights, undercut the proper role of parents in child rearing, guarantee a global abortion policy and encourage global prostitution. Moreover, CWA believes that the creation of 23 international experts to oversee the implementation of the treaty would

interfere with and jeopardize American sovereignty in regulating the welfare and wellbeing of American women and families [27].

CWA is also very active in the international human or sex trafficking issue. Since 1995, together with the Southern Baptist Convention and Salvation Army, CWA has been deeply involved in the legislative process of the US human trafficking law, which it believes is inter-related with the international sex trafficking issue. Besides drafting the legislation, CWA also lobbies on Capitol Hill and conducts seminars for congressmen to let them know about the facts and figures of human trafficking in the world [28]. Janice Crouse claims that the Trafficking Victims Protection Act [29] passed by Congress and signed by the president in 2000, was partly the product of CWA lobbying efforts [30].

Lastly, CWA is a strong opponent of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and opposes American participation and ratification of the treaty. Its main argument is that UNCLOS could pose a grave threat and could jeopardize the national sovereignty of the United States [31], and could cause the United States to lose money, national security, private property rights, military intelligence, competitive markets, access to US territory, natural resources, autonomy, and arguments against submitting to International Criminal Court [32]. According to Sarah Rode, an officer for the CWA Legislative Action Committee, CWA sees the treaty as a tool for anti-Americans at the United Nations to undermine United States sovereignty. In addition, she argues that any attempts to ratify the treaty are worthwhile since ratification would damage US sovereignty and could also have negative consequences on America's military, businesses and taxpayers [33].

CWA has developed multiple strategies for lobbying on Capitol Hill, particularly regarding ratification of CEDAW, sex trafficking, UNCLOS and the International Criminal Court. For instance, CWA created the Beverly LaHaye Institute as its think tank organization. The institute, led by Janice Crouse, is an intellectual arm of CWA and takes a leading role in educating and promoting CWA's core issues to its members as well as to the American public. Furthermore, the institute acts as a research and consultancy centre that provides contemporary intellectual input to CWA activists [34]. Meanwhile, CWA is involved in lobbying activities at Capitol Hill by channeling issues through two affiliated organizations: Concerned Women Political Action Committee (CWPAC) and Concerned Women for America Legislative Action Committee (CWALAC). While CWPAC is focused on and responds to any political issues related to the mission of CWA, CWALAC acts as the legislation and advocacy arm of CWA and is committed to reforming any American legislation that is not in line with CWA aspirations. Presently, CWALAC is conducting a program called "Project 535". According to Janice Crouse, Project 535 was initially called "The 535 Ladies" as it was started by a group that consisted of five hundred and thirty-five women. This lobbyist group targets and conducts lobbying activities on members of the House

and Senate [35]. The 535 ladies delegate a task to a small team consisting of 20–30 women who voluntarily come to Capitol Hill, once a month, and lobby on a particular issue or law. The team are normally briefed precisely on the issue or law and equipped with rational arguments. After that, they are asked to wage a campaign on particular senators or congressmen and lobby them with specific arguments. In addition, they will also arrange to meet a sub-committee to deal with any particular bill relevant to their mission that is about to be voted on [36].

Because of the need to expand CWA human resources for lobbying activities, the project name was changed to “Project 535” and no longer limited its members to five hundred and thirty-five. Instead, it offers membership of the project to any CWA member. According to the CWA website, with its present capacity and its ability to reach between 40 and 70 congressional offices in a day, Project 535 could become an influential lobbyist actor in Capitol Hill. Currently, Project 535 has volunteers at state and local level to also advocate their agenda to local constituents. By this modus operandi, it argues that it creates a communication chain that links state and local leaders with their congressmen on Capitol Hill [37].

III. EAGLE FORUM

A. Historical Background

Eagle Forum is the oldest Christian Right advocacy group in the United States. The organization was founded by Phyllis Schlafly in 1972. Since then, it has become one of the most important wings of conservative lobbyists and political groups of the Christian Right. Presently, Eagle Forum is a conservative interest group that has been primarily focused on social and political issues. According to Colleen Holmes, the executive director of Eagle Forum, the organization’s interest is predominantly in domestic political and social issues such as being against the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and feminism, and in favor of traditional morality. However, it also shows interest in supporting a free enterprise economy system, less intrusive national government, strong national defense and is anti-immigration [38].

