Barbara Honegger: We’re really focusing here on a fundamental redefinition and reframing of the entire abortion issue so that we focus off of the fetus and actually off of the woman, onto an organ, the uterus. We see that forced pregnancy and childbirth is a special case of forced organ donation, which would, as the judge in the McFall v. Shimp case, actually undercut the entire foundation of US and American federal law.

I’m Bonnie Faulkner. Today on Guns and Butter, Barbara Honegger. Today’s show, “We the Men vs We the People.” Barbara Honegger is a leading researcher, author, and public speaker. She is a former senior military affairs journalist at the Naval Postgraduate School, the premier science, technology and national security affairs graduate research university of the Department of Defense. She held high-level positions in the federal government during the Reagan administration including White House Policy Analyst, Special Assistant to the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy and Director of the Attorney General’s Anti-Discrimination Law Review at the US Department of Justice. Her pioneering book, October Surprise: The Deep Story Behind the Iran Side of the Iran-Contra Scandal, was subsequently confirmed by formerly classified documents and led to a full subpoena-powered US House of Representatives investigation. In light of the recent violence at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs, today we discuss her experiences in the Reagan White House championing women’s reproductive and civil rights. The Associated Press reports that according to the National Abortion Foundation, there have been eight murders and more than 220 bombings and arson attacks at abortion facilities in the US since 1977.

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Bonnie Faulkner: Barbara Honegger, welcome.

Barbara Honegger: Thank you, Bonnie.

Bonnie Faulkner: Barbara, you were a White House policy analyst and the top aide to President Ronald Reagan’s chief domestic policy advisor, beginning with Reagan’s inauguration January 20th, 1981. Before we go into your responsibilities in that position, could you briefly tell us how you ended up in the Reagan White House?

Barbara Honegger: I’d be happy to do that, Bonnie, and just before I do I’d like to give a little context for this interview. I’d like to begin just by saying