



Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main

Zentrum für Nordamerika – Forschung (ZENAF)
Center for North American Studies

ZENAF Arbeits- und Forschungsberichte (ZAF)

Nr. 1 / 2006

Axel R. Schäfer

**Religion, the Cold War State, and the Resurgence of Evangelicalism
in the US, 1942-1990**

Copyright © by Axel R. Schäfer

Zentrum für Nordamerika-Forschung
Center for North American Studies

Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität
Robert-Mayer-Strasse 1
60054 Frankfurt / Main

Tel.: (069) 798 28521 / 28538
e-mail: zenafdir@em.uni-frankfurt.de
homepage: <http://web.uni-frankfurt.de/zenaf>
Federal Republic of Germany

Abstract:

Beobachter der amerikanischen Politik deuten die so genannte „faith-based initiative“ der Bush-Regierung, die eine staatliche Mitfinanzierung religiöser Sozialeinrichtungen ermöglicht, zumeist als einen Versuch, die traditionelle Trennung von Kirche und Staat in den USA zu unterminieren. Bei näherem Hinsehen zeigt sich jedoch, dass bundesstaatliche Gelder bereits seit dem zweiten Weltkrieg in großem Umfang zum Aufbau religiöser Krankenhäuser, Universitäten, internationaler Hilfsorganisationen und sozialer Dienste beigetragen haben. Unter der Ägide des Kalten Krieges wurden religiöse Gruppen institutionell und ideologisch in die Staatsbildung der Nachkriegszeit integriert, die weder eine Rückkehr zum „Nachtwächterstaat“ der zwanziger Jahre darstellte, noch auf dem Staatsbegriff des New Deal beruhte. Stattdessen war das spezifische Merkmal des „Cold War state“, dass er auf dem Prinzip der Subsidiarität aufbaute, welches den Staat in erster Linie als Geldgeber für den Aufbau einer von privaten, gemeinnützigen und kirchlichen Einrichtungen getragenen sozialstaatlichen Infrastruktur ansah. Zu den besonderen Charakteristika des sich daraus entwickelnden neuen Verhältnisses zwischen Kirche und Staat gehörte, dass konservative protestantische Gruppen, die bislang auf einer strikten Trennung beider Bereiche bestanden, zunehmend in die subsidiaristischen Strukturen eingebunden wurden. Vor allem die Identifikation der Evangelikalen mit dem Antikommunismus und ihre Furcht vor katholischer Dominanz bei der staatlichen Förderung trug zu ihrer neuen Staatsnähe bei. Darüber hinaus profitierten konservative Protestanten insbesondere während der Ausweitung des Wohlfahrtsstaates in den sechziger Jahren (Great Society), die sie ansonsten als Beginn des moralischen Verfalls und staatlichen Versagens angreifen, zunehmend von öffentlichen Mitteln. Dies wirft die Frage auf, welche Rolle diese neue Hinwendung zum Staat für die politische Mobilisierung der Evangelikalen spielte, die in der Forschung zumeist erst in den achtziger Jahren als Resultat der Ablehnung gegenkultureller Impulse angesiedelt wird. Unter Rückgriff auf Theorien der sozialen Bewegungen zeigt der Beitrag auf, dass die ideologische und institutionelle Integration in den Staatsbildungsprozess seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg ebenso wichtig war für das politische Wiedererwachen der Evangelikalen wie ihre Reaktion gegen „sex, drugs, and rock’n’roll“ seit den späten siebziger Jahren.

Religion, Politics, and Conservative Protestantism¹

To many observers, the high level of religiosity in the United States is one of the strangest and most disturbing phenomena of the post-World War II period, apparently defying all assumptions about the rise of secularism in modern industrial societies and the much-vaunted “separation of church and state” in the US. Building upon the theories of seminal thinkers, ranging from Karl Marx via Max Weber to Emile Durkheim, scholars predicted that religion would cease to be important with the emergence of “modernity.” They maintained that the US after the Civil War was a society where religion receded, especially in public life, not just because of abstract processes of urbanization and industrialization, the spread of science and technology, and the rise of the bureaucratic nation-state, but also because of particular secularization agents, such as educators, scientists, bureaucrats, social reformers, lawyers, and even religious leaders.² Yet, today we are confronted with the simultaneous growth of religion, bureaucratic state-building, and modernization in the United States.

The resurgence of evangelical and fundamentalist Christianity since the 1930s constitutes one of the most striking manifestations of this particular feature of American society. Three key developments are at the core of this resurgence. First, church growth between the 1960s to the 1980s was marked by a distinct disparity. While mainline Protestant churches, such as the United Presbyterians, Episcopalians, United Methodists and the Wisconsin Synod Lutherans, kept losing followers, evangelical and fundamentalist churches, such as the Southern Baptist Convention and the (pentecostal) Assemblies of God, saw their membership increase dramatically. Since then, the sprawling and loosely organized conservative evangelical movement has become the largest single religious faction in the United States.³

The growth of conservative Protestantism went hand in hand with a second crucial development in American religion, namely the partial replacement of traditional denominational divisions with a liberal-orthodox divide. Evangelical Protestants, who believe in the inerrancy of the bible, salvation through faith, the born-again experience, and a premillennialist escha-

¹ Sections of this essay have been published in *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: The State-Private Network*, ed. Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 173-191. I will explore the issues raised in this paper further in my forthcoming book *Religion, the Cold War State, and the Resurgence of Evangelicalism, 1942-1990*.

² See Jon Butler, “Jack-in-the-Box Faith: The Religion Problem in Modern American History,” *Journal of American History* 90 (March 2004): 1357-78. For a concise summary of the enlightenment paradigm which has sidelined religion see M. Bradbury and James Gilbert, eds., *Transforming Faith: The Sacred and Secular in Modern American History* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989), ix-x.

³ On post-war changes in religious affiliation and evangelical growth see Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1992), 463-69; R. Stephen Warner, *New Wine in Old Wineskins: Evangelicals and Liberals in a Small-Town Church* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 1-30; George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1991), 1-6, 62-82; Jon R. Stone, *On the Boundaries of American Evangelicalism: The Postwar Evangelical Coalition* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997); Joel A. Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Nathan O. Hatch and Michael S. Hamilton, “Taking the Measure of the Evangelical Resurgence, 1942-1992,” in *Reckoning with the Past: Historical Essays on American Evangelicalism from the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals*, ed. D. G. Hart (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1995), 395-412.

tology, now have more in common with conservative Catholics and Jews than with liberal members of their own theological tradition, who emphasize the historicity of sacred texts. Debates on issues such as abortion, gay rights, public prayer, pornography, and welfare reform, James Davison Hunter and other advocates of the “culture war” thesis maintain, reflect fundamental differences in the perception of social reality and moral truth. They pit the orthodox with their belief in fixed and universal moral norms against the progressives, who have a relativistic world view. As part of this new cleavage, evangelicals, despite being traditionally known for their virulent anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism, began to embrace alliances across denominational boundaries.⁴

Finally, the new liberal-orthodox divide has also replaced denominational divisions as the key determinant in partisan alignment. While Catholics used to be solidly Democratic, for example, voting patterns indicate that conservative Catholics nowadays are likely to vote Republican, while liberal Catholics continue to identify with the Democrats. The most striking case of these recent political realignments, however, are the evangelicals, who moved from being strongly Democratic in the 1960s and most of the 70s to steadily more Republican in the 1980s and 90s. Today, as Geoffrey Layman notes, they form the “the most strongly Republican group in the religious spectrum.”⁵

The growth of conservative Protestantism, the liberal-orthodox divide, and the concomitant partisan realignments have put the spotlight once again on the question of the salience of moral and religious orientations in the US party politics. Since the 1970s, moral norms, life-styles, social values and religious orientation have increasingly sidelined class, race, region or denomination as the basis for party identification and have become the most reliable indicators of partisan affiliation. A study of election data between 1952 and 1996 identifies religion as the second most important “cleavage” separating American voters, after race and ahead of class and gender.⁶ There is little consensus among scholars, however, about either the causes of the resurgence of evangelicalism or the conservative political mobilization of its followers. Before moving on to the specific contribution this study seeks to make, this essay will examine some of the main scholarly explanations for the cultural vitality and right-wing political alignment of conservative Protestants in the US.

⁴ See, for example, Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith Since World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 133-172; Rhys H. Williams, ed., *Cultural Wars in American Politics: Critical Review of a Popular Myth* (New York: de Gruyter, 1997), 1-12, 175-195; James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle To Define America* (New York: Basic Books, 1992).

⁵ Geoffrey Layman, *The Great Divide: Religious and Cultural Conflict in American Party Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), quote on p. 199; John C. Green, James L. Guth, and Kevin Hill, “Faith and Election: The Christian Right in Congressional Campaigns 1978-1988,” *The Journal of Politics* 55 (February 1993): 80-91.

⁶ Jeff Manza and Clem Brooks, *Social Cleavages and Political Change: Voter Alignments and U.S. Party Coalitions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). Considering that throughout the history of the United States religious revivals frequently culminated in deep political fissures, the conclusion that the new religious lines of division in the US since World War II prefigured new political divides is both intriguing and disturbing. They invite comparisons, however flawed, with the relationship between the first Great Awakening and the American Revolution, and the Second Great Awakening, the emergence of the Republican party, and the Civil War. See, for example, Mark A. Noll, ed. *Religion and American Politics: From the Colonial Period to the 1980s* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1989).