Historically, the creation of Eagle Forum was a reaction to the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) which was deemed to be pro-feminist and against conservative pro-family values. It began when Mrs. Schlafly launched the Eagle Trust Fund in 1967 for receiving donations related to the conservative cause movement. Three years later, she established a group called “Stop ERA” and published the “Eagle Forum Newsletter”; their main objective was to defeat the ratification of ERA. After successfully defeating ERA, in 1972 Mrs. Schlafly formed a new organization, the “Eagle Forum” [39]. Acclaimed as “leading the pro-family movement since 1972”, Eagle Forum’s central work in America is anti-feminism. Through *The Phyllis Schlafly Report*, Eagle Forum continues to show its staunch efforts in opposing the women’s rights movement in America. For instance, in December 2002, the report claims that: “The feminists’ goal is to eradicate from our culture everything that is masculine and remake us into a

gender-neutral society” [40]. Likewise the report also states that:

Feminist goals are incompatible with the combat readiness we need in times of war, a priority that has taken on a new urgency because of events since 9/11. The brave fire fighters who charged up the towers of the World Trade Center, and our Special Forces who dared to enter the caves in Afghanistan need our help to defend themselves and their work against the feminists who despise macho men [41].

In an Eagle Forum press release in March 2008, the organization condemns the US administration that endorsed the International Women’s Day (IWD). It argues that IWD will serve to advance global radical feminism that is pro-abortion, pro-gay rights and advocates the ratification of ERA. Eagle Forum claims that the feminist movements who are behind the introduction of IWD are the same groups that lobby for ratification of the United Nations Conventions on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In that press release, Mrs. Schlafly argues: “Today’s feminists and CEDAW advocates view ‘progress’ as government-run day care, greater access to abortion, the elimination of ‘Mother’s Day’ because it promotes a ‘negative cultural stereotype’, decriminalization of prostitution in China, and government-mandated workplace benefits that men do not enjoy, just to name a few...Their goal is not equality, but preferential treatment” [42].

Eagle Forum claims it is not purely a faith-based organization. Though Eagle Forum was established by Phyllis Schlafly, a conservative Catholic, the members of the organization come from various Christian denominations; for instance, the organization’s executive director Colleen Holmes is an evangelical. However, she admits that some religious values and convictions, such as anti-feminism, gay rights and abortion, did influence the motives of Eagle Forum’s foundation. Therefore, as an organization, Eagle Forum has no particular theological beliefs that formally shape the movement’s direction. However, Colleen Holmes did acknowledge that some of its members subscribe to some particular theological beliefs such as end-time theology [43].

Eagle Forum states its organization’s objective is “to enable conservative and pro-family men and women to participate in the process of self-government and public policymaking so that America will continue to be land of individual liberty, respect for family integrity, public and private virtue, and free enterprise” [44]. On its website, Eagle Forum lists its five core agendas: to protect American sovereignty, to maintain American culture and identity, to defend the American constitution, to argue against feminism and to support traditional education [45]. To date, Eagle Forum membership is around 80,000 and its main office is located in Alton, Illinois. However, in order to be close to federal government and policy makers, Eagle Forum also has an office in Washington DC It has thirty branch offices all over the US. Presently, it is an umbrella of another two organizations, the

Eagle Forum Education and Legal Defense Fund (EFELDF) and the Eagle Forum PAC (EFP). While, EFELDF is a non-profit organization and a tax deductible charity, the EFP serves as a fundraiser, thus it receives donations for political campaign funding and is a source of money for candidate endorsement in an election.

According to Right Wing Watch, domestically, Eagle Forum is mostly active in lobbying lawmakers to enact legislation which is deemed to be in line with its concerns. It has also designed specific programs to assist its lobbying efforts, such as Eagle Forum's Score Board that encourages the public to become aware of conservative issues. Through the Score Board, Eagle Forum updates and informs its supporters about representatives in Congress either working for or against its conservative agenda. In addition, Eagle Forum also spreads out its interests through the mass media, especially through Mrs. Schlafly's weekly radio commentary which is carried on 460 stations in the United States, and through her newspaper column that is published by more than 100 newspapers across the nation [46].

