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The way forward for social policy in America in the midst of conflicting religious and political ideologies.

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Abstract

This paper discusses the way forward for social policy in America considering the conflicting religious and political ideologies that confront the polity. The paper applies the Secularized Evangelical Discourse to analyze the position of the religious right, new Christian right and mainstream evangelicals to seek answers on the way forward for the American welfare state. This paper argues that the debates between left wing liberal democrats and right-wing conservative republicans have generated an ideological fulcrum that sometimes destabilizes, but often ensuring stability for democratic checks and balances. The paper therefore suggests that the way forward for an effective social policy implementation is to embrace a secularized notion of moral justice that admits of equity, fair play and true statesmanship.

Keywords: New Christian Right; Secularized Evangelical Discourse; Social Policy; Public Policy; Religion and Politics.

Introduction

This paper evaluates the interface of religion and politics in American society drawing from the influence of Christian groups such as Evangelicals and the New Christian Right on the political discourse. The paper also evaluates the state of competing ideologies in the policy arena and furthers the discussion on the way forward in the light of policy interventions implemented by government in the recent past, synthesized by a Biblical model of government and statesmanship. There is no doubt that the United States was founded on Christian principles, but what is in doubt is whether the founding fathers conceived any idea of a dominant religion (Smith 2016). The argument goes further that there is no evidence that the God of America's civil religion is the same God of the Bible.¹ However, the key thing to remember is that by the time "The Star-Spangled Banner" became the official national anthem in 1931, in the American consciousness, the "Power that hath made and preserved us as a nation" had become a nondescript deity. A generation later, when "under God" was added to the Pledge of Allegiance (in 1954), and "In God We Trust" became the American motto (in 1956), this bland, distant deity was more fully ensconced on the pedestal.

After his election in 1952, President Eisenhower famously remarked that "our form of government has no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith, and I don't care what it is." Some scholars such as Huntington (1993) and Miller (2016) consider religious belief and affiliation not as causes of political action, but rather as consequences of political or economic interests. Religion, at most, is a device that savvy elites use to hoodwink gullible masses into serving their purposes. Some American presidents who talked of a divine mission

¹ From the time of Thomas Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence, the idea of a deistic deity was deliberately at war with the earlier, Puritan vision of the Lord who would rule over the "city set on a hill." Starting in 1776, and with greater or lesser emphasis throughout American history, the lack of specificity has meant that the God who is invoked may be conceived in the mind of the patriot (or the churchgoer) as the Triune God, but not so in terms of the body politic (Noll, 2015).

to spread liberty used such language and symbols to aggrandize themselves and their wealthy constituents (Bulmer-Thomas, 2018).

This paper probes into the fundamental concepts of our social policy from the New Deal of President Franklin Roosevelt to the triumphant position of the New Christian Right to seek answers on the way forward for the American welfare state. There is no doubt that the New Christian Right has taken positions on a variety of social policy issues including family life, public morality, affirmative action, and education (Midgley, 1990). Numerous arguments have been generated to support this stance, but generally this position is inspired by an antipathy to modernism and 'liberal' tendencies in civil society (Bruce 1988, Falwell 1980, Gottfried 1988 and Guth 1983). The New Christian Right has used various tactics to influence the political process including well-orchestrated media campaigns, direct lobbying, the public endorsement of legislative and presidential candidates and even the civil disobedience (Jorstad 1987).

The competing positions in debates between left wing liberal democrats and right-wing conservative republicans have generated an ideological fulcrum that sometimes destabilizes, but often ensuring stability for democratic checks and balances. But, the question now is, where do we go from here or which way forward? There might be no definite answer to this, but there is no doubt that the United States is founded on democratic principles that espouses justice, morality and the fear of God.² This paper is presented in six sections, the second evaluates the interface between religion and politics today, the third section evaluates the state of competing political ideologies, while the fourth section discusses the way forward based on the current trend of social policy, the fifth section synthesizes the above views with a Biblical model of government and statesmanship, and the sixth concludes.

²Thompson (1986) quotes a letter from John Adams to Jefferson in 1815 "The question before the human race is whether the God of nature shall govern the world by his own laws, or whether priests and kings shall rule it by fictitious miracles." These words captured the essence of the fear of the convergence of religion and politics.