The Resurgence of Evangelicalism

Sociologists of religion, in particular, have suggested a number of theoretical frameworks for interpreting the resurgence of evangelicalism – and have rescued modernization theory in the wake. Peter Berger, James Davison Hunter, Mark Shibley and others see evangelicalism’s renewed cultural legitimacy and influence rooted in its accommodation to modernity, rather than its assertion of traditionalism. They maintain that evangelicalism, with its emphasis on the individual experience of religion, voluntarism, choice, flexibility, and quick and personal access to knowledge, adequately reflects modern norms and social conditions and was thus not a negative reaction to modernity, but an integral part of the process of modernization and secularization. The popular post-war *Youth for Christ* movement, for example, accommodated to worldly tastes by copying the youth culture of the time with its fashions and celebrities, pepped-up music, fast-paced shows, and radio-style intensity. Likewise, famed evangelist Billy Graham combined cultural modernity, use of latest communications technology, and up-to-date personnel mobilization, with an apocalyptic and countercultural message.⁷

The cultural accommodation of evangelicalism, Hunter and other argue, led to its “cognitive contamination.” Adopting modern advertising techniques, using state-of-the art technology to present the evangelical message, relying on modern organizational and managerial principles, and catering to the tastes of new audiences ultimately influenced the message itself. As part of this process, the conversion experience, a crucial component in evangelical identity, became less associated with self-denial, awareness of sin, and tough moral codes than with health, business success, and self-esteem. Likewise, the shift in emphasis to what religion can “do” for “you” allowed evangelical leaders to stress broad principles and emphasize the functional and therapeutic dimensions of the belief in the supernatural. Specific liturgies and denominational exclusiveness increasingly gave way to sermons on how faith empowers people and helps them become more successful and better integrated. While some called it “cheap grace,” evangelist Tammy Baker simply stated, “today we take vitamins, trust God, and eat well.”⁸ Evangelical content was thus transformed and domesticated into an ac-

⁷ Peter L. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion* (Harmondsworth, 1973); James Davison Hunter, *Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Mark A. Shibley, *Resurgent Evangelicalism in the United States* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 1996), esp. 133-37; Joel A. Carpenter, “Youth for Christ and the New Evangelicals,” in *Reckoning with the Past*, ed. Hart, 357-58, 363-4; Robert S. Ellwood, *The Fifties Spiritual Marketplace: American Religion in a Decade of Conflict* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 48; Grant Wacker, “Uneasy in Zion: Evangelicals in Postmodern Society,” in *Reckoning with the Past*, ed. Hart, 376-93.

⁸ Joel A. Carpenter, “Revive Us Again: Alienation, Hope, and the Resurgence of Fundamentalism, 1930-1950,” in *Transforming Faith*, ed. Bradbury and Gilbert, 116; Butler, “Jack-in-the-Box Faith,” 1374-75; Tammy Baker quoted in Michael Lienesch, *Redeeming America: Piety and Politics in the New Christian Right* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 42; see also 23-51. On the therapeutic impulse and the spiritualization of popular psychology see Wade Clark Roof, *Spiritual Marketplace: Baby Boomers and the Remaking of American Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Robert Wuthnow, *After Heaven: Spirituality in America Since the 1950s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Virginia Lieson Brereton, *From Sin to Salvation: Stories of Women’s Conversions, 1800 to the Present* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), esp. p. 48. On linking conversion to this-worldly success see David H. Watt, *A Transforming Faith: Explorations*

ceptable cultural expression no longer at odds with mainstream culture. As Hunter contends, evangelical beliefs had become “tolerably deviant” and, socio-culturally, evangelicals were “firmly representative of the world of the American middle class.”⁹

Drawing upon functionalist and social-relational theories developed by Talcott Parsons and others, another influential school of thought links the resurgence of evangelicalism to the social and economic changes in post-war American society, namely the rise of consumer culture, suburbanization, and the shift in economic power from the commercial centers of the Northeast to the military-industrial complex of the South and the West. Texas, California, Florida, Arizona and other evangelical strongholds profited disproportionately from both post-war middle-class social benefits, such as the GI bill, housing subsidies, and mortgage support, and the build-up of military industries. By the 1960s, evangelicals were no longer significantly more rural, older, poorer, and less educated than the average American, and those who had relocated to the sunbelt to work in military-related industries often experienced a significant improvement of their economic fortunes amidst a government-subsidized modern and technocratic setting.¹⁰

Nonetheless, evangelicals frequently retained their pieties and moral conservatism, as evangelical churches were better able to meet the social challenges of war-related dislocation. Less tied to an established institutional heritage, evangelical forms of instantaneous religious community, such as parachurch organizations and special purpose groups, became highly attractive in the post-war suburban setting where people were mobile, separated from their denominational grounding and their traditional socio-cultural contexts. As Jon Butler concludes, “[s]uburbanization with its consumer-dominated public culture likewise proved a boon to organized religion after World War II. . . . [A]necdotal evidence and criticism of suburban religion suggests an engagement between religion and suburbanization so strong that it accounts for the exceptional rise in church membership among Americans between 1945 and 1970.”¹¹ Sparkling suburban churches, such as Robert Schuller’s *Crystal Cathedral*, frequently predated enclosed shopping malls with vast car parks. Churches also provided the social services which were lacking as private developers, encouraged by public subsidies, put up one suburban tract development after another without providing proper spaces for playgrounds, recrea-

of *Twentieth-Century American Evangelicalism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991), 24; Wacker, “Uneasy in Zion,” 381.

⁹ James Davison Hunter, *American Evangelicalism: Conservative Religion and the Quandary of Modernity* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1983), quote on p. 47; see Hatch and Hamilton, “Taking the Measure,” 395-412; George M. Marsden, “Introduction: Defining Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism,” in *Understanding Fundamentalism*, 81. On the compatibility of religion and consumer culture see also Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

¹⁰ For an example of the rural-urban approach see Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America* (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1965). For references to research on lower-class features see Warner, *New Wine in Old Wineskins*, 59; see also George Gallup, Jr. and Jim Castelli, *The People’s Religion: American Faith in the 90’s* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 73-4, 94. For a critique of these interpretations see Stuart Rothenberg and Frank Newport, *The Evangelical Voter: Religion and Politics in America* (Washington, D.C.: The Institute for Government and Politics, 1984), 27, 31-35.

¹¹ Butler, “Jack-in-the-Box-Faith,” 1375. See also Serge Carlos, “Religious Participation and the Urban-Suburban Continuum,” *American Journal of Sociology* 75 (March 1970): 742-59; Susan Curtis, *A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).

tion, schooling and community centers. Offering nursery schools, counseling, youth groups, choirs, pre-schools and other services, suburban evangelical churches soon provided a baptized cradle-to-grave subculture. In turn, evangelicals were able to replicate the nineteenth-century successes of Methodists and Baptists as they embarked on their quest to claim the crabgrass frontier.¹²

Organizational resources and theological effectiveness are also at the core of interpretations of the resurgence suggested by evangelical scholars such as Joel Carpenter and George Marsden. Carpenter credits the internal resources of separatist fundamentalism with providing the institutional backdrop of post-war evangelicalism. After years of self-imposed isolation, fundamentalists increasingly yearned for a revival. Adaptive to the deprivations of the Depression, they successfully established subcultural institutional networks, such as evangelical bible institutes, day schools, seminaries, colleges, foreign mission societies, publishing houses, journals, radio stations and TV programs. These fundamentalist “shelter belts” provided new tools for mass evangelization in the post-war era.¹³ Similarly, George Marsden and Robert Wuthnow regard the network between “positive” fundamentalists and conservatives within the mainline Protestant denominations as instrumental in bringing about the evangelical revival. While evangelicals distanced themselves from separatist fundamentalism, conservatives questioned the modernism and postmillennialism of liberal Protestantism. A remarkably high degree of consensus prevailed among Protestants after the Second World War, to the extent that an explicitly evangelical crusade such as Youth for Christ received support from both fundamentalists and mainline churches. Although the new evangelicalism remained a religiously diverse movement, it finally shed the Mecklenite image of religious backcountry bacchanalia and donned the voguish ties and clean-shaven look of a Billy Graham, who offered a transdenominational, transracial, and transethnic alternative to traditional fundamentalism. The move away from separatist fundamentalism by these neo-evangelicals culminated in the formation of the National Association of Evangelicals in 1942, the establishment of Fuller Theological Seminary in 1947, and the creation of the magazine *Christianity Today* in 1956.¹⁴

Researchers who emphasize the role of competition and markets in sustaining religiosity add to the mosaic of interpretations. This market-driven approach assumes that vigorous competition between religious groups in a liberal capitalist society, rather than their social function or accommodation to modernity, explains the vitality of religion in the US. Its advocates attribute the rise in religious involvement and the resurgence of evangelicalism to the ability of religious suppliers to satisfy the demand for spiritual “goods”. In a similar vein, a

¹² Wuthnow, *Restructuring*, 14-53; Jerome L. Himmelstein, *To the Right: The Transformation of American Conservatism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); see also Etan Diamond, *Souls of the City: Religion and the Search for Community in Postwar America* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2003); James Hudnet-Beumler, *Looking for God in the Suburbs: The Religion of the American Dream and Its Critics* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994).

¹³ Hunter, *American Evangelicalism*, 39, 44; Carpenter, “Revive Us Again,” 109, 111-114, 116. See also Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*.