B. Eagle Forum's Influential Leader: Phyllis Schlafly

Phyllis Schlafly is the founder of Eagle Forum and has been president since 1972. She gained her reputation after the publication her first book *A Choice Not An Echo* in 1964 and her leadership in bringing the Eagle Forum into the mainstream of conservative movement organizations. She also is the founder and president of the Eagle Forum Education and Legal Defense Fund. Mrs. Schlafly, a conservative Catholic, is a lawyer by profession but she is more prominent as a conservative advocate, writer and radio commentator. She has published more than twenty books and was listed as one of the 100 most important women of the 20th century by the Ladies' Home Journal. During Reagan's presidency, she became actively involved in politics. She was a member of the Commission on the Bicentennial of the US Constitution from 1985 to 1991. During this period, she testified more than fifty times before Congressional and State Legislative Committees on various subjects such as constitutional law, national defense and family issues.

Phyllis Schlafly laid the groundwork for the anti-feminist movement in the US as early as 1967. Susan Marshall, in her study of the anti-feminist movement in America, concludes that Mrs. Schlafly is the most important figure behind the movement and deserves much of the credit for reversing the strong momentum of feminist movements in the 1960s. She suggests that the major factors that led to Mrs. Schlafly's success were her charismatic leadership and capability in mobilizing and organizing the grassroots [47]. Marshall concludes that Mrs. Schlafly is "an assertive woman who has successfully adopted some of the confrontational tactics of the feminist movement in the service of the pro-family agenda" [48]. In 2003, the Conservative Political Action Conference honored her as the "conservative movement's founding mother". Judith Warner, in her review of Mrs. Schlafly's

biography *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade*, describes her as:

A one-woman right communications empire. Through her speeches, books, radio addresses and monthly newsletter, "The Phyllis Schlafly Report," she has supported the nuclear arms race, Barry Goldwater, the Strategic Defense Initiative and phonics, and has bashed whole language learning, Communism at home and abroad, strategic arms limitation treaties, Nixon's diplomatic overtures to China, Nelson Rockefeller, Henry Kissinger, *Roe v. Wade* [49].

According to Critchlow, Mrs. Schlafly is very competent in linking intellectuals to the grassroots activists. Moreover, she has the ability to make it easy for the grassroots members to understand her sophisticated ideas [50]. Critchlow suggests that Mrs. Schlafly has uniquely influenced American politics. This is largely because of her genius selection of social, military and foreign policy issues that have been able to activate the conservative grassroots movement to pull its strength to influence national, state and local policymakers [51]. It is believed that Mrs. Schlafly is amongst the important people who helped Barry Goldwater win the presidential nomination and were responsible for helping Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan before and after they became presidents. She remains a central figure in shaping the ideas and direction of Eagle Forum. "*The Phyllis Schlafly Report*" has been her main monthly platform to deliver her social and political ideas and thoughts for the last twenty years. This newsletter covers all her ideas and comments on all aspects, including international and foreign policy issues such as illegal immigrants, and American security and sovereignty.

C. Pursuing on International Agenda: Priorities and Issues

Despite Eagle Forum's main agendas generally being domestic issues, it does show some interest in international issues, especially those related to American sovereignty and freedom [52]. In Eagle Forum's mission statements, it specifically highlights its international interest under the banners of "Support American Sovereignty" and "Support American Identity". The organization is strongly against most global laws and international regimes. It opposes the involvement of the US in international treaties that possibly jeopardize the sovereignty of the US. As such, in matters of foreign policy, it opposes participation of the US in the United Nations, the Law of the Sea, and signing other international treaties such as environmental treaties, CEDAW, Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), North American Union, and so on. In addition, it believes any kind of economic integration would undermine American sovereignty.

