

little parental interest in them. Fewer than 2 percent of parents in the 13 states with statewide choice programs have actually moved their children to different schools, and most of those transfers were done for non-academic reasons.

The Carnegie report, based on a year-long study, was also critical of the Milwaukee voucher experiment that includes private nonsectarian schools within its scope. The study notes that participating private schools are not accountable to the public. One closed in mid-school year, stranding 63 "choice" students.

The Carnegie report concludes that more emphasis should be placed on improving all public schools, especially those in poor areas.

"More than ever before, this nation must reaffirm public education, especially in our disadvantaged neighborhoods," the report asserts. "In these pockets of poverty and neglect, libraries have closed, churches have fled to the suburbs, health clinics have been abandoned. Yet, the public school—flawed and under siege—still opens its doors every weekday morning. It is perhaps the only institution within reach that offers hope. Rather than talk of closing schools, then, we should talk about expanding services, and about giving neighborhood schools the resources they need not only to empower students, but to renew neighborhoods as well."

(Copies of "School Choice" are available for \$11 each from California/Princeton Fulfillment Services, 1445 Lower Ferry Rd., Ewing, NJ 08618.)

Reaction from the Bush administration, which has made vouchers the centerpiece of its policy objectives for three years, was predictably negative. Focusing on the minority of parents who disliked their children's schools, Education Secretary Lamar Alexander criticized public school advocates for opposing education choice. He said, "Only a very self-satisfied establishment could so easily dismiss so many parents' wishes. Would the Berlin Wall still be a good idea if only 28 percent of East Germans wanted out?"

In other developments, Alexander indicated in a post-election interview that he will leave the education field soon. "You know, I'm not an educator, and I never really intended to spend this much time on education," he told the *Knoxville News-Sentinel*. "I just got drawn into it as governor because I saw how important it was to our state." (Alexander focused on education reform while serving as governor of Tennessee.)

Asked why George Bush lost the presidential race, Alexander observed, "The voters were sending us, the Republicans, a message, saying: 'We're tired of you. You don't sound like you really understand what is going on in our lives, and...you're not giving us an idea of what direction to move in.'" I could sense that and see it coming."

American Society Needs 'God's Law,' Says Attorney General

Religiously based "natural law" should be the foundation for the moral reform of American society, according to Attorney General William Barr.

Addressing a Washington conference sponsored by the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, Barr insisted that the Judeo-Christian tradition is threatened in the United States and that our country faces a moral crisis. The solution, he argued, is the reassertion of a "moral consensus" based on natural law, a philosophical concept touted by Catholic theologians who say that Catholic moral principles—such as the ban on abortion—can be arrived at through secular reasoning.

"Natural law—those rules of right and wrong which make up traditional morality and which modern secularists dismiss as otherworldly superstitions—are in fact, the ultimate practical utilitarian rules for human conduct," the attorney general said. "Because human nature is fallen, we will not automatically conform ourselves to God's law, but because we can know what is good...we are not doomed to be slaves to our passions and wants. To the

extent that a society's moral culture is based on God's law, it will guide men toward the best possible life."

Picking up the "culture war" theme advanced by Patrick Buchanan and other conservatives during the recent presidential campaign, Barr charged, "There is a battle going on that will decide who we are as a people and what name this age will ultimately bear. We cannot sit back and just hope that somehow the pendulum is going to swing back toward sanity. We are going to have to struggle to achieve the moral renewal of our country."

Barr's speech drew press attention because he also criticized the views and conduct of Woody Allen, the New York filmmaker whose personal life has become the subject of media scrutiny and controversy. The attorney general seemed surprised by the press coverage.

"This was a meeting of Catholic organizations, and I was addressing them as a Catholic as much as a public official," Barr told *The New York Times*. "This was not a media event."

Barr was on hand at the gathering to receive the Catholic League's "Equal Justice Under Law" Award. The Oct. 6 conference, titled "In Defense of Western Civilization," was convened to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' voyage to the Western hemisphere.

Protestant Missionaries In Latin America Are 'Rapacious Wolves,' Warns Pope John Paul II

The Roman Catholic Church must take steps to block the advance of Protestant missionaries in Latin America, according to Pope John Paul II.

Addressing a conference of Latin American bishops in Santo Domingo Oct. 12, the pope said "sects and 'pseudo-spiritual' movements" are a source of division and discord in the Catholic community. "Like the Good Shepherd," he said, "you are to feed the flock entrusted to you and defend it from rapacious