¹⁴ Wuthnow, *Restructuring*, 137-143; Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism*, 65-70; see also Hunter, *American Evangelicalism*, 41.

number of comparative interpretations note that the divergence in religiosity between the US and Western Europe is explained by the fact that European societies are more conservative, regulated, stable and less market-driven. Moral and normative codes are reinforced via community relations, publicly-funded social services and places of social and civic interaction. They provide more social and organic connections which tie individuals to each other, and thus do not require the church as a social space and as a spiritual home for their shared heritage and experience. Moreover, religious institutions are taken for granted, often in the context of established churches.¹⁵

Finally, we should note that some scholars question the whole concept of the US being out of sync with the trend toward secularization which characterizes other modern industrialized countries. Robert Inglehart, for example, maintains that the high levels of religiosity in the US can be explained on the basis of immigration rates from less developed areas, primarily Latin America, and the high levels of socio-economic inequality. Controlled for these factors, he argues, the US shows significant movement toward secularization. However, while religiosity is on the decline, a growing percentage of the public throughout advanced industrial societies spends time thinking about the meaning and purpose of life. Though organized religion is on the wane, but spiritual concerns are growing.¹⁶

The Political Mobilization of Evangelicals

In contrast to the controversies about the origins of the high levels of religiosity in the US and the evangelical resurgence, there is widespread agreement when it comes to explaining the conservative political alignment of conservative Protestants. Most studies of the rise of the New Christian Right in the US since the late 1970s axiomatically attribute the right-wing political affiliation of conservative Protestantism to the so-called “backlash” against the cultural and political upheaval in the aftermath of the 1960s. They frequently use the New Right and evangelical Christianity interchangeably, assuming a natural alliance of Christian fundamentalists, conservative Republicans, and disaffected southern Democrats. As James Davison Hunter argues, the “association between Protestant orthodoxy and political conservatism is perhaps the most reliable and enduring commonplaces concerning this subject.”¹⁷

In a nutshell, the backlash argument runs as follows: Beginning in the 1960s, desegregation and the Civil Rights movement alienated white Southerners from the Democrats, the Vietnam war split the party as protests ran afoul of the patriotic instincts of middle America, and economic problems and tax burdens of the Great Society ate into the party’s urban working-class base. Meanwhile, the War on Poverty appeared to condone immoral behavior and create welfare dependency, the growth of a “secular humanist” state relegated traditional religion to the sidelines, and the post-sixties culture of “permissiveness” clashed with lower

¹⁵ Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *The Churching of America, 1776-1990: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992); Roof, *Spiritual Marketplace*. See also Robert William Fogel, *The Fourth Great Awakening and the Future of Egalitarianism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

¹⁶ Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

¹⁷ Cited in Lienesch, *Redeeming America*, 19.

middle-class culture organized around family, church, and neighborhood. As a result, the traditional link between evangelicals and the Democratic party was severely strained in the 1960s. While the Democratic Party was torn apart, the Republicans gradually embraced right-wing populism and built a power base among disaffected white working and middle-class voters. The grass-roots organizing of the Christian Right in the 1970s mobilized these voters around “social issues” such as abortion, homosexuality, and the Equal Rights Amendment. The key to the political effectiveness of the right-wing resurgence, however, is not just the electoral power of the Christian Right, but also business financing. Beginning in the 1970s, big business abandoned the post-war consensus in which it had accepted more rigid labor laws and social legislation in exchange for social peace and government subsidies. Resentful of new regulatory agencies and social entitlements which cut into profitability, business mobilized across traditional divisions in pursuit of an anti-statist agenda. Business interests set up conservative think tanks, such as the American Enterprise Institute, the Hoover Institution, and the Heritage Foundation, funded advertising campaigns and Political Action Committees, and established pro-business research clusters at leading universities. After many twists and turns this resulted by the 1980s in a successful political movement which combined social and economic conservatism and rejected the post-war liberal consensus.¹⁸

Despite its widespread appeal and interpretive power, however, the backlash argument has serious shortcomings. For once, it runs counter to many of the interpretations of the evangelical resurgence outlined above, which focus on cognitive accommodation and institution-building in the post-war era, rather than on the post-sixties rejection of the liberal state and hostility to socio-cultural change. Moreover, by assuming a natural affinity between conservative Protestantism and right-wing politics, backlash advocates ignore the fact that in US history the link between theological and socio-economic conservatism remains tenuous at best. In the past, evangelicalism constituted a distinct cultural and intellectual tradition whose egalitarian and democratic impulses had fanned the flames of abolitionism, the women suffrage movement, Populism and American Socialism, and had arguably played a crucial part in the development of the American welfare state. Even by the mid-1970s, Robert Wuthnow found that at least two thirds of the critical studies of conservative religion failed to discover a link between theological conservatism and other forms of conservative beliefs.¹⁹

¹⁸ For good examples of the backlash argument see Clyde Wilcox, *Onward Christian Soldiers? The Religious Right in American Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996); Steve Bruce, *Conservative Protestant Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Robert Liebman and Robert Wuthnow, eds., *The New Christian Right* (New York: Aldine, 1983); Leo Ribuffo, *The Old Christian Right. The Protestant Far Right from the Great Depression to the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), 263; Lienesch, *Redeeming America*, 8; Himmelstein, *To the Right*, 136, 138-9. See also Christopher Lasch, *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991), 476, 477, 486-88.

¹⁹ Wuthnow cited in Ralph W. Hood and Ronald J. Morris, “Boundary Maintenance, Social-Political Views, and the Presidential Preference among High and Low Fundamentalists,” *Review of Religious Research* 27 (December 1985): 136. For a contrasting view which regards capitalism as one of the most divisive issues within American evangelicalism in recent decades see Craig Gay, *With Liberty and Justice for Whom? The Recent Evangelical Debate over Capitalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1991), 1-2. On the link between evangelicalism, social reform, and the welfare state see Fogel, *Fourth Great Awakening*.

Despite their gradual cultural alienation from the Democratic party and the Great Society, many evangelicals remained generally supportive of the New Deal welfare state and the politics of growth. George Wallace's insurgent campaign in 1968, for example, attracted a significant evangelical following with a platform that embraced social security increases, better health care, and the right to collective bargaining, prompting *National Review* to denounce Wallace's views as "Country and Western Marxism." At the other end of the political spectrum, Jimmy Carter's political stance illustrated that being a full-fledged evangelical did not mean being a political conservative. He initiated the policy of deregulation, but was not adamantly committed to laissez-faire economics. He was a born-again Christian and a Southerner, but also a defender of racial equality and social justice.²⁰ Until the 1980s evangelicals either grudgingly stayed with the Democrats or became independents, and their social conservatism did not necessarily translate into support for conservative economic policies. George Gallup found in the late 1980s that, although evangelicals were generally more conservative on matters of lifestyle than non-evangelicals, they were slightly more liberal on some economic issues. While 74% of non-evangelicals favored raising the minimum wage, 83% of evangelicals did. Only 8% of evangelicals but 9% of non-evangelicals, supported cutting entitlement programs to reduce the deficit. Large minorities of evangelicals identified with causes such as environmentalism (39%) and civil rights (33%). Two-thirds even supported the Equal Rights Amendment. The polls revealed that non-evangelicals and the religiously unaffiliated were the ones who were most clearly opposed to expanded government programs. The 1988 election, Gallup maintained, "suggests that Democratic candidates are not hurt by, and are actually helped by, relatively liberal economic programs."²¹

Another problem with the backlash scenario is that it regards conservative Protestantism primarily as a reaction *against* the cultural changes in the aftermath of the 1960s and thus tends to ignore the organizational, personal and cognitive links between evangelicalism and the Civil Rights movement, the counterculture, and even the New Left. Conservative Protestantism has a lot more in common with the sixties movements it loves to hate, and the boundaries between evangelicalism and the insurgent movements of the 1960s are rather more fluid than is commonly assumed. Evangelical revivalism with its egalitarian tradition, critique of established hierarchies, epistemological reliance on the immediacy of the divine, organizational emphasis on mobility, absence of strong institutional ties, embrace of Christian faith as an actively chosen status, and deliberate air of spontaneity closely resembles the agenda and expressive styles of the sixties' movements. The moral message is strict, but church structures are loose and casual. Particularly in the 1970s one could see people with long hair wearing granny dresses carrying fur-covered bibles and talking about getting high on Jesus.

²⁰ *National Review* cited in Lasch, *True and Only Heaven*, 505. On Carter see Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism*, 105; Leo Ribuffo, "God and Jimmy Carter," in *Transforming Faith*, ed. Bradbury and Gilbert, 155.

²¹ See Gallup and Castelli, *People's Religion*, 16, 94, 98, 215-217; quote on p. 249. On the continuing link between evangelicals and the Democratic party see Himmelstein, *To the Right*, 78-9; Layman, *The Great Divide*, 172; Rothenberg and Newport, *Evangelical Voter*, 77-78; Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, "The Election and the Evangelicals," *Commentary* 71 (March 1981): 25-31.

Moreover, the sixties' disenchantment with government and large-scale organizations allowed for a fairly easy cross-over between left-wing and right-wing grass-roots organizations, and many evangelical nonprofits developed out of the ideas and experiences of foot soldiers in the war against poverty. Although the language of "retrenchment," "privatization," and "empowerment of mediating structures" generated by the political right vilified the Great Society as promoting moral decline and big government, it actually envisioned the same kind of privatization of social services through local nonprofits - many of them faith-based - which had been pioneered by liberals and progressives via the War on Poverty. In the words of Todd Gitlin, "[w]hen Republicans claim they want the poor to make their own decisions rather than suffer from the whims of Washington bureaucrats. . . this is exactly the program of the New Left in the sixties, which believed that "people should make the decisions that affect their own lives."²² In the same vein, the New Christian Right appropriated the rhetoric and organizing techniques of the Civil Rights movement and sixties insurgencies, as the right-to-life campaign indicates. Moreover, this appropriation of the countercultural rhetoric allowed evangelicals to revive the radicalism of nineteenth century producer-class ideology in terms derived from the expressive styles and language of the sixties. Their religious conversionism repackaged the sixties agenda of personal liberation and individual self-actualization in ways which affirmed the entrepreneurial market individual.²³

Revising the Backlash Theory

This suggests that the orthodoxies which still dominate the literature, namely the notion that the political mobilization of conservative Protestantism rests solely on the "backlash," the assumption that it was primarily a reaction against the growth of the liberal state, and the view that there is an inherent affinity between conservative Protestantism and right-wing politics, need to be revised. Hence, this paper takes a closer look at a largely ignored aspect of the evangelical resurgence, namely the fact that in the half-century since the end of World War II the relationship between religious groups and the federal government in the US changed dramatically under the auspices of the Cold War. Evangelicalism underwent a historic inner change and reentered the political arena at exactly the same time when the state expanded and church-state relations changed with far-reaching political consequences.

