

Vital Voices Global Partnership: A Radical Vision of “Gender Equity”

Group Advances Pro-Prostitution Policy Agenda

by Christopher Yablonski

Summary: The Washington, DC-based group Vital Voices Global Partnership champions Afghan women who suffered under the Taliban regime and is a partner in the Bush Administration’s “war on terror.” Who would suspect that this nonpartisan women’s organization is a platform for Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton’s (D-NY) feminist agenda? Yet Vital Voices is marshalling government, foundation, and corporate funding to support a worldwide network of feminist activists.

Vital Voices is an advocate for Afghan women. It celebrates women’s participation in government and business, and decries international sex trafficking. These efforts have fixed Vital Voices’ image as a nonpartisan group, and its powerful bipartisan connections have helped with fundraising. But while Vital Voices presents itself as a mainstream advocate for female empowerment around the world, what we know of its background and sources of funding suggests that its long-term goals are at odds with common-sense notions of equality and traditional concepts of family and gender. The individuals at the heart of Vital Voices support a feminist agenda, which was crystallized at the 1995 Beijing Women’s Conference. That agenda emphasizes highly political women’s studies programs at all levels of education, government-mandated wages, gender preferences in hiring and education, and “gender balance” in public and private decision-making bodies. More disturbing, some associates of Vital Voices and the organizations that have partnered



Vital Voices is a platform for Hillary Clinton’s feminist political agenda.

with it have lobbied for the legalization of prostitution in foreign countries. They claim to be combating sex trafficking, but their goal is to organize and legitimate “sex workers.”

The U.S. government funds much of what Vital Voices promotes. During the waning days of the Clinton Administration federal agencies distributed millions of dollars in federal grants to organizations that eventually became part of the Vital Voices “Global Advisory Council.” Vital Voices also received start-up funds from the Summit Charitable Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, as well as Texaco and foundations sponsored by

Proctor and Gamble, Liz Claiborne, and Mary Kay cosmetics. These and other funders provided nearly \$1 million to Vital Voices in 2000 and 2001. Several other companies, including General Motors, Wal Mart, and Timberland, pledged unspeci-

March 2003

CONTENTS

Vital Voices Global Partnership:
A Radical Vision of “Gender
Equity”
page 1

Philanthropy Notes
page 8

Foundation Watch

fied financial support to Vital Voices at the same time that the Bush Administration Labor Department awarded the group \$300,000 for a program of highly-publicized assistance to Afghan women. By supporting Vital Voices, the Bush Administration is giving its seal of approval to a group profoundly at odds with the President's own commitment to faith and family.

State Department and Beijing '95 Origins

Vital Voices' origins lie in the U.S. delegation to the 1995 United Nations World Conference on Women, which was held in Beijing, China. As honorary chairman of the delegation, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton was returning to a public role in the Administration following the humiliating rejection of her healthcare proposals and Republican victories in the 1994 elections. At this conference, she dramatically asserted: "Women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights."

The sentiment seemed reasonable enough, but the real work of the Clinton Administration's delegation took a more radical bent. In conference documents and

Editor: John Carlisle

Publisher: Terrence Scanlon

Foundation Watch

is published by Capital Research Center, a non-partisan education and research organization, classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) public charity.

Address:

1513 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036-1480

Phone: (202) 483-6900

Long-Distance: (800) 459-3950

E-mail Address:

jcarlisle@capitalresearch.org

Web Site:

<http://www.capitalresearch.org>

Foundation Watch welcomes letters to the editor.

Reprints are available for \$2.50 prepaid to Capital Research Center.

declarations it endeavored to replace the term "mother" with "caregiver," and replaced "family" with "household." U.S. delegates also fought to maintain language in a draft "Platform for Action" that was hostile to traditional ideas of the family. This document, presented for review by conference delegates, contained fifteen references to motherhood—but twelve discussed it as a threat to women's independence. The Declaration endorsed taxpayer-funded "family planning" and lauded gender-based quotas across public life, even in legislative bodies. In language typical of the U.N., it outlined the basic problem:

"The widespread exclusion of half of humanity from institutions of power and governance underscore the need to continue the search for development, peace and security and for ways of assuring people-centered sustainable development. The participation and leadership of the half of humanity that is female is essential to the success of that search."

