The Feminist Left Goes Global on Our Money

by Phyllis Schlafly August 20, 2010

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Just when we thought President Obama had reached the ultimate in seizing extravagant power by appointing a Health Care Czar (Donald Berwick) to exercise life-and-death surveillance over Medicare and Medicaid, Congress is now trying to give him a Czar with global powers. It would be a Czar over women's issues, worldwide.

Based in the State Department, her statutory title will be "Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues." Her task will be to assure a "gender integration" perspective in all State Department policies and programs.

The breath-taking reach of her powers is openly stated in the bill's first section: "The Ambassador shall coordinate and advise, and where relevant lead — (1) State Department activities and policies, including as they affect programs and funding relating to prevention and response, including gender integration and women's development internationally as relates to prevention and response."

And if that's not enough, the feminist Ambassador will also be responsible for the "allocation of State Department resources" to carry out the mischief.

Reinforcing her ukases will be a "Women's Development Advisor" with a desk in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). This is the same federal agency that sent millions to a radical feminist group in India called Women Power Connect, which used U.S. taxpayers' money to lobby for a 33 percent female quota in the Indian Parliament.

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The vehicle for this latest pandering to the feminist left is the International Violence Against Women Act called I-VAWA (S.2982 and H.R.4594). The lead sponsors are Senators John Kerry and Barbara Boxer.

The bill broadly defines violence against women to include non-violent "psychological harm," "intimidation at work," and "psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the government of the country in which the victim is a resident." Naturally, lots of taxpayers' money will be needed for so awesome a task, so the bill authorizes $1 billion over five years.

The global reach of this new Czar's activities opens the door for Obama's feminist constituency to dictate to other countries. The bill calls for a "comprehensive, five-year international strategy to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls internationally" and to set up "gender-integrated, comprehensive, and holistic" plans in 20 countries.

This new feminist gestapo will support the "development and enforcement of civil and criminal legal and judicial sanctions, protections, trainings, and capacity." And there's more: the bill authorizes U.S. money to be spent to develop "programs affecting social norms, community attitudes, and male and female participation in violence and response to victims."

The feminist movement in the United States has never been only about changing laws alleged to be discriminatory. Feminists yearn to dictate norms and attitudes, too.

I-VAWA will provide "legal services for women" but not for men. According to the practice of our domestic Violence Against Women Act, which has been functioning in the United States since 1994, "legal services" are not just legal

defense but also aggressive legal troublemaking such as getting a restraining order to kick the husband out of the house.

One important section of I-VAWA assures that the feminist left controls the flow of taxpayers' money. Section 112 provides for grants to "Women's Nongovernmental Organizations and Community-Based Organizations."

It's a no-brainer to predict what kinds of "organizations" will be eligible for those grants. You can be sure that non-feminist organizations will not be on any approved list of grantees.

I-VAWA requires the State Department to "prepare a public report on best practices for preventing and addressing violence against women and girls internationally." The feminist left has always been skillful and experienced in preventing grant money ever to go to any group or individual who might unearth scientific or statistical evidence contrary to feminist ideology.

Feminist orthodoxy teaches that there are no innate differences between males and females with one exception. Men are naturally batterers and women are naturally victims.

Does anyone dare to think that the State Department report will call for stopping the violence against women committed by mandatory abortions to carry out a government's one-child policy? Or report on sex-selective abortions to kill unborn girl babies because parents prefer a boy baby?

If our State Department wants to help women in other countries, how about reporting to the American people about the atrocities against women committed by Muslim countries that use sharia law. That includes forced marriages, child marriages, so-called "honor" murders, polygamy, and death by stoning as punishment for women who commit adultery.

The State Department could do something very useful by refusing to grant visas or immigrant status to anyone who supports Sharia punishments or genital mutilation of women. That would be an inexpensive way to stop a lot of violence against women.