Seeking to shore up national defense, ensure international security, generate economic growth, and create social stability, Cold War policy-makers developed close funding ties with

²² Todd Gitlin, "Straight from the Sixties: What Conservatives Owe to the Decade They Hate," *The American Prospect* 26 (May-June 1996): 54-59.

²³ On the link between evangelicalism and the insurgent movements of the 1960s see Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 241-59; Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Steven M. Tipton, *Getting Saved from the Sixties: Moral Meaning in Conversion and Cultural Change* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Stephen A. Kent, *From Slogans to Mantras: Social Protest and Religious Conversion in the Late Vietnam War Era* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2001); Robert Wuthnow, *The Consciousness Reformation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); Randall Balmer, *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: A Journey into the Evangelical Subculture in America* (New York, 1989), 19-25; Carpenter, "Revive Us Again," 105; Warner, *New Wine in Old Wineskins*, 72, 141-153.

religious charities in such diverse areas as health care, higher education, welfare services, and foreign aid. Moreover, the post-war era provided religious groups with opportunities to reassert their spiritual mission by linking it to America's new global role as "defender of the Free World." The institutional and ideological construction of the Cold War state largely neutralized the two main obstacles to the integration of religious groups, namely post-war Supreme Court rulings which strengthened the legendary "wall of separation between church and state" and misgivings among many religious groups about closer ties to the state. While the state drew upon the resources of religious entities, it also safeguarded their organizational autonomy and effectively sanctioned their faith-based practices. By the same token, the integration of religious groups helped cushion the political impact of the massive expansion of the Cold War state by preserving the image of limited government. Institutionally, as well as ideologically, state and religious nonprofits thus became closely intertwined under the auspices of the Cold War state.

The state-private networks which developed during this time between the federal government and religious agencies have so far received little systematic attention in Cold War scholarship. A closer analysis, however, is likely to revise significantly our understanding of the Cold War state and the religious dimension of post-war political realignments. Crucially, funding relations between church and state developed not only with mainline Protestant, Jewish and Catholic organizations, but also with white evangelicals, who had traditionally been the most outspoken opponents of closer ties between church and state. The post-war expansion of the welfare and national security state was marked by the growing involvement of evangelical service providers. This suggests that Cold War state-building and the resurgence of evangelicalism mutually reinforced each other in ways which nurtured both the expansion of the federal government and the growth of religious agencies.

These findings also indicate that in order to understand the political mobilization of post-war evangelicalism, we need to move beyond the focus on the "backlash" and examine more closely the Cold War state, the transformation of church-state relations, and the "statist turn" of conservative Protestantism. For this purpose the paper focuses in particular on religious colleges and universities, hospitals, social service providers, and international relief agencies - institutions which were regarded as vital to Cold War preparedness and became major beneficiaries of federal largesse.

The Cold War State, Nonprofit Organizations, and Religious Charities

In the period after World War II, policy-makers had a difficult task on their hands. On the one hand they could meet the post-war exigencies of global power only by expanding the administrative capacities of the nation-state. On the other hand, they were hemmed in by the war-time and post-war rejection of New Deal-style interventionism and deeply rooted traditions of hostility to a strong centralized government. In their attempt to reconcile these conflicting impulses, Cold War policy-makers ended up constructing an entirely new administrative state

which combined the publicly-funded growth of private and nonprofit organizations with the expansion of the federal government.

This extensive reliance of the state upon the administrative capacities of nongovernmental agencies is one of the least recognized and analyzed features of Cold War social and foreign policy. There is significant debate among scholars about whether “subsidiarity”, “corporatism”, the “allocative state”, “third-party government”, or, in a broader context, the “politics of growth” is best suited to describe these state-private networks. There is little controversy about their basic features, however. The federal government sought to attain many of its policy objectives by funding and regulating activities of private and nonprofit organizations, rather than by creating government agencies and providing services directly. Post-war policy makers devised a subsidiarist state which combined centralized revenue gathering and policy planning with the devolution of policy implementation to non-governmental actors. In addition, planners relied upon fiscal and tax policies, rather than on economic redistribution and direct public control, as the main instrument for achieving growth and social stability. War-time cooperation between government and business had paved the way for a shift from New Deal-style planning to growth-inducing policies via Keynesian deficit spending. Combining national security and welfarist components, massive federal funding was made available to private business and nonprofit organizations in order to build up military industries, promote foreign investment, expand higher education and the human services infrastructure, and boost consumer spending. State-private networks thus became the administrative core of Cold War public policy and a key instrument in the massive expansion of the federal government after World War II.²⁴

Meanwhile, many religious charities, remembering the devastating financial impact of the Great Depression, had relaxed their opposition to public subsidies. Eager to rebuild their institutional base after the war, expand their growing foreign relief and missionary activities, and cultivate religion’s positive wartime image, even the more separatist religious organizations were willing to rethink their traditional stance. These tendencies were encouraged by the ideological convergence between church and state in the post-war years. In the social welfare field, many post-war planners saw religious agencies as natural allies in solving some of the most pressing social and moral concerns of the war and post-war years, such family disorder, alcohol consumption, divorce, vice, and crime. The “poverty knowledge” underlying federal social policy throughout the Cold War attributed deprivation to behavioral deviance and social deficiencies, rather than to structural inequality and the maldistribution of income. This

²⁴ On the post-war state see Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, eds., *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); Alan Wolfe, *America’s Impasse: The Rise and Fall of the Politics of Growth* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981); and Michael Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States Since the 1930s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), esp. 71-86. On subsidiarity see Lester H. Salamon, *Partners in Public Service: Government-Nonprofit Relations in the Modern Welfare State* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 18ff.; Steven Rathgeb Smith and Michael Lipsky, *Nonprofits for Hire: The Welfare State in the Age of Contracting* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1993), 179-80; Peter Dobkin Hall, “The Welfare State and the Careers of Public and Private Institutions Since 1945,” in Lawrence J. Friedman and Mark D. McGarvie, *Charity, Philanthropy and Civility in American History* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2003), 363-383.

matched the faith-based approach advocated by many religious groups, which focused on moral norms and spiritual conversion.²⁵

Subsidiarity and fiscal policies set the stage for closer organizational ties between church and state, but the needs of the Cold War state were not just administrative, but also ideological. Policy-makers knew that religious belief in a just cause, a world view based on a clear distinction between good and evil, adherence to moral principles, and strong enemy images were effective tools during the Cold War. By depicting the Cold war as a battle against an enemy who not only needed to be defeated militarily, but also spiritually and culturally, they tied national security to a renewed commitment to traditional religion. In the words of Dwight Eisenhower, “when God comes in, communism has to go.”²⁶ The link between the constitutional order and Christianity was given symbolic expression when the words “under God” were added to the Pledge of Allegiance, which, as William Miller put it, had “its rhythm upset but its anti-Communist spirituality improved.”²⁷

In turn, religious groups were keen to bolster the religious component in American society by showing that moral character based on Judeo-Christian teachings was an indispensable component in the battle against the evils of totalitarianism. They moved to the forefront of the process of sanctifying American liberal democracy in order to bolster the nation in the spiritual struggle of the Cold War. Many churches embraced the opportunity to counter the long-term trend towards understanding democracy and American liberty as the result of an anti-clerical Enlightenment tradition, secular values, and pragmatist ethics, and few had second thoughts about the finer differences between the Kingdom of God and the American way of life. As influential Presbyterian minister Edward L. R. Elson pointed out in a sermon to an audience which included Eisenhower and Vice-President Nixon, the axe of the pioneer “has become America’s gigantic industrial machine, and the world sees that. His gun has become America’s powerful armament, and the world knows it well. His Book, by the power of the Person revealed therein, is pouring forth the light of a new spiritual rebirth, and the world must clearly see that.”²⁸ Or, as Billy Graham put it, “[i]f you would be a true patriot, then become a Christian. If you would be a loyal American, then become a loyal Christian.”²⁹

²⁵ On religious charities see Robert A. Wuthnow, Virginia Hodgkinson and Associates, *Faith and Philanthropy in America: Exploring the Role of Religion in America’s Voluntary Sector* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990); Michael O’Neill, *The Third America: The Emergence of the Nonprofit Sector in the United States* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989). On “poverty knowledge” see Alice O’Connor, *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Axel R. Schaefer, “Evangelicalism, Social Reform and the US Welfare State, 1970-1996,” in *Religious and Secular Reform in America: Ideas, Beliefs and Social Change*, ed. David K. Adams and Cornelius A. van Minnen (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 249-273.

²⁶ Quoted in Richard V. Pierard and Robert D. Lindner, *Civil Religion and the Presidency* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Academie Books, 1988), 197.

²⁷ William Lee Miller, *Piety Along the Potomac: Notes on Politics and Morals in the Fifties* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964), 41.

²⁸ *Christianity Today* 1 (February 4, 1957): 38.