The Declaration arbitrarily urged nations to reduce defense spending in order to allow for more welfare spending: "Excessive military expenditures, including global military expenditures and arms trade or trafficking, and investments for arms production and acquisition have reduced the resources available for social development." The Declaration also attacked free markets: "Accelerated economic growth...does not by itself improve the quality of life of the population...it is indispensable to search for new alternatives that ensure that all members of society benefit from economic growth."

While the final Platform for Action was changed somewhat, it remained a bold manifesto for government intervention in the economy and alteration of traditional social institutions. The Platform calls for women's studies programs at all levels of education, government-mandated wages, gender preferences in hiring and education, and "gender balance" in public and private decision-making bodies.

Social conservatives like Dr. James Dobson, president of Focus on the Family, harshly criticized the U.S. delegation:

"They focused on redesigning the family, reordering the way males and females interrelate, promoting 'reproductive rights for women,' distributing condoms and safe-sex nonsense to kids, propagating 'homosexual and lesbian rights,' weakening parental authority, undermining 'patriarchal' religious teachings and spreading feminist ideology to every nation on earth."

Dobson quoted a shocked delegate from Kenya: "Apparently in the United States, the most powerful country in the world, the family is considered as nothing anymore."

Upon their return from Beijing, Mrs. Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright set about implementing the Platform as if it were a formal treaty. They used the newly-established President's Inter-agency Council on Women (PICW) as a mechanism to imprint the Platform on the federal government. PICW included senior representatives of nearly 30 agencies, including the Departments of Justice, Defense, Labor, State, and Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). In this way, PICW was able to coordinate Administration policy with no reported costs and little congressional oversight. It set in motion programs transferring taxpayer money to feminist nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) around the world. This embryonic network eventually became the Vital Voices "Global Advisory Council," which includes U.S. government grantees and subgrantees like Hungary's Women Together with Women Against Violence, Ukraine's La Strada, and Russia's ANNA organization.

State Department official Theresa Loar, a former New York advertising executive—she created the "Where's the Beef?" campaign for the Wendy's hamburger chain—ran PICW in the Clinton White House and advised the Clintons and Secretary Albright on international women's issues. At PICW,

Loar was personally concerned with combating the problem of sex trafficking and undoubtedly drew much-needed attention to this international tragedy.

But by the end of the Clinton term, PICW was claiming credit for far more. It claimed to have engineered a massive re-orientation of federal programs along the lines of the Beijing Platform. The 2000 PICW report, "America's Commitment: Federal Programs Benefiting Women," catalogued grantmaking activities in dozens of agencies offering everything from a "gendered perspective on public housing" and the recruitment of women into construction jobs to consulting with feminist groups on ways to monitor gender balance in federal contracting. For example, the feminist National Committee on Pay Equity partnered with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs to enforce gender-based preferences in contracts awarded by the Administration.

In 1997, the State Department announced the launching of the Vital Voices Global Democracy Initiative under the direction of Loar and PICW. The initiative produced a series of conferences around the world bringing together women leaders to network and seek funding from private and government sources. Major conferences were held in Vienna, Austria in July 1997, Belfast, Northern Ireland in September 1998, Montevideo, Uruguay in October 1998, Reykjavik, Iceland in October 1999, and Washington, D.C. in February 2000.

From the start, the Vital Voices conferences served to ingratiate Mrs. Clinton to her international constituency. Loar described how feminist delegates in Montevideo greeted the First Lady as a "rock star," and an unnamed aide allowed that "[Mrs. Clinton] never deviated from her goal, which is creating a post-presidency platform." Comparing Mrs. Clinton to Eleanor Roosevelt, Secretary Albright laid out high hopes for the initiative: "With the leadership and active participation of yet another great First Lady, Hillary Clinton, we...[are] bringing women together from around the world to build public-private partnerships, and to help women

Foundation Grants to Vital Voices

(2001 Grants)

Summit Foundation — \$100,000
 Charles Stewart Mott Foundation — \$62,500
 Open Society Institute (George Soros) — \$50,000
 Liz Claiborne Foundation — \$50,000
 Carnegie Corporation of New York — \$25,000
 Mary Kay Foundation — \$25,000
 Wallace Foundation — \$25,000
 Texaco — \$15,000
 Procter & Gamble Foundation — \$10,000

participate fully in the economic and political lives of our nations."