Mrs. Schlafly frequently calls the United Nations one of the "globalists", together with the International Criminal Court and other international organizations; she accuses the UN of advocating a New World Order that is anti-American interest and sovereignty. She argues that "the globalists are constantly

devising plans to lock the United States into a world government that erases national borders and diminishes national sovereignty. War “peacekeeping” escapades, and treaties are the means of incrementally achieving that goal” [53]. Eagle Forum believes that any economic integration agreements, such as NAFTA, Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) [54] and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) [55], would not only restrict American sovereignty, but would also bring down America’s economy. Moreover, they would also have a significant impact on US borders policy and security, drain US taxpayers’ money in subsidizing foreign aid to partner countries of the agreements, and force the US to comply with international regulations [56].

Eagle Forum is a staunch opponent of international environmental treaties such as the Kyoto Protocol. This treaty set limits on its signatories for carbon dioxide emissions and other greenhouse gases that are harmful to the atmosphere and was ratified by most developed nations including the US. However, to date, the treaty has still not been ratified by the Senate. Eagle Forum strongly advocates that the US Senate should not ratify the treaty as it views the treaty as a threat to US sovereignty and its economy. As such, the organization supported President Bush’s withdrawal from further negotiations on the treaty in 2001. The organization opposed the treaty on two grounds. Firstly, it claims that global warming and the greenhouse effect are myths as there is no scientific evidence that supports the theory of carbon emissions being the main cause of global warming. Mrs Schlafly believes the protocol was brought by a “cult of radical environmentalists...a new religion of worshipping Mother Earth” [57]. Secondly, Mrs Schlafly believes that the treaty is unfair to the US as it restricts US economic growth and social development. She argues the treaty is “an anti-American interest” as it sets a different environmental standard between developing countries and developed countries that will bring the American standard of living to a substandard. Mrs Schlafly notes:

The Kyoto Protocol would require the United States to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to 7% below our 1990 level, a tremendous reduction in our energy consumption (our use of electricity, gas, oil, and gasoline) and therefore in our standard of living. However, Kyoto would impose no limitation on 130 developing nations, including China (the world’s second largest emitter of greenhouse gases), India, Mexico and Brazil, and would allow Europeans to evade reductions by averaging among the European Union (EU) countries [58].

Moreover, she claims the treaty is part of a UN-sponsored conspiracy to redistribute American wealth to “Third World dictatorships”. Mrs. Schlafly asserts: “The foreign dictators in the United Nations who look upon the UN as a forum where they can demand that the United States redistribute our wealth

to them. Our foreign aid never gets to the poor people who need it; it is gobbled up by the ruling tyrants” [59].

Eagle Forum is in favor of developing strong American military capability such as deployment of an anti-ballistic missile defense system and building a Strategic Defense Initiative. Eagle Forum believes that a strong military capability is a necessity as this would protect not only US but also its citizens. This is in line with the mainstream Republican Party, which strongly advocated a national missile defense system in the 1990s [60]. Mrs. Schlafly claims that the reason the United States cannot develop those military capabilities is due to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and blamed President Richard Nixon who signed that treaty in 1972. She states:

The United States has no system capable of shooting down ballistic missiles, whether they are from Russia or some rogue nation. That’s an appalling default of leadership, since the U.S. government’s number-one constitutional duty is to “provide for the common defense”...The reason we have no defenses against incoming ballistic missiles is our slavish adherence to the ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile) Treaty. Written by Henry Kissinger and signed by Richard Nixon in 1972, it was today highly dangerous to U.S. security. It should have been unconstitutional when it was signed because it pledged the United States government not to defend Americans against nuclear attack, despite the fact that national defense is the prime duty of our government [61].

Eagle Forum also supports stricter US border regulations in order to stop illegal immigrants, drugs and terrorists. Since the attacks of 9/11, the organization has become more critical of immigrants. Mrs. Schlafly calls immigrants “aliens” and continuously criticizes American policy towards immigrants. She claims a loophole in American immigration policy caused the 9/11 attacks to happen. She says: “The terrorists are foreigners, most or all of whom should not have been allowed to live in our country...It should be repeated over and over again: The terrorism threat is from illegal aliens who are allowed to live in our midst – and this a failure of our immigration laws and our immigration officials” [62]. On October 2001, Eagle Forum also sent a letter to American Congress and put blame on US immigration law as a major factor contributing to the attacks. It states: “All the criminals who participated in the terrible acts of terrorism on September 11 were aliens who should not have been allowed in the United States. We should enforce our immigration laws already in the law books instead of cracking down on the freedom of law-abiding citizens. Terrorism is not a domestic problem if we have border security” [63]. The letter also gave some constructive comments to enhance the draft Anti-Terrorism legislation proposal which eventually became a basis of the Patriot Act 2001.