The interface of religion and politics

Discussions on religion have been inadvertently intertwined with the discussion of politics, even from medieval times (Smith 2016). Many scholars argue that evangelical Christian beliefs and traditions are central to dominant conceptions of American national identity, but most empirical studies in this area focus on the activities and identities of evangelical Christians themselves (Delehanty, Edgell and Stewart 2019). In the late 1970's political conservatives collectively known as the New Right helped evangelicals establish political institutions capable of swinging elections (Shires 2007). Most of these New Right leaders, although they may have been religious, were not evangelicals. The New Right was anticommunist, anti-union, and anti-big government; it attacked the programs and the objectives of the Great Society and defended traditional individual rights, but also criticized corporate executives.

However, the New Right protagonists objected to the new individual rights sought by political liberals – such as abortion rights, women's rights and gay rights – not because they believed these positions would destroy America spiritually per se, but because they believed such changes would destabilize society (Shires 2007). Ultimately, many New Right pundits sought to establish or confirm moral behavior and business-friendly economic practices for the purpose of making the technocracy itself function more efficiently. Conservatives with strong religious convictions decided to go into politics to reestablish America's lost economic and social order. A case in point was the Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*,³ that the government had launched a war against their religious life. Nonetheless, they did not intend to infuse government with religion. By the 1970's the traditional evangelical perspective was changing, and largely because the new Christians, those born of the counterculture, and reform-minded evangelicals tended to look at these issues a little differently, reformers and baby-

³ *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113 (1973), was a landmark decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in which the Court ruled that the U.S. Constitution protects a pregnant woman's liberty to choose to have an abortion without excessive government restriction.

boomer Christians understood that actions to help the poor, the sick, and the oppressed had important spiritual implications in and of themselves.

Many Americans desire a stronger religious presence in public life (Pew Research Center 2014) and draw sharp symbolic boundaries around religion. In the present dispensation, according to Delehanty et al. (2019), Donald Trump's strong and persistent support among white evangelicals has renewed debate around a long-standing question: How do white evangelical Christian traditions shape prevailing understandings of national identity and belonging in the United States? In this regard, white evangelicalism is more than a religious subculture. It is also the primary historical source and contemporary institutional carrier of a broader discourse about the religious roots of citizenship and national identity (Williams 1995) — a discourse that has spilled out from evangelical institutions to provide symbolic backing to restrictive understandings of national membership (Braunstein 2017a). Culturally dominant throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, this discourse grew more contested with increasing pluralism (Jones 2016, Wuthnow 1988). Starting in the postwar period, conflict over it became a defining feature of the civic landscape, contributing to divisions between mainline and fundamentalist Protestants and sparking the growth of a multidenominational coalition that brought conservative Catholics and Jews into cultural affinity with white evangelical Protestants (Worthen 2013, Wuthnow 1988). This discourse is now employed not only by people in white evangelical denominations and congregations, but also by culturally conservative people in other faith traditions (Wuthnow 1988). It is not inherently politically conservative (Williams 1995), but throughout the twentieth century, it took on exclusionary meanings through the cultural work of Republican elites, who identified religious conservatives as a potentially powerful political constituency (Kruse 2016, McAdam and Kloos 2014, Worthen 2013, Wuthnow 2012). Its embrace by the Republican Party extended its appeal

beyond evangelicals to include others whose understandings of national belonging reflect white Christian cultural heritage, if not Christian beliefs.

The decline of religious belief and behavior in the United States has changed how religion shapes politics and public life, but it has not significantly diminished its importance. Religion persists as a source of durable but flexible symbols that actors use in political speech and action (Chaves 1994; Williams 1995) and shapes the symbolic construction of the civic sphere (Alexander 2006). In the contemporary United States, white evangelical traditions are associated with a narrow vision of national belonging that often excludes nonwhites (Tranby and Hartmann 2008), the “undeserving” poor (Steensland 2007), atheists (Edgell et al. 2016), Muslims (Braunstein 2017), and gays, lesbians, and transgender people (Haider-Market and Taylor 2016). This means that analyzing evangelicals’ political attitudes gives an incomplete picture of how conservative Christian ideas affect politics and public life. As American religion has reorganized around an orthodox-modernist split (Wuthnow 1988), and many mainline Protestants, Catholics, and even Jews have adopted evangelical practices and attitudes, it is also important to assess how Americans of all religious backgrounds evaluate political claims that have cultural roots in, but have become institutionally untethered from, white evangelical Christianity. Such claims cohere in an underlying repertoire that became polarizing in the twentieth century through its association with party politics and social movements, beginning with fiscal conservatives’ efforts in the 1930s to mobilize opposition to redistributive economic programs (Kruse 2016), and continuing with later movements to make wedge issues out of racial equality, abortion, and gay marriage (McAdam and Kloos 2014).⁴