Building public-private partnerships was not mere rhetoric. The 1999 Vital Voices conference in Reykjavik showcased how USAID, the State Department, and the U.S. Information Agency could fund feminist political formation in Russia. For instance, USAID boasted of a June 1999 agreement with the Russian Women's NGO Consortium aimed specifically to "increase the capacity of women's organizations to advocate more effectively on women's issues and to provide information on gender issues to journalists." The State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (BECA) announced, "Exchanges and training programs supported by institutional grants from the Bureau should provide women and women's groups opportunities to increase their visibility and effectiveness in the political, social and democratic spheres."

PICW directed the flow of U.S. taxpayer money to feminist NGOs overseas and used the Vital Voices conferences to market programs to them. At USAID, federal employees were reminded by the agency's Beijing-inspired Gender Plan of Action that "attention to gender issues will be part of the evaluation process used by staff and committees rating the perfor-

mance of civil service and foreign service personnel."

In 2000, Loar boasted that since the first Vital Voices conference in Vienna the U.S. government had awarded \$3 million in grants to feminist groups and micro-loans programs to women-owned businesses. She went on to praise the Clinton Administration for having made since 1997 commitments of \$10 million overall to such groups in Europe.

Other agencies were even more expansive. As part of PICW's five-year review of progress, USAID reported that it had spent \$500 million annually toward "advancing women's economic, social, and political status," and claimed "a critical leadership role in helping countries in all regions of the world to fulfill their Beijing promises."

Organization and Staff

Vital Voices Global Partnership would outlive the Clinton Administration. In mid-2000, it transformed itself from a White House and State Department "initiative" into an independent 501(c)(3) tax-exempt public charity. Loar and Melanne Verveer, Mrs. Clinton's chief of staff, left their government positions to run the organization as president and chair of the board. Of course, the organization already had a global network of supporters in place—all the

Foundation Watch

NGOs that received grants and micro-loans under the auspices of PICW. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., Vital Voices reported total revenue in 2000 of \$432,102 and expenses of \$192,469. In 2001, revenue was \$514,661 and expenses of \$501,344.

In board chair Melanne Verveer Vital Voices has a skilled political insider. Verveer's resume is far more political than Theresa Loar's. She and her husband Philip, a telecommunications attorney, have known Bill Clinton since they all attended Georgetown University in the 1960s. Before becoming an advisor to the Clintons Melanne Verveer worked for liberal advocacy groups like Common Cause and People for the American Way, where she was executive vice president.

Vital Voices is nominally bipartisan. Now-Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton serves as "honorary co-chair" along with Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) and former Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker (R-KS). But other members of the Vital Voices board include actress/activist Sally Field; Ann Jordan, wife of Clinton confidant Vernon Jordan; Donna McLarty, wife of Clinton chief of staff Mack McLarty; and Peace Links founder Betty Bumpers, wife of former Arkansas Senator Dale Bumpers.

Corporate and Foundation Funding

Vital Voices earliest documented funding came mostly from liberal foundations (See Box on page 3). They include the Summit Charitable Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the Open Society Institute.

The Summit Charitable Foundation was particularly important in helping Vital Voices convert from a State Department initiative to a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. A \$100,000 Summit start-up grant in 2000 was followed by another \$100,000 in 2001. Summit's mission statement is exceptionally bold. Its website proclaims its commitment "to a world where people can thrive and nature can flourish - a world in which one is not sacrificed for the other," and its desire to "promote the health and well-

being of the planet - its people and its natural environment - by empowering women and youth, stabilizing global population growth, and protecting the earth's biodiversity." Victoria Sant, a member of the Vital Voices board, is president of Summit, which she founded with her husband Roger, chairman of the global power company AES and #292 on the 2001 *Forbes* list of the world's richest people.

For the last two years Summit has distributed about \$12 million annually to international development and women's groups like the Campaign to Preserve U.S.

Human Rights Watch, and the International Research Exchanges Board (IREX). The latter two figure prominently in efforts to shift anti-sex-trafficking programs in Russia towards the legalization of prostitution and the unionization of "sex workers." The Mott Foundation also funds IREX and is a funding clearinghouse for radical policy agendas generally. It was established by a pioneer founder of the General Motors Corporation.