²⁹ Quoted in Anne C. Loveland, *American Evangelicals and the U.S. Military, 1942-1993* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 37. I have explored the ideological links in Axel R. Schäfer, “Neo-Evangelikalismus, amerikanische Außenpolitik und die NATO, 1941-1961,” in *Religion und Zivilreligion im atlantischen Bündnis*, ed. Berthold Meyer and Werner Kremp (Trier: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2001), 235-55.

Together, Cold War subsidiarity, the ideological convergence between church and state, and the religious nonprofit sector's new-found openness to government fundamentally reshaped the relationship between religion and the federal government. Post-war policy makers, eager to expand the links with voluntary organizations, could hardly ignore the resources and capacities of religious charities, which constitute about 40 percent of the organizations in the nonprofit sector and account for as much as two-thirds of its donated revenues and volunteer labor force.³⁰ Hence, in the social welfare field, tax exemptions, loans, vouchers, grants-in-aid and purchase-of-service agreements funneled billions of dollars of public funds into religiously-affiliated hospitals, nursing homes, educational institutions, and social services. This enabled the vast expansion of federally funded welfare provision during the Cold War and provided religious groups with new access to public funds and political influence. By the same token, government use of religious foreign aid agencies, funding of the chaplainry in the armed forces, donation of surplus land and military facilities to religious charities, and support for overseas mission work undergirded Cold War foreign policy goals while underwriting the expansion of religious agencies. This integration of religious groups played a crucial role in constructing the divergent ideological underpinnings of the Cold War state, which combined the image of limited government, the sanctification of liberal capitalism and American-style democracy, and the massive expansion of the state's military and welfare components.³¹

The mutual construction of the state and religious nonprofits on the basis of the institutional and ideological trajectories of Cold War public policy is best observed in the areas which policy-makers considered vital for sustaining national defense, creating social stability, and safeguarding international security: higher education, hospitals, social services, and foreign aid. Despite the prevalence of religious organizations in these fields, remarkably little reliable statistical information on religiously-based nonprofits and funding ties with the government exists. Likewise, data on federal support to nonprofits is difficult to obtain. No government-wide overview is available, and although nonprofit organizations were by the 1980s eligible participants in 564 out of approximately 1000 federal programs, few of these programs maintained sufficient data to identify the scale of resources flowing to nonprofits. Hence, snapshot information gleaned from rich but unstandardized data from a variety of sources has to suffice to trace the main outlines of this relationship and the transformation of church-state relations under the auspices of the Cold War in the social and national security policy arenas.³²

While church organizations were barely involved in the vast federal New Deal social programs, beginning in the mid-1940s the federal government broadened its use of religious agencies in its pursuit of the expansion of higher education, defense-related research, hospital

³⁰ Peter Dobkin Hall and Colin B. Burke, "Historical Statistics of the United States Chapter on Voluntary, Nonprofit, and Religious Entities and Activities: Underlying Concepts, Concerns, and Opportunities," *Working Paper #14* (Cambridge: The Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations, Harvard University, 2002), 9; Stephen V. Monsma, *When Sacred and Secular Mix: Religious Nonprofit Organizations and Public Money* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996), 8-9, 67.

³¹ On public funding for religious nonprofits see especially Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*; and Bernard Coughlin, *Church and State in Social Welfare* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965).

³² Hall and Burke, "Historical Statistics," 9, 27-8; Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 12-13; Salamon, *Partners*, 86; and Ellen F. Netting, "Secular and Religious Funding of Church-Related Agencies," *Social Service Review* 56 (1982): 587, 601.

building, community development, and foreign aid. The 1944 GI Bill, which granted stipends for tuition and living expenses of veterans, funneled large amounts of federal monies into religious colleges and universities. In addition, the 1958 National Defense Education Act provided new funds for college construction, student loans, and science teaching. Even in the controversial area of federal funding for parochial schools, church-state ties continued to get stronger in the post-war period. Tax money subsidized bus transportation, textbooks, and auxiliary educational services.³³ Similarly, the 1947 Hill-Burton Hospital Survey and Construction Act made federal funds available for hospitals and other medical facilities, including those run by sectarian institutions. The expansion of this program throughout the 1950s and 60s resulted in the progressive increase in the share of funds received by religious organizations. In total, over half the funds allocated under the Hill-Burton Act went to the private and nonprofit sectors, and of these the largest category was the religious one. The state's expansion of the nation's hospital infrastructure was thus to a large extent achieved by funding church institutions.³⁴

The Great Society, more than any previous expansion of government social provision, brought religiously-based organizations into the public-private funding arrangement. Higher education laws passed in 1963 and 1965 made an unprecedented amount of federal money available to church colleges via federal student loans, capital financing, research contracts and subsidized construction loans. Moreover, the landmark 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act established a precedent for the controversial funding for parochial schools by providing indirect federal funds to students, ushering in the large-scale conversion of conservatives to public funding for private schools. In the health care field, Medicaid and Medicare became large-scale funding sources for religiously-based hospitals, mental health institutions, and nursing homes. The most dramatic change, however, came in the area of social service funding, where the federal government had not played a prominent role until the early 1960s, though state and local ties with religious charities were well established. Emphasizing direct federal-to-nonprofit allocation, the War on Poverty helped finance congregation-based child care, church-based anti-poverty programs, job creation schemes, migrant worker support, and mental health centers. The 1967 Social Security amendments (Title IV-A) in particular proved a watershed both in terms of the expansion of the federal role in social service funding and the reliance upon both religious and secular nonprofits. Prohibitions against federal funding for voluntary agencies were dropped, and the open-ended program allocated almost unlimited amounts of money to states for the contracting out of social services.³⁵ "Three or four years

³³ On higher education see Hall and Burke, "Historical Statistics," 12, 29-30; Hall, "Careers," 364, 378ff; Theda Skocpol, "Religion, Civil Society, and Social Provision in the U.S.," in *Who Will Provide? The Changing Role of Religion in American Social Welfare*, ed. Mary Jo Bane (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 2000), 26. On schools see John Lee Eighmy, *Churches in Cultural Captivity: A History of the Social Attitudes of Southern Baptists* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1972), 160.

³⁴ Coughlin, *Church and State*, 47.

³⁵ Eighmy, *Churches in Captivity*, 160, 164-66; Smith and Lipsky, *Nonprofits for Hire*, 50-71; Stephen Rathgeb Smith and Deborah A. Stone, "The Unexpected Consequences of Privatization," in *Remaking the Welfare State. Retrenchment and Social Policy in America and Europe*, ed. Michael K. Brown (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 235-38; Salamon, *Partners*, 85-86; Stanley Lowell, *The Great Church-State Fraud* (Washington, D.C.: Robert B. Luce, 1973), 168-70, 173-4, 178-82, 188; Martha Derthick, *Uncontrollable Spending for Social Services* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1975), 8.

ago it was impossible for a federal agency to give a direct grant to a religious group”, Office of Economic Opportunity director Sargent Shriver remarked, “today we are giving hundreds of grants without violating the principle of separation of church and state.”³⁶

Despite attempts to reign in the spiraling costs in the 1970s and the cuts during the Reagan administration, the precedent set by the Great Society remained a stable element of post-sixties relations between government and the nonprofit sector. In particular, the federal government increased expenditures in established entitlement programs, such as Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare, which frequently involved religious nonprofit providers. In addition, state governments increasingly spent funds to purchase services from nonprofit agencies. More recent legislation, such as the 1990 Child Care and Development Block Grant, the “charitable choice” provision in the landmark 1996 welfare reform legislation, and the Bush administration’s “faith-based initiative” opened up further opportunities for religious agencies to participate in federal funding streams. Although many observers consider these laws a novel breach in the wall of separation between church and state, from the perspective of post-war subsidiarity they simply strengthened the legislative basis of a long-established pattern of church-state cooperation.³⁷

These domestic funding streams which undergirded the state-private network in the welfare state had equivalents in the national security arena. Foreign aid in particular was the quintessential Cold War program, linking the expansion of government to the growth of voluntary agencies in the pursuit of the combined goals of military support, commercial access, humanitarian aid, and containment. International relief became a popular area of cooperation between church and state and engineered the integration of previously marginalized religious groups into US foreign policy on the basis of their embrace of strict anti-communism. The main funding ties developed in the aftermath of the federal government’s decision to fund ocean freight costs in 1947, to provide US surplus food distribution abroad under the Agricultural Act of 1949 and the 1954 Food for Peace legislation (Public Law 480), and to offer international technical assistance under Truman’s Point Four proposals, which later developed into the AID program.³⁸ In 1948, a subcommittee of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs acknowledged that voluntary agencies which “represent in part the interest of American religious groups” should be seen as “an essential counterpart of foreign assistance programs”, and in 1962, AID Director Fowler Hamilton reported that the use of religiously-

³⁶ Quoted in Lowell, *Church-State Fraud*, 178.

³⁷ On legislation since the 1970s see Smith and Lipsky, *Nonprofits for Hire*, 54-7, 62-3, 67; Mary M. Bogle, “A Survey of Congregation-Based Child Care in the United States,” in *Sacred Places, Civic Purposes: Should Government Help Faith-Based Charity*, ed. E. J. Dionne, Jr., and Ming Hsu Chen (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001), 226-7; Barbara Gottschalk and Peter Gottschalk, “The Reagan Retrenchment in Historical Context,” in *Remaking the Welfare State*, ed. Brown, 61-71; Smith and Stone, “Unexpected Consequences,” 239-240; and Hall, “Careers,” 381-2. On the most recent legislation see Stanley Carlson-Thiess, “Charitable Choice: Bringing Religion Back Into American Welfare,” *Journal of Policy History* 13 (2001): 114-5; Paula F. Pipes and Helen Rose Ebaugh, “Faith-Based Coalitions, Social Services, and Government Funding,” *Sociology of Religion* 63 (2002): 49-68.