⁴ In this polarized environment, white evangelical discourse has diffused widely and come to influence everyday Americans’ views across a wide range of issues, including welfare policy (Davis and Robinson 2012), consumer taste (Massengill 2013), and Islamophobia (Braunstein 2017; Brubaker 2013), with deep effects on the attitudes of not only evangelicals, but people of various religious identities. Recent political science research suggests that candidates and politicians employ Secularized Evangelical Discourse (SED) in attempts to consolidate support among religious conservatives without explicitly embracing religious nationalism. Conservative candidates employ a “religious code” that they hope will be recognized and valued by white evangelical voters but pass unnoticed by others (Albertson 2015; Djupe and Calfano 2013). By using subtle cues to activate evangelicals’ learned identities and associate them with nostalgia for a society unified around white Christian heritage

It is not only conservatives who endeavor to appeal to multiple audiences by invoking religious narratives of national belonging. Barack Obama, for instance, often employed a civil religious discourse as a candidate and as president (Gorski 2011). Yet the relative racial and cultural homogeneity of the right makes its use of Secularized Evangelical Discourse (SED) more effective, and more controversial, than the left's use of civil religious discourse. For example, although Mitt Romney failed to win the presidency in either 2008 or 2012, his use of evangelical-oriented religious language to demonstrate his conservative bonafides assuaged concerns about his own Mormon identity and reinforced skepticism on the right about Obama's faith (Crosby 2015). Donald Trump's rush to embrace conservative religious language during his candidacy helped solidify support among white evangelicals. The civil religious discourse employed by Obama and others on the left does not draw symbolic boundaries as sharply (Braunstein 2017b; Gorski 2017b) and has not appeared as frequently in mainstream political speech (Braunstein 2018). The specific meanings that SED takes on when deployed in political speech fracture public opinion, not only regarding "religious" issues, like abortion and gay marriage, but also regarding the larger influence of religious culture on public institutions (Hout and Fischer 2014). This is because political parties, candidates, media organizations, and social movements have strategically linked white evangelical identity to narrow visions of national belonging (Bail 2014; Baldassarri and Goldberg 2014; Kruse 2016; McAdam and Kloos 2014). Americans outside evangelical subcultures are influenced when elite actors invoke evangelical traditions in their public rhetoric by using nonsectarian phrasings like "traditional family values," "wholesome school environments," "economic self-sufficiency," and "religious freedom" to describe policy preferences (Jones 2016). Thus, a discourse derived

(Campbell, Green, and Layman 2011), this tactic resonates among culturally conservative nonevangelicals as well as among evangelicals themselves. By employing it, candidates reinforce evangelical ideas' importance to US political culture.

from white evangelical traditions is used politically in ways that extend beyond its religious origins and is inserted into political debates of all kinds.

Delehanty et al. (2019) measure the dimensions of SED on American body polity, by asking respondents whether one must be religious to be a good American. Respondents show that American evangelical leaders have long constructed symbolic boundaries pertaining to religiosity and national belongings. Many Americans have long expected moral guidance from elected officials, and white evangelicals look to the president as a source for moral leadership. In their view, it is well if politicians are skilled orators, keen strategists, or proven problem-solvers, but such criteria are secondary to the ability to provide strong moral guidance (Smidt 2006). As a result, white evangelicals look to the presidency to defend “mythological narratives about America’s distinctly Christian heritage and future (Whitehead, Perry, and Baker 2018, Gorski 2017), and white evangelical leaders have dismissed concerns about Trump’s past behavior by averring that he has been born again. Trump has nominated judges and supported policies that white evangelicals widely approve of. That white evangelical leaders feel compelled to affirm his personal religiosity even as his policies and nominations advance their interests speaks to the importance that evangelical culture ascribes to personal moral leadership rooted in religious faith. Perhaps, the most significant interface between religion and politics in American life in recent times is the same sex marriage case involving Kim Davis, the Rowan County Kentucky Clerk, who refused to issue a marriage license to a gay couple, by invoking “God’s authority.”⁵