The Open Society Institute (OSI), another Vital Voices supporter, is the philanthropic vehicle of Hungarian emigrant

In board chair Melanne Verveer Vital Voices has a skilled political insider. Verveer's resume is far more political than Theresa Loar's. She and her husband Philip, a telecommunications attorney, have known Bill Clinton since they all attended Georgetown University in the 1960s. Before becoming an advisor to the Clintons Melanne Verveer worked for liberal advocacy groups like Common Cause and People for the American Way, where she was executive vice president.

Global Leadership, Global Fund for Women, and the International Center for Research on Women. The Foundation's program forms a population control nexus between pro-abortion rights groups like Catholics for a Free Choice, the Center for Reproductive Law and Policy, and Planned Parenthood, and environmental activists such as Conservation International Foundation and Conservation Law Foundation. As a grantee, Vital Voices' combination of "sustainable development" and "empowering women and girls" reflects the principal themes of Summit's giving.

The Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation are well-established philanthropies in the same mould. Carnegie funds NGOs close to Vital Voices: Global Fund for Women,

George Soros (See the February 2003 *Foundation Watch* article, "George Soros: A Bridge to Radicalism"). OSI also funds Women Together with Women Against Violence (NaNE), an anti-domestic violence campaign in Hungary that receives U.S. government funding. NaNE is a member of the Vital Voices Global Advisory Council. OSI funds dozens of organizations committed to population control and abortion rights, including the Abortion Access Project, Catholics for a Free Choice, and the Alan Guttmacher Institute, a Planned Parenthood affiliate.

These foundations and corporate funders provided Vital Voices with \$100,000 in 2000 and \$362,500 in 2001. The group's 2001 IRS Form 990, faxed by Vital Voices at my request, also shows three individual contributors: Joan Challinor of

Washington, D.C. — \$10,766; Samia Farouki of McLean, Virginia — \$50,000; and Colette Rhoney of Washington, D.C. — \$15,000. Farouki is a Vital Voices board member; all are Democratic Party supporters. Historian Challinor, a Clinton appointee to the National Libraries and Information Sciences Commission, and Clinton friend Farouki together gave more than \$25,000 to Hillary Clinton's 2000 Senate campaign and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee for the 2000 election cycle.

Lobbying for Prostitution with Taxpayers' Money

Vital Voices condemns international sex trafficking – the trading of women and children into prostitution. What's extraordinary is that leaders and associates of the group, acting through other organizations, are working to have the U.N. redefine prostitution so that only "forced" prostitution is considered an illegal and illicit activity.

A Vital Voices ally in these efforts is Ann Jordan, director of the Initiative Against Trafficking at the International Human Rights Law Group, a key NGO that worked in partnership with the PICW under Clinton. (She is not to be confused with the Ann Jordan who serves on the Vital Voices board.) Jordan is a leader in international efforts to legalize voluntary prostitution and organize "sex workers" into labor unions. She traveled to several U.S. embassies in the waning Clinton years promoting her pro-prostitution agenda with PICW's approval. Another activist is Ruchira Gupta, a member of the Vital Voices Global Advisory Council from Mumbai, India who heads the Apne Aap organization. It is described in an Indian newspaper as a "community based organization of women and children in prostitution" that offers prostitutes workshops in hygiene and safe sex.

Sadly, this is how "anti-trafficking" is understood by organizations that received PICW support and USAID funding during the Clinton Administration. It's even been reported that one USAID subcontractor in Cambodia used its resources to teach children in brothels how to say, "Please use a condom before you insert" in various lan-

guages.

Vital Voices' activities in Russia and the former East Bloc countries particularly highlight the sorry role played by U.S. government grants in supporting a pro-prostitution agenda. In 2000 and 2001, attorney-activist Jordan lobbied the State Department to shift all U.S. anti-trafficking funding to IREX and its Russian partner, which goes by the name ANNA. Like Jordan, they are supportive of legalized "consensual" prostitution.