³⁸ Bruce Nichols, *The Uneasy Alliance: Religion, Refugee Work, and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 207-8; Department of State, Agency for International Development, “Involvement of Religious Affiliated Institutions in the U.S. Foreign Aid Program,” in: Fowler Hamilton to Clinton P. Anderson, 9 November 1962, National Association of Evangelicals Records (SC-113), Buswell Memorial Library, Wheaton College, Illinois (hereafter cited as NAE Records).

affiliated institutions for foreign aid purposes “has been confirmed by legislation enacted by the Congress for every year from 1947 through the foreign aid legislation enacted this year.”³⁹

By 1962, religiously-affiliated voluntary agencies handled 70 percent of surplus food distribution. Between the 1950s and the 1980s, the Escapee Program first implemented by the Truman administration funneled millions to religious relief organizations helping eastern European and Soviet refugees, and the State Department’s Bureau for Refugee Programs made ample use of missionary societies in the Far East. Churches also benefited from war claims legislation, in which enemy assets confiscated by the US were used to fund the building of religious institutions, as happened in the Philippines under the War Claims Act of 1948 and subsequent legislation. Moreover, the Cuban refugee crisis of 1960-61 ushered in new federal funding streams for resettlement work of religious agencies, culminating in the Kennedy administration’s policy of extending welfare services to asylum seekers via direct assistance to voluntary agencies. The “triumph of subsidiarity” (Bruce Nichols) was thus firmly entrenched in the foreign aid field between church and state before the Vietnam war.⁴⁰

Despite attempts to separate between secular and religious activities, the distinction remained blurry, particularly as military and humanitarian goals merged. Catholic and evangelical Protestant agencies with strong anti-communist heritages, in particular, were often much less concerned about taking federal funds and being identified with government goals than many secular agencies, who feared that they would become tools of American foreign policy. This was especially the case after the disaster in Vietnam, which led to a shake-up of the funding networks between the government and voluntary agencies. According to one survey, by the 1990s the number of secular agencies not receiving any public funds was higher than that of religiously-based ones, and out of 13 international aid and relief agencies with total revenues of over \$80 million registered with the United States Agency for International Development in 1991, seven were religiously based.⁴¹

In summation, Cold War subsidiarity, particularly during the 1960s, fuelled both the expansion of the federal government and the growth of nonprofit agencies and linked them together in ever closer networks. By the early 1980s, overall federal support to the nonprofit sector amounted to \$40.4 billion, representing about 36 percent of federal spending and 35 percent of nonprofit income in a wide range of areas. State and local government added another estimated \$8-\$10 billion to this total. Federal funds constituted on average 36 per cent of the overall revenue of hospitals and health care providers, 22 per cent of the income of educational and research institutions, and 55 per cent of the combined funds of social service providers and foreign aid agencies, with many individual charities receiving over 70 percent of their funds from federal and state sources. By the same token, the growth of philanthropic

³⁹ Fowler Hamilton to Clinton P. Anderson, 9 November 1962, 1-2, NAE Records. Hamilton cites House Report 1845, 80th Congress, 2nd Session.

⁴⁰ Fowler Hamilton to Clinton P. Anderson, 9 November 1962, 4, 5, NAE Records; Nichols, *Uneasy Alliance*, 208-10; Lowell, *Church-State Fraud*, 164, 168.

⁴¹ Nichols, *Uneasy Alliance*, 100-131, 210; Scott Flipse, “To Save ‘Free Vietnam’ and Lose Our Souls,” in *The Foreign Mission Enterprise at Home: Explorations in American Cultural History*, ed. Daniel H. Bays and Grant Wacker (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003), 206-222; Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 9-10. See also Loveland, *Evangelicals and the Military*.

entities paralleled the rise of the national security and welfare state in the period after World War II. In 1950, there were 50,000 charitable nonprofits registered with the Internal Revenue Service. By 1967, the number had increased to 300,000. By 1992, there were approximately 1.4 million nonprofits, with a total income of \$316 billion.⁴²

The available data also clearly shows that religious entities were part and parcel of both the expansion of the nonprofit sector and the subsidiarist funding arrangements. Although all the main denominational groups participated in post-war subsidiarity, Catholic agencies tended to be the prime beneficiaries, reflecting both the greater willingness of Catholics to accept public funds and the greater number of Catholic charities in areas where funding ties had a long tradition. However, particularly Protestant organizations increasingly caught up. Among religiously-affiliated colleges and universities, a survey from the early 1990s showed that 97 per cent received public funds, and that the percentage of government funds was higher among religiously-based institutions than among secular ones. Mainline Protestants and Catholics had largely pulled even, with 25 percent of mainline Protestant and 23 percent of Catholic institutions receiving more than 20 percent of their funds from public sources.⁴³

Among religiously based hospitals, nursing homes, children's institutions, and children's services surveyed in the early 1960s, 71 per cent had contractual agreements providing for government assistance, usually in the form of purchase of service arrangements, and sectarian hospitals had received close to \$330 million in Hill-Burton funds. By the 1990s, 65 percent of Catholic Charities' revenues came from government sources, as did 75 percent of the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services' revenues, and 92 percent of Lutheran Social Ministries' revenues. Around 60 percent of Catholic and Protestant child service agencies received over 60 percent of their income from public sources, although religious agencies received on average less of their income from public funds than their secular counterparts.

In the foreign aid field, close to 70 percent of Catholic Relief Services agency income came from government sources by the 1980s. The respective figures for the (mainline Protestant) Church World Service was 43.6 percent, for Lutheran World Relief 24 percent. A survey from the early 1990s shows that, overall, 70 percent of religious agencies reported receiving public funds. Although religious foreign aid agencies received less of their budget from public sources than secular organizations, the percentage of secular agencies receiving no government funds at all was significantly higher (36 percent) than among religious agencies (30 percent).⁴⁴

⁴² Salamon, *Partners*, 87-93; Hall, "Careers," 363-4.

⁴³ For data sources see footnote 44.

⁴⁴ The data on public funding of religious agencies is taken from the following sources: Robert Wuthnow, "Religion and the Voluntary Spirit in the United States: Mapping the Terrain," in *Faith and Philanthropy*, ed. Wuthnow et al., 15-16; Virginia A. Hodgkinson, Murray S. Weitzman, Arthur D. Kirsch, "From Commitment to Action: How Religious Involvement Affects Giving and Volunteering," in *Faith and Philanthropy*, ed. Wuthnow et al., 96; Coughlin, *Church and State*, 60, 64, 67-73, 130, 159-62; Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 1, 9-10, 68-70, 72-3, 78; Eighmy, *Churches in Captivity*, 160; Nichols, *Uneasy Alliance*, 211.

Evangelicals and the Cold War State

The most intriguing figures, however, are not the ones which trace the growing participation of Catholics, mainline Protestants, and Jewish groups, which had by and large had embraced closer church-state ties and subsidiarity in the Cold War era. The real enigma is that conservative Protestant organizations, which had the longest tradition in upholding the banner of church-state separation, shared fully in this public funding arrangement and in some fields even reported larger proportions of their budgets coming from government sources than other religious providers. The longing to “Christianize” the state, identification with Cold War policy goals, and the desire for agency growth and political access were strong incentives to bring about a change of attitude among many evangelical organizations.

Reliance on government funds was most evident in the higher education arena. Federal loans for Southern Baptist schools through 1962, for example, added up to \$36.6 million for dormitories and \$4.7 million for students even before the Great Society programs made federal funds available on an unprecedented scale to private schools for classrooms, libraries, laboratories, teaching equipment, and student aid.⁴⁵ Higher education also exemplifies the fundamental revision in church-state thinking which characterized evangelicalism outside of Southern Baptism during the Cold War. On the one hand, the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) ran a vitriolic anti-Catholic campaign against public funding for parochial schools and was closely affiliated with the separatist lobbying group *Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State* (POAU) throughout the 1950s and 60s. On the other hand, the emphasis among many conservative Protestants was beginning to shift from insisting on church-state separation to protecting the spiritual mission under public funding arrangements. Despite denouncing the “syndromes of socialism” and “the penetration of naturalistic humanism,” a leading speaker at an evangelical conference on church-state relations in 1963 regarded federal funds to higher education as more acceptable to evangelicals because they were available via tuition waivers, rather than via direct grants and contracts. Pointing to the Christian’s “obligation to the defense needs of his country in a world threatened by militant, scientific and atheistic communism”, he concluded that the main issue for evangelical colleges was “not whether they will accept some form of Federal aid, but how they can preserve their spiritual integrity, autonomy, and goals in doing so.”⁴⁶ By the 1990s, conservative Protestant colleges and universities were outstripping Catholic and mainline Protestant entities in the receipt of public funds, with 35 percent of conservative Protestant institutions receiving more than 20 percent of income coming from public sources.⁴⁷ In the health care field, a 1963 survey of aid to Southern Baptist institutions revealed that grants under the Hill-Burton Act amounted to almost \$12.8 million. Again, these funding ties developed despite the fact that the Southern Baptist Convention had consistently condemned the acceptance of Hill-Burton money. Among both Southern Baptists and evangelicals affiliated with the NAE, pragmatic considerations, however, often clashed with church

⁴⁵ Eighmy, *Churches in Captivity*, 166.

⁴⁶ James Forrester, “Federal Aid to Higher Education and the Church Related College,” National Conference on Church-State Relations, NAE, Winona Lake, Indiana, 6-8 March 1963, 1, 6, NAE Records.