The state of competing political ideologies in the policy arena today

Murray (2015: 196) asks the question “what do we want to accomplish?” The differing political ideologies that envelope the policy arena makes it difficult to accomplish much within a

⁵ There is no doubt the constitution of the United States in no way invokes Biblical principles in the protection of the rights of citizens. However, the moral standing of individuals and their Christian principles upon which the American society exists allows the expression of one’s religious belief and opinion but not to interfere with others (See Williams 2018).

stipulated time. Every issue of national discourse has been dissected to reflect the viewpoints of either the left or the right and in general terms must showcase the liberal or conservative leaning. These differing viewpoints in today's political arena have led to sequestration, government shutdown and other social policy annihilations that affect the well-being of individuals and the progress of the American society.⁶ Although, the differing political ideologies make the debate more robust and promotes a political culture that is cautiously optimistic, but one strongly questions the rationale for an idealistic stance that ignores the welfare and prosperity of ordinary Americans.⁷ According to Jha, Boudreaux and Banerjee (2018) political leanings affect corporate and individual decisions, which in turn affect social capital. Social capital on the other hand affects corporate and individual decisions. Their study aims to find whether in current political settings, social capital tilts towards certain political ideologies. The results indicate a double swing, on the one hand, high social capital regions show a greater inclination for the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party agenda is in essence a transfer of wealth from those that are relatively well off to those that are relatively poor. The justification for such a transfer is that some people are not doing well financially, not because they have a poor work ethic, but because the society has evolved in ways that do not favor their skills.

On the other hand, higher social capital regions might lean toward the Republican Party – a party that champions self-reliance and greater personal responsibility. The Republican Party also supports lower taxes, and rather than helping the poor through redistributive policies, it encourages them to become self-reliant. A high social capital region could develop values that encourage people to solve their own problems rather than relying on the government (i.e.,

⁶ Iyengar, S., Westwood, S.J., Fear and loathing across party lines: new evidence on group polarization. *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (3), (2015). 690–707

⁷ McAdam, Doug, and Karina Kloos. *Deeply Divided: Racial Politics and Social Movements in Postwar America*. New York: Oxford University Press 2014.

smaller government). This association can be best understood by the work of deTocqueville (1835). deTocqueville was impressed by the American values that celebrated self-interest and self-reliance. He noticed that Americans often got together to solve their problems outside the purview of the government. Because of their active participation in different nongovernment organizations, Americans developed what he called “the art of association.” He argued that Americans preferred limited government intervention. Participation in nongovernment organization is a key feature of high social capital. Ultimately, whether social capital is associated with leaning toward the Democratic or Republican Party is an empirical question (Jha et al. 2018). In contemporary political culture of the American society, political biases have gained prominence, and play a large role in personal, social and government relations (Iyengar and Westwood 2015). More people are building their communal and social identities around political labels (Brooks 2014). In Iyengar and Westwood (2015) they find that it is much easier for Democrats (Republicans) to associate the word “good” with other Democrats (Republicans); they are also more likely to trust Democrats (Republicans).

The current trend of political ideologies stem from a post-modernism worldview and philosophy that embraces a system of multiculturalism, which is embedded in a critical theory that allows culture and norms to be used as tools for the exploitation of the masses. From the events of the sixties, the society has absorbed civil rights movements in the shades of racial desegregation, feminism, environmental activism and above all, gay rights. All these competing social issues attract considerable attention from public policy analysts, who question the “why” and “how” we got here, to seek answers for political stability and social cohesion. Barber and Pope (2019) posits that, “are people conservative (liberal) because they are Republican (Democrats)? Or is it the reverse?” The answer to this question seems very far-fetched and could only be subjected to empirical scrutiny. Using the election of President

Donald Trump as a yardstick, the study finds that many respondents are not assuaged by ideological principles, but party loyalty.⁸

Way forward based on past policy interventions

The idea that religiosity may be partly based on economic insecurity and that such insecurity is more common in the United States than other industrialized nations, may provide a particular structural explanation for the relatively high levels of religious involvement observed in the United States (Jelen 2007). First and most obviously, religion affects public policy Cochran et al. (2016). The precise linkage between public opinion and public policy is elusive, few candid observers would deny that the actions of policy makers (especially elected officials) are influenced by public opinion. To the extent that the values and preferences of ordinary Americans are animated by religious considerations, religion will inevitably affect the content of government policy. In the late 20th and early 21st century, religious political activism is generally associated with the political right. Religious conservatives are considered an important voting bloc in the Republican party (Wilcox and Larson 2006), and such partisans are thought to be motivated by “social issues” (for example, those involving personal morality) such as abortion, gay rights, and the proper role of women in society.