Jordan's effort to defund the MiraMed Institute, a group that does not propose alternative public policies for consensual and non-consensual prostitution, illustrates the determination and power of the activists who are building a global feminist network. Seattle-based MiraMed has a strong track record working against trafficking in Russia. Since 1998 it has provided the most comprehensive programs of public education, training, and research about international sexual trafficking to Russian and international NGOs and to the Russian government. It created the anti-trafficking Angel Coalition with 43 NGO members in Russia and the former Soviet republics. MiraMed received U.S. government funding for these activities with an initial \$120,000 grant from State's Bureau of Economic and Cultural Affairs (BECA).

But in February 2001, Angel Coalition members in Russia alerted MiraMed that they had received threatening "advisory" phone calls. According to MiraMed president Juliette M. Engle, M.D., staff from the groups IREX and ANNA told coalition members that if they did not "remove their names from the Angel Coalition list, they would not be considered for U.S. government funding." Coalition members were informed that IREX would soon receive \$2 million dollars from the U.S. government to combat sex trafficking in Russia, and the MiraMed Institute would be defunded. By June 2001, eleven Angel Coalition partners had informed MiraMed of these "advisory" calls.

In May 2001, the State Department denied MiraMed's proposals for contin-

ued funding for its anti-trafficking projects and it cancelled existing programs without cause. In June 2001, it announced that IREX would be the sole recipient of BECA's anti-trafficking project funding for Russia. Subsequently, IREX was named the sole recipient for USAID anti-trafficking funding in western Russia and the sole recipient for Department of Labor anti-trafficking funds. In effect, IREX now controls all U.S. government funding for anti-trafficking projects in Russia.

Vital Voices' Ukrainian partner La Strada also has been instrumental in the IREX takeover. In October 2000, La Strada representatives informed MiraMed they were "concerned about their U.S. government funding because the State Department saw them as being against the legalization of prostitution," according to Engel. La Strada, along with the groups Human Rights Watch and IREX, later endorsed a document that took a position in favor of the legalization of prostitution as a way to solve the issue of involuntary trafficking. In other words, it converted a sexual trafficking issue into a labor issue.

When MiraMed and the Angel Coalition refused to accept the terms of this document, La Strada ceased work with the Angel Coalition. According to La Strada officials speaking to Engel, "Ann Jordan of the State Department" said that MiraMed and the Coalition were "on the wrong side of the prostitution issue." La Strada feared that working with them threatened its continued U.S. funding.

Former IREX board members confirmed to MiraMed that IREX had reached an agreement with Jordan: it would promote the legalization of prostitution throughout Russia if Jordan would work with the State Department to de-fund the MiraMed Institute and shift U.S. government funding to IREX, which had no previous anti-trafficking experience.

Despite its loss of funding the Angel Coalition remains strong—and strongly opposed to legalized prostitution. However, several Coalition members are being replaced by pro-prostitution NGOs allied with Vital Voices. In two Russian cities

Foundation Watch

where the Angel Coalition has run extensive anti-trafficking programs, Petrozavodsk and Saratov, BECA and USAID have funded IREX to work with inexperienced Russian NGO's on anti-trafficking programs.

The Micro-Enterprise Racket

Until it had to face a conservative Republican Administration, Vital Voices promoted the agenda of the Beijing Platform. It endorsed a vision of equality that demanded statistical parity between the sexes across many sectors of society, especially among "decision-making" institutions. The group built up a network of foreign NGOs that trained feminist activists, and it promoted government-funded childcare and world-wide "family planning."

attention to Russia and former East Bloc countries. In 1999, just prior to Vital Voices' Reykjavik conference, Russian NGOs compiled a document itemizing U.S. programs for Eastern European women. It shows the far-reaching influence that PICW and Vital Voices have had on U.S. government micro-lending grants.

USAID led other agencies in the 1999 compilation with \$1 million in assistance to a U.S. group called Opportunity International. Showcased in Vital Voices conferences, it sponsors a Small Business Opportunities Program in Russia. Two other groups, Counterpart International, Inc. and FINCA International, were also USAID micro-loan partners championed by Vital Voices. PICW approved grants to these groups, and Vital Voices conferences pro-

Washington, D.C.-based marketing and public affairs consultant Claudia Barlow has conducted research on PICW and Vital Voices. She asserts that the transformation of Vital Voices from Administration project to independent non-profit and the flow of taxpayer funds to its favorite overseas NGOs suggests that the Administration was "dumping money offshore by executive order." She reports that Vital Voices "scrubbed their website," removing references to controversy-prone U.S.-funded NGOs less than a month before First Lady Laura Bush announced that government aid bound for Afghanistan would pass through Vital Voices.