⁴⁷ Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 68, 72-3.

doctrine as heavy expenditure for new equipment and rising operational costs made it increasingly harder for administrators to pursue a policy of outright rejection of government funds.⁴⁸ Indicating the new direction of church-state thinking, NAE Executive Director R.L. Decker warned in a 1963 review of public funding for religious institutions that the “complete observance of separation of Church and State often times seem to evangelicals to be encouragements toward the development of a purely secular state.”⁴⁹

In the welfare realm, evangelicals tended to quietly condone public funding as ties between religious agencies and government had a long tradition on the state and local levels. A study of a Midwestern agency of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod revealed that it received 38 percent of its total budget from public funds in 1950. By 1980, the figure had increased to 59 percent. In the case of the Salvation Army, which was affiliated with the NAE, the percentage of government funds in overall agency income increased from 4 percent in 1974-5 to 17 percent by fiscal year 1979-80. Although in overall terms evangelical social service agencies received a lower percentage of their total income from public sources than Catholic or mainline agencies, 39 percent of conservative Protestant child service agencies surveyed in the 1990s reported receiving more than 60 percent their income from public funds.⁵⁰

Finally, in the foreign aid field, government imperatives to expand administrative capacities and the resurgence of evangelicalism produced an array of new links between the state and conservative Protestantism. Seventh-Day Adventists, the Salvation Army, and the NAE’s World Relief Corporation (WRC), became major players in government funded transportation and distribution of surplus foods, hospital building, land reclamation programs, and similar endeavors. In the ensuing decades, an array of federal grants and contracts helped World Vision, a California-based evangelical relief agency established in 1952, become one of the largest international aid providers. By the 1990s, only a quarter of evangelical international aid organizations received no government funds, as opposed to one half of mainline Protestant agencies. 17 percent of conservative Protestant foreign aid agencies received more than 40 percent of their income from public funds.⁵¹

Public Policy and the Separation of Church and State

On the surface, the pervasive nature of church-state funding ties in general, and the integration of evangelical Protestants in particular, is difficult to square with both the constitutional separation of church and state and with the anti-establishmentarian traditions within American religion. However, as the following analysis will show, the structures of the subsidiarist state and the transformation of church-state attitudes among religious groups together provided a

⁴⁸ Eighmy, *Churches in Captivity*, 160, 165; Coughlin, *Church and State*, 81-2, 108-10, 160; Lowell, *Church-State Fraud*, 148, 170-1.

⁴⁹ R. L. Decker, “Government Grants and Loans to Charitable Institutions,” National Conference on Church-State Relations, NAE, Winona Lake, Indiana, 6-8 March 1963, 5, NAE Records.

⁵⁰ Netting, “Secular and Religious Funding,” 590-91; Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 72-3.

⁵¹ Nichols, *Uncertain Alliance*, 92-3, 211; Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 182; Report of the Executive Director N.A.E. World Relief Commission, Inc. [Wendell L. Rockey] to the Executive Committee and the Board of Administration of NAE, Los Angeles, California, 4 April 1967, n.p., NAE Records.

way of reconciling these divergent impulses. This sheds new light on the nature of the Cold War state and the relationship between religion and politics in the US after World War II.

The expansion of funding for religious groups during the Cold War was circumscribed by constitutional law on the one hand, and bureaucratic processes on the other. Legally, the long established practice of state aid to church-related institutions came under more intense scrutiny in response to the development of large-scale federal funding for religious providers after World War II. Ironically, however, the various decisions by the Supreme Court in the post-war period, while rhetorically upholding the hallowed principle of the wall of separation between church and state and prohibiting public aid in primary and secondary education, left a vast array of government subsidies to church-based hospitals, colleges, welfare organizations, and foreign aid agencies unchallenged.⁵²

The landmark 1947 *Everson v. Board of Education* decision was a case in point. In this case, the Court handed down a thundering defense of the no-aid-to-religion doctrine based on the establishment clause of the Constitution and Jefferson's adage of the "wall of separation". It asserted that public funds should not be used to finance religious primary and secondary education. Nonetheless, the Court upheld the legality of New Jersey's public support for student transportation by arguing that the money was provided for the secular aspect of parochial schools only. In turn, although the *Everson* decision had declared aid to religious education illegal, its backing for state funding of services which supported the *public* purposes of sectarian institutions was used by the courts to uphold public aid to sectarian social welfare agencies. For example, a spate of state court cases asserted the constitutionality of the Hill-Burton Act by distinguishing between the religious auspices of an institution and its public purpose. Surprisingly, even the vast expansion of federal funding for church-related agencies during the Great Society raised few legal eyebrows. Church-state funding during the War on Poverty, as one of its most vocal critics notes, "has appeared remarkably elusive so far as lawsuits are concerned."⁵³

In 1971, public funding for religious schools became yet again the basis for a Supreme Court ruling which formulated another legal principle governing church-state funding ties. Pulling the constitutional rug from under state programs which supplemented salaries of teachers in religiously-based schools teaching secular subjects, *Lemon v. Kurzman* permitted funding of faith-based organizations only if the law establishing the program had a secular purpose, neither advanced nor inhibited religion, and did not foster an excessive government entanglement with religion. It also established that if a school receiving public money was "pervasively sectarian," state aid violated the first Amendment. As in the *Everson* case, however, the apparently restrictive nature of the ruling did not seriously question the established funding ties between government and religious groups in other areas. Decisions upholding the vast government aid programs funneling funds to religious colleges, universities, and sectarian welfare organizations show that the Court continued to apply different standards to schools than to other religious institutions. Despite landmark decisions on church-state rela-

⁵² N. J. Demerath III and Rhys H. Williams, "A Mythical Past and Uncertain Future," in *Church-State Relations: Tensions and Transitions*, ed. Thomas Robbins and Roland Robertson (New Brunswick: Transition Books, 1987), 77-90; Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 30-31.

⁵³ Coughlin, *Church and State*, 44-48, 129. Quote in Lowell, *Church-State Fraud*, 189.

tions, the Supreme Court has thus neither established well-developed legal principles nor been consistent in its rulings on government aid to religious agencies.⁵⁴

The second potential constraint upon public funding of religious entities is procedural and bureaucratic. In keeping with Court rulings, many federal statutes and regulations bar direct subsidies to churches and prohibit aid to religious agencies if they engage in religious instruction, discriminate in their employment and admission policies on the basis of religious belief, and display of religious symbols. Nonetheless, as we have seen, this has not stood in the way of funding religiously-affiliated institution. Neither have the prohibitions resulted in the significant curtailment of sectarian practices among religious agencies receiving public funds. The fears expressed by many critics of subsidiarity, particularly those from strict religious backgrounds, that public funding leads to government control and loss of agency autonomy, has proven largely unfounded. Despite a number of highly publicized cases of government interference and a plethora of statutes prohibiting public support for sectarian practices, few agencies experienced any federally mandated curtailments. When it came to the limitations on sectarian practices, government funding came with few strings attached.⁵⁵

The reasons for this benign neglect can be found in the political and ideological underpinnings of Cold War subsidiarity. One of the crucial political assets of the state-private network is that it renders big government palatable to a public which associates allocative policies with cost reduction, self-help, flexibility, and the responsiveness of local services, and regards them as alternatives to impersonal state bureaucracies. Subsidiarity mobilizes political support for welfare and national security policies “by deemphasizing their governmental nature and pretending that they conformed to more traditional American values.”⁵⁶ Much of the growth of government after World War II was thus hidden behind the smoke-screen of subsidiarity. The number of federal employees per 1,000 people in the population declined in real terms between 1954 and 1979 by more than 10 per cent, and despite the marked increase in the range of federal responsibilities, the federal budget as part of the Gross National Product remained comparatively stable around 20 per cent. The elaborate funding arrangements made with state and local government, nonprofit providers, and private players ensured that federal support frequently did not appear in the federal budget.⁵⁷

This also explains why government support often reaches nonprofits indirectly and why the expansion of federal funding for nonprofits was in most cases accompanied by the loosening, rather than the tightening of regulatory controls, especially during the Great Society. In 1980, only 20 percent of all federal aid to nonprofits came directly from the govern-

⁵⁴ Anna Greenberg, “Doing Whose Work? Faith-Based Organizations and Government Partnerships,” in *Who Will Provide?*, ed. Bane, 180; Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 31-41; Hall and Burke, “Historical Statistics,” 17.

⁵⁵ E. Theodore Bachmann, ed., *Churches and Social Welfare*, Vol. III (National Council of Churches in Christ, 1956), 156; Netting, “Secular and Religious Funding,” 594; Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 11-12.; Lowell, *Church-State Fraud*, 147, 177, 184-5, 212; Coughlin, *Church and State*, 57.

⁵⁶ Marc Bendick, Jr., “Privatizing the Delivery of Social Welfare Services: An Idea to Be Taken Seriously,” in *Privatization and the Welfare State*, ed. Sheila B. Kamerman and Alfred J. Kahn (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 101; see also Ralph M. Kramer, *Voluntary Agencies in the Welfare State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 72; Salamon, *Partners*, 28-30; Smith and Lipsky, *Nonprofits for Hire*, 203-4.