To the extent that democratic discourse requires diversity, religion can provide important sources of ideas to the public debate. The presence of religious diversity in the United States has obvious effects on the practice of religion in the public sphere. Neuhaus (1984) argues that the increasingly secular nature of American culture had rendered the public square “naked,” or bereft of a shared moral or religious consensus within which political and social life could be conducted. Religious pluralism is an aspect of the culture of the United States with which religiously motivated political activists have had to contend. Accounts of the

⁸ This informs the reason why Trump’s harsh campaign rhetoric and amoral posture did not affect the outcome of the 2016 presidential elections.

Christian Right in the 1980's documented the fact that the movement was fragmented, and rendered relatively ineffective, by the effects of religious particularism (Jellen 2007). Williams (2007) observe that religion helps legitimate cultural forms and in turn becomes a legitimate mode of expression within a culture. Many scholars posit the basis of these changes in what is generally known as the "sixties," where the authority of many social institutions was challenged, and individual expression was given the same primacy in the moral, cultural and religious realms that it had in capitalist economic ideology and institutions (Cochran et al. 2016, Williams 2017, Owen 2019).

Capitalism may be so stiff to the extent that it creates limited social capital for the majority who work for the upper class. In order to cushion the effects of this shortfall, government is poised to deliver some goods free to the less privileged in the form of social welfare. In the American welfare state criticisms are rife that the social policy may be construed as transferring from the haves to the have-nots (Murray 2015). But, one wonders if better housing, nutrition, and medical care contribute to less misery and more happiness; so also do good parents, a loving spouse, safe streets, personal freedom and the respect of one's neighbors provide the alternative. But, the synthesis of this argument is that the provision of government support if abused breaks the family, reduces the propensity for upward mobility of recipients in the social ladder. Murray (2015) further submits that social programs in a democratic society tend to produce net harm in dealing with the most difficult problems, because it inherently has enough inducement to produce bad behavior, and not enough solution to stimulate good conduct; the more difficult the problem, the more likely it is that this relationship will prevail.

Credited with so many good things, religion and religious organizations are culturally legitimate in American society. Individuals who participate in religious organizations are

thought to be good people.⁹ It is difficult to run for public office without being a religious participant and religious participation makes people at-least by some American criteria-better family members; more successful participants in education and economic institutions, less likely to commit crime or other “sins of the flesh”; more willing to help others, often through volunteering their time and donating their money. Smith (2016) proclaim that the New Deal of Franklin Roosevelt reflects so many ideas that our “Founding Fathers” would not have embraced, which includes government involvement in our lives from cradle to grave (or from womb to tomb). Smith (2016) further declares that today post modernism appears to be a regnant philosophy. He traced the roots of postmodernism in part, to what has been called the quintessential American philosophy, pragmatism, which arose in the late nineteenth century. A pragmatic approach, Smith (2016) contends, in the extreme takes the position that the end justifies the means – that is, that even underhandedness and dishonesty may be employed in order to promote a desired outcome. From all indications, the way forward seems to favor a religious God-fearing posture for one to articulate a realistic public policy that would create a social and political balance.

Biblical model of government and statesmanship

From the scriptures we learn that government operates under authority from God. In Romans 13:1 the scripture says “let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.” A true stateman should be able to stand strong and disagree well (Fischer 1998, 13). In the same vein, statesmanship requires the individual to acknowledge the sovereignty of God; knowing full well that God is the ultimate source of authority and power. Fischer further stated that humility is a very important