Courting the Bush White House

If the election of George W. Bush in 2000 created a big hurdle for Vital Voices, the events to September 11, 2001 offered Vital Voices a golden opportunity to clear it. Vital Voices' latest activities on behalf of Afghan women are generating much positive publicity. They bolster its bipartisan board and nonpartisan credentials, and help it gain status as a federal grantee and disburser of federal money.

How did this happen? Vital Voices' partnership with the Bush Administration grew out of the Administration's efforts to build support for the reconstruction of Afghan civil society following the overthrow of the Taliban regime. In November 2001, Verveer and Loar organized a meeting between First Lady Laura Bush and Afghan women refugees. It followed the First Lady's November 17, 2001 radio address condemning the Taliban's treatment of women and girls. Vital Voices also forwarded to the State Department its recommendations of Afghan women leaders who could play a role in creating a new civil order.

In March 2002, the Department of Labor's International Labor Affairs Bureau (ILAB) made a \$300,000 award to Vital Voices to provide sewing machines and fabric to Afghan women. A new school year was starting—the first time in years that girls would be allowed to attend school in Afghanistan—and the award would provide jobs for Afghan seamstresses and

Vital Voices condemns international sex trafficking – the trading of women and children into prostitution. What's extraordinary is that leaders and associates of the group, acting through other organizations, are working to have the U.N. redefine prostitution so that only "forced" prostitution is considered an illegal and illicit activity.

Vital Voices also encouraged its non-profit network to fund "micro-enterprises." In its "Beijing Plus Five" report, issued after a 2000 U.N. conference on the status of women, USAID reported making available \$120 million annually for micro-loan programs, of which "more than two-thirds of the borrowers are women." The report cited programs in Nicaragua, Nepal, Haiti, Kyrgyzstan, and Jamaica. Crunching the numbers for its 1998 micro-loan grantmaking, the agency tracked services to "23,148 organizations and 2.2 million individuals, most of whom were women." Certainly, Loar at PICW had some say over how USAID disbursed these funds.

As with support for sex-traffic programs, micro-loan programs pay particular

moted their work. IREX and the American International Health Alliance were also on the list as USAID partners that made grants to women's centers across Russia.

"Micro-lending" conjures up images of village seamstresses and bakers securing a stake in their communities. But the spigot that funds these ventures is easily turned on and off, and only a few large players control it. Take Counterpart International and FINCA. During the years 1999, 2000, and 2001, the U.S. government, usually through USAID, awarded these organizations \$76.8 million, which they used to sponsor micro-lending programs across the globe. What procedures did they follow when they let overseas NGOs to tap into U.S. taxpayer-funds?

uniforms for Afghan schoolgirls.

To its credit, Vital Voices had been working with refugees from the Taliban well before September 11th. Yet why expedite an award to Vital Voices when there were other humanitarian groups already on the ground in Afghanistan? The \$300,000 grant was included in a memorandum of understanding with the new Afghan government that provides \$1.5 million in recovery and development funds for Afghanistan over the next three years.

ILAB issued no standard solicitation for grant applications in advance of awarding the grant. Indeed, it awarded the money without any competition at all. The grant will go directly to pay the wages of the Afghan seamstresses making school uniforms – Vital Voices receives no overhead expenses.

In the wake of the award U.S. companies have begun to pledge hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash and goods to support the production of Afghan school

uniforms. J.R. United, a Miami-based clothing company, donated sewing machines and fabric. So did Liz Claiborne. L.L. Bean, Bass, Sebago, and New Balance donated thousands of pairs of shoes. General Motors, Wal Mart, and Timberland all pledged financial support to Vital Voice's Afghan project. Corporate sponsorship and public interest are giving Vital Voices a healthy dose of mainstream legitimacy.

The Department of Labor grant also establishes Vital Voices as a federal awardee, giving it a track record when it applies for future grants. Certainly, Vital Voices might have won a federal grant to benefit Afghan women and girls by following a normal competitive award process. But by skirting the process, the Bush Administration let the politics of the moment undermine its goal of competitive sourcing of grants.