⁵⁷ Salamon, *Partners*, 19.

ment via grants, loans and contracts. 53 percent of the federal aid to the sector was channeled through individuals via vouchers and reimbursement schemes, and another 27 percent reached nonprofits through state and local governments through block grants. One also needs to consider the least direct funding components, mainly tax exemptions. Voluntary agencies, though often viewed as alternatives to government, actually became part of the expansion of government. At the same time they continued to enjoy a high level of autonomy and little regulatory oversight.⁵⁸

Finally, subsidiarity relied upon broad political support and legitimated the growth of government across partisan divides. Both liberal Democrats in the 1960s and conservative Republicans in the 1990s looked to nonprofit organizations to play major roles in the American system of social provision. Using nonprofit agencies to circumvent traditional mediating levels of state and local bureaucracies was the centerpiece of the War on Poverty, and the Great Society's large-scale government expansion was saturated in anti-government rhetoric. By the same token, the conservative rhetoric of "privatization", and "empowerment of mediating structures" did not seriously impinge upon the growth of the Cold War state. The continuous expansion of the national security and welfare components of the subsidiarist state, in spite of the highly charged debates about the role of government, indicates that in the post-war period the key conflict between liberals and conservatives was no longer about the size of government, but about which funding and delivery arrangement to privilege. Subsidiarity thus played a crucial role in the statist turn of post-war conservatism, because it packaged the growth of the state in a rhetoric of limited government.⁵⁹

In summation, post-war legal rulings and political processes sustained a distinctive subsidiarist state which combined the growth of the federal government with limited regulatory control of nonprofit agencies. The role of these particular features of subsidiarity in integrating religious providers into the structures of the Cold War state can hardly be overestimated. They effectively sanctioned the faith-based approaches of church-affiliated agencies and thus assuaged fears of the loss of agency autonomy, the marginalization of religious content, and the absorption into a government-run system. Not only did religious agencies fully participate in the public-nonprofit partnership, they were able to do so without having to compromise their religious missions. According to Stephen Monsma's survey, 91 percent of the religiously-affiliated colleges and universities, 77 percent of child service agencies, and 62 percent of international aid organizations receiving public funds reported that they engaged openly, rather than subtly, in religious practices. Even though almost a third of religiously-based colleges and universities receiving public funds have compulsory chapel services, only 13 percent mentioned any problems with government at all, and just 7 percent reported being forced to curtail religious practices. Among religiously-based child and family service agencies, 30 percent reported some problems with government pressures, especially in regard to church attendance requirements and the presence of religious symbols. Nonetheless, only 11

⁵⁸ Salamon, *Partners*, 19, 93-96, 99; Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 5.

⁵⁹ Smith and Stone, "Unexpected Consequences," 234-35, 240; Smith and Lipsky, *Nonprofits for Hire*, 16-17, 53, 60; Arnold Gurin, "Governmental Responsibility and Privatization: Examples from Four Social Services," in *Privatization*, ed. Kamerman and Kahn, 181, 183; Salamon, *Partners*, 23; Hall, "Careers," 380-81.

percent were actually forced to curb practices, and the vast majority (89 percent) viewed public funds in a positive light as a means of expanding services. Among religious foreign aid agencies, 22 percent reported running into problems with government officials, but less than 10 percent indicated that government funds caused them to change their relief or development priorities to meet government wishes. The impression given by international aid officials was that “as long as the religiously based aid agencies are not too overt or up-front with their religious practices, they can get by with a significant amount of mixing religious elements into publicly funded activities and programs.”⁶⁰

Limited regulatory oversight, safeguarding of agency autonomy, indirect funding streams, and the absence of effective restrictions on evangelizing also became the basis upon which conservative Protestants came to embrace the public-private networks which underlay Cold War state-building. Foreign aid subsidiarity, the first significant area of contact, put few overall restraints upon the spiritual mission of conservative Protestant agencies. A 1973 agenda paper of the WRC, for example, shows that recipients of government surplus food in Korea “were exposed to the Gospel in many different ways and their compensation and reward was WRC provided surplus food, clothing, vitamins, materials, equipment, and so forth.”⁶¹ Conservative Protestant organizations also led the field among religious agencies in restrictive hiring and encouraging religious commitment. Nonetheless, while a third of the agencies surveyed in the 1990s reported problems with government in carrying out their religious mission, there was strong evidence to suggest that these were minor conflicts and that AID officials appreciated the moral framework of conservative Protestants.⁶²

A similar picture emerges in the domestic arena. Although conservative Protestant child service agencies headed the field in exclusive hiring, compulsory religious activities, and encouraging religious commitment, the percentage reporting problems with government was only marginally higher than the average for all religiously-based agencies (34 percent). At the same time, the highly religious agencies reported the most positive effects of public funding. Finally, despite being leaders in discriminatory hiring and admissions policies and in mandatory religious exercises, 78 percent of conservative Protestant colleges and universities receiving public funds reported no problems whatsoever with government pressures to limit their sectarian practices.⁶³ By the 1990s, the odd man out in the Cold War state was no longer evangelicalism, but “that assortment of strict separationists, leftist critics, and theological liberationists who from their various perspectives find government funding of religiously grounded activities abhorrent to the best interests of American democracy.”⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 82-85, 91, 94-98. Quote on p. 95.

⁶¹ Agenda (“Miscellaneous”), Executive Committee of the WRC, WRC Headquarters, Valley Forge, 13-14 November 1973, 9, NAE Records.

⁶² Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 78, 95, 97-98.

⁶³ Monsma, *Sacred and Secular*, 74-75, 84, 90, 93.

⁶⁴ Nichols, *Uncertain Alliance*, 206.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study suggests that the exigencies of global power during the Cold War involved the administrative state and religious entities in a process of mutual construction which has not yet been fully explored. Despite the legendary “wall of separation between church and state,” religious agencies, including evangelical organizations, became a constituent part of the public-private funding networks which underlay Cold War social and foreign policy. The organizational resurgence of conservative Protestantism, rather than being solely derived from separatist institution-building and cultural marginalization, developed in conjunction with the Cold War state. Anti-communism and the growth of the national security state provided resurgent evangelicalism with opportunities to reassert its spiritual mission by linking it to America’s new global role. By the same token, the politics of growth and subsidiarist social policies nurtured the expansion of evangelical colleges, hospitals, charities, and foreign aid providers.

The absence of effective restrictions on evangelizing, which characterized Cold War policies, reinforced the development of closer institutional and ideological ties between evangelical agencies and the state. Especially the Great Society programs, so frequently vilified by the political right, preserved the autonomy of conservative Protestant agencies and sanctioned their spiritual mission. This ushered in the gradual revision of church-state attitudes among conservative Protestants. Evangelicals largely parted with their traditional strict separatism and moved towards an accommodationist stance. However, conservative Protestants asserted Cold War state-building in a way which enabled them to calibrate carefully between the institutional benefits of their integration into the post-war state and the cultural resonance of their traditional anti-statist ideology. By making the preservation of autonomy within a system of state subsidies the linchpin of their church-state attitude, evangelicals simultaneously nurtured their ties with the state and upheld their rhetorical commitment to church-state separation and their self-image as critics of the welfare state.

These complex dynamics of the relationship between church and state since World War II might play a larger role in the political resurgence of conservative Protestantism than scholarship, dominated by the argument that the “backlash” against the 1960s accounts for their mobilization, has so far acknowledged. As many social movement theorists and students of religious movements have pointed out, the ability to calibrate between an insurgent message and institutional ties is a crucial factor in political mobilization.⁶⁵ The combination of evangelicalism's integration into the structures of the Cold War state with a subcultural, anti-statist, and anti-establishment message helped conservative Protestants mobilize an electorate

⁶⁵ Political scientist Jerome Himmelstein, for example, maintains that the “paradoxical combination” of “insider resources - support from business and the upper middle class as well as solid roots within the Republican party - and a capacity to use antiestablishment rhetoric to talk to the growing range of discontents that grew out of the 1960s constituted the strengths of the conservative movement”. See Himmelstein, *To the Right*, 78. Likewise, sociologist Christian Smith points out that evangelicalism's standing power was the “result of the combination of its socially-constructed cultural distinction *vis-à-vis* and vigorous socio-cultural engagement *with* pluralistic modernity.” See Smith, *American Evangelicalism: Embattled and Thriving* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1998), 153.

which rhetorically embraced limited government, yet had benefited from and was supportive of deficit spending, the military build-up, and subsidiarist social policies. This is exactly the ideological amalgam which has sustained the Republican ascendancy since the 1980s. The institutional and ideological ties between evangelicals and the state thus highlight the extent to which Cold War public policies did not constitute the triumph of the progressive liberal state, but instead nurtured the forces of conservatism.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ According to historian Alan Wolfe, Cold War policies left "little room on ship for liberal politicians who kept alive an aggressive and articulate concern with income redistribution, economic planning, or international idealism." Alan Wolfe cited in *Major Problems in American History Since 1945*, ed. Robert Griffith (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1992), 27.

Über den Autor / About the author:

*Dr. Axel Schäfer ist Historiker und Direktor des David Bruce Centre for American Studies an der Keele University in Großbritannien. Er hat Veröffentlichungen zur transatlantischen Ideengeschichte und zur Sozialreform im ausgehenden neunzehnten Jahrhundert vorgelegt, darunter eine Monographie *American Progressives and German Social Reform, 1875-1920* (Stuttgart, 2000) und einen preisgekrönten Aufsatz im *Journal of American History* über „W.E.B. Du Bois, German Social Thought, and the Racial Divide in American Progressivism, 1892-1909“ (2001). Der vorliegende Beitrag entstammt seinem jüngsten Forschungsprojekt über „The Cold War State, Religion, and the Resurgence of Evangelicalism, 1942-1990“, zu dem ebenfalls bereits mehrere Veröffentlichungen vorliegen, darunter ein Aufsatz in *The US Government, Citizen Groups and the Cold War: The State-Private Network*, hrsg. von Helen Laville und Hugh Wilford (London und New York, 2006).*