⁹ Noll, Mark "The Bible in Revolutionary America," *The Bible in American Law, Politics, and Political Rhetoric*, edited by I. T. Johnson [Fortress, 1985], p. 43

characteristic for a person to serve the needs of the people. A humble disposition will eschew foolish pride and the lack of wisdom. Biblical injunction recognizes that even though the state gets its power from the people, absolute power resides with God. The greatest problem facing our society today as Fischer (1998:8) puts it ... has nothing to do with government at all. There is nothing as absolute truth, but the right answer to our problems could be found in God and a believer in the Christian faith. Liberty of the mind comes from acknowledging the sovereignty of God. Fischer (1998) further opines that if society and government are going to be preserved and set free from the bondage of sin and its deadly influences, then change has to occur first of all on a personal level. A study conducted by Jackson, Hester & Gray (2018) on revealing religious diversity across people and politics in America, using the perception and face visualization approach to measure God's mind in a large sample of American Christians show how motivations and cognitive biases shape believers' understandings of God's mind. Compared to liberals, the study finds that American conservatives are more motivated to maximize social regulation, emphasizing law enforcement and authoritarian leadership. By contrast, liberals are more motivated to maximize societal tolerance, emphasizing intergroup harmony and social justice. These contrasting motivations suggest that conservatives may visualize an older, sterner and more masculine God who is better suited to safeguard social order, whereas liberals may visualize a younger, kinder, and more feminine God who is better suited to encourage social tolerance. So, what this finding implies is that one's view of the primacy of God in his life and social order is influenced by his political leaning. To this end, spirit of statesmanship counteracts with the persons visualization of God.

However, a Biblical conception of true believe in God is bereft of one's political ideology. Fischer (1998) frantically states that God is sovereign is the main reason that we know that government in general, and government officials in particular, should not have unlimited powers. The role of the Bible in public policy could be inferred from the passage

opened for the swearing-in ceremony of Jimmy Carter as President – Micah 6:8 reads “He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” This passage reflects Carter’s way of relating his personal faith to his role as president. In another scenario, the passage is in sharp contrast with that used for the inauguration of President Reagan, Chronicles 7:14, “If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” This passage suggests a public, not a private, vision. It makes a public charge to the nation as God’s people. The power of statesmanship in the United States has always been to appeal to God through the Bible for public policy guidance. But, to use the Bible in public-policy discussion violates the proper basis of discussion in a democratic society.

Nolls (1985:43) opines that there were devout Christians among the founding fathers of our nation, but there were probably more who would be considered "secular humanists" by the contemporary Christian right.¹⁰ Christianity may be the tacit religion of the U.S., but it is not the "official" religion of the country. Those who would use Scriptures in public-policy discussion forget this, and improperly assume that the Bible can be used legitimately to address the nation. They forget that the Bible is neither the preamble to the U.S. Constitution nor an amendment to it. However, a true statesman must serve with the fear of God and government must work towards fulfilling God’s purpose on earth.

¹⁰ Indeed, the individual most responsible for guaranteeing religious freedom in the U.S., Thomas Jefferson, was an avowed deist. In a 1779 preamble to a bill on religious freedom introduced in the Virginia legislature, Jefferson wrote: “Our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, any more than our opinions in physics and geometry; therefore the proscribing of any citizen as unworthy of the public confidence by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to office of public trust . . . unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion, is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which he has a natural right.”

Conclusion

In this paper we evaluate the interface between religion and politics in contemporary American society and find that despite all the fuss about our religious inclination, there is every tendency that America civil religion appeals to an interest group based on specific ideological front. Although there is no accepted state religion, Americans are most likely to be sympathetic to the Christian religious faith. In recent times we have seen the impact of the New Religious Right on the body politic in changing the political landscape through a persistent demand for a Christian-like statesman to be voted for as President of the United States.

Secondly this paper reveals that the most dominant political ideology in the United States today, draws from the post-modernism worldview, and a critical theory of multiculturalism that promotes a culture of capitalism, where the poor works for the rich. The failure of the American welfare state to alleviate poverty but rather perpetually impoverish those involved in the scheme is now a cause of concern for scholars. There is a fervent need to restructure the social security scheme as conceived under the New Deal and subsequent reforms, to suit the socio-economic conditions of today. Although the debate on the political spectrum from both sides of the aisle is necessary for democratic stability, one should expect a common ground when there is need to put national interest above personal sentiments. Our democracy should begrudge the notion of winner takes all, but compromise for the benefit of the society.

Lastly, it is an agreeable fact that America is not a religious republic, although founded on Biblical principles and religious persuasion, our founding fathers did not conceive a state that is governed by the tenets of a particular religion. The true order of principles would rather admit to moral justice and the respect for fundamental rights as enshrined in the constitution. Above all, moral justice entails the fear of God, for statesmanship and true allegiance to the

service of humanity shall be the guiding principles of our government. A humble disposition will eschew foolish pride and the lack of wisdom.

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