In 2007, Eagle Forum initiated a “Stand Up for America” program. It promotes three key issues, namely the Rule of Law, American sovereignty and the defense of US jobs. The first initiative, “Standing Up for the Rule of Law” calls the US president and Congress to use Article IV of the American Constitution that states one of the main duties of American government is to “Protect against invasion”. Mrs. Schlafly in her writing argues that “invasion” is taking place in the US whereby foreign people are rampantly crossing American borders illegally. She proposes that the administration curb this problem by building fences at every border and closing the US southern borders. In addition, she advocates the passage of comprehensive and strict immigration laws [64].

The second initiative, “Standing Up for American Sovereignty”, calls American leaders to defend American sovereignty from foreign or international control. One of main agendas within this issue is opposing any economic integration between America and other countries. In this respect, Eagle Forum denounced a 2001 Declaration of Quebec which demands economic integration between the US, Canada and Mexico and argued against a Security and Prosperity Partnership that would lead to North Economic Integration by 2010. According to Eagle Forum, these economic partnership agreements, which gained endorsement by President Bush at Waco in 2005 and at Cancun in 2006, will jeopardize American sovereignty in the near future. Eagle Forum is also against the Commerce Department’s initiative that intends to harmonize American trade regulations with Mexico and Canada. Eagle Forum opposes dual nationality. As such, in Eagle Forum’s second agenda under the issue of standing up for American sovereignty, its demands that immigrants who have obtained American nationality give up their previous nationality. It also demands that English becomes official national language for the US [65].

In its third initiative under the program “Standing Up for America”, Eagle Forum demands US administration protects American workers and their jobs against international or other nation’s trade policies. The organization argues that the American government has failed to protect American workers and job opportunities in the US from being allocated to foreigners. It argues that foreign nations, particularly China and some other developing countries, have bribed US companies to relocate their industries overseas, then cheated American tax-policies and robbed American technology and intellectual property to aid their countries’ development. As a result, Eagle Forum proposes the US government take serious action against foreign countries that bribe US companies or steal intellectual property, patents or copyright owned by Americans. Finally, Eagle Forum views foreign trade tribunals such as the World Trade Organization and NAFTA as anti-American. As such, Eagle Forum proposes that the US government does not abide to regulations or decisions made by those international tribunals [66].

In 2008, Eagle Forum listed its lobby’s priorities for the 110th Congress. Among the important aspects of its priorities that related to US foreign policy were its stance towards the

UN, pro-life appropriation riders, and immigrant and border policies. It calls for the US government to reject all UN treaties and not to implement any unratified UN treaties. In addition, it demands that the US stop its contributions to the United Nations Fund for Population Assistance (UNFPA). Concerning pro-life policy, Eagle Forum supports the Mexico City Policy and the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) funding. On immigrant and border policy, it calls for the US government to deny visas to foreigners from countries listed on the State Department’s list of “State Sponsors of Terrorism” [67].

IV. CONCLUSION

The study suggests that the Christian Right advocacy groups are not a monolithic in term of historical background of the organizations, mission, vision and activities. Both, CWA and Eagle Forum were established mainly because of their reactions to the growth of feminist movements in the US, but later on have diversified their activities to defend conservative Christian family values from the attacks of humanists and secularists globally. Though, most of the Christian Right organizations are mainly focus on domestic social conservative issues and do not really have a foreign policy concentration, but this study shows that these organizations are also interested to some international issues and have involved in lobbying activities in American politics. The paper also shows that leaders of these organizations play very important role in framing and selecting international issues that became the focus of organizations’ global activities. Nevertheless, this study does not, in any way, conclude that these organizations were able to influence or determine the direction of US foreign policy and its outcomes; however, it does suggest that they did contribute and possibly gave an impact on the formulation of some American foreign policy during the George W. Bush.

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