The Afghan project is laudable of course, and the Bush Administration's award to Vital Voices amounts to a relatively small grant for a benign public rela-

tions effort. Unfortunately, Vital Voices does not harbor a benign public policy agenda. White House intervention to assist Vital Voices' short-term project gives too much credit to the President's long-term adversaries.

Christopher Yablonski is a free-lance writer living in Arlington, Virginia. He is former Manager of the Government Integrity Project at The Heritage Foundation. He wishes to thank Claudia Barlow and Elizabeth O'Connell for their assistance.

Guide To Feminist Organizations

Read the New Capital Research Center Book Exposing Leading Feminist Organizations

Capital Research Center's new book, *Guide To Feminist Organizations*, provides in-depth analysis and criticism of the nation's feminist movement. Author Kimberly Schuld, formerly of the Independent Women's Forum, describes the mission, leadership and funding sources of the top three dozen feminist groups. Schuld provides individual profiles of each group -- their projects, personnel, membership and budget.

To buy your copy of the *Guide To Feminist Organizations*, call Capital Research Center at 202-483-6900. Each copy is \$15. Discounts are offered for multiple copies.

"By the time one finishes reading, there is no longer any mystery about how this movement – in so many fateful ways disconnected from the everyday lives and needs of ordinary women – has nevertheless so widely taken over. All of us who think and care about the real lives of girls and women (not to mention men) owe both author and sponsor a genuine debt of gratitude."

Midge Decter, From the Foreword to the *Guide To Feminist Organizations*

PhilanthropyNotes

In January, the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation** announced a gift of \$200 million for disease prevention programs in developing nations. Notes Ron Bailey of *Reason* magazine, “The Gates Foundation gift fills a market gap. Profit-making corporations cannot justify spending research dollars to develop treatments the poor cannot afford.” The Gates Foundation has already donated millions of dollars to support research as part of its program, “Grand Challenges in Global Health.” The program includes developing treatments for HIV/AIDS and preventing the spread of tuberculosis. The Gates Foundation also has donated millions to malaria research and supports studies to make mosquitoes incapable of transmitting certain diseases.

Washington Legal Foundation has just released a new paper on donor intent. “Donor Intent: Preserving the Mission of Charitable Foundations,” by Washington, D.C. attorney Lloyd Mayer, provides a detailed overview of the legal landscape governing the mission of foundations and discusses strategies donors can use to ensure that foundations they establish maintain their mission. The first section discusses current law regarding how a donor can enforce his intent through provisions in the governing documents of the private foundation he creates. It includes a general review of corporate and trust law. The second section reviews specific strategies to preserve donor intent and the risks of each. An appendix contains sample language for implementing these strategies.

In January, the **Associated Press** conducted a survey of **126 charities** and found a drop in contributions is causing many to reduce their operations. According to the survey, 66 charities said donations were down from 2001, 38 said donations were up, and 22 reported a stable financial condition.

President Bush is using executive orders and changes to regulations to advance his **faith-based initiative**. Seven government departments now have faith-based offices, which steer religious groups toward billions of dollars in grant money. On the legislative front, the Senate Finance Committee is set to approve legislation that would allow people who do not itemize their taxes to deduct a portion of their charitable giving, which would be of particular benefit to religious organizations. However, some proposals are causing controversy. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has proposed a rule to allow taxpayer money to be used for the construction, acquisition, or rehabilitation of houses of worship. Civil liberties groups claim this violates the constitutional principle of separation of church and state. Some Administration supporters are also concerned. Says Joe Loconte of the Heritage Foundation, “It’s as close to the church-state line as I think the administration has gotten.” Loconte warns, “When government money goes directly to houses of worship, it will invite unnecessary government intrusion.”

Harvard University blames the economy for its decision to abandon plans to use a \$12.5 million gift pledged by actress **Jane Fonda** to establish a research center on gender in education. The gift to Harvard’s Graduate School of Education was announced in 2001, and Fonda immediately provided \$6 million, of which a portion was invested to generate income for an endowed chair. However, Harvard has announced it will return some of the \$6 million because the invested amount has failed to generate sufficient income. Fonda will not fulfill the second half of her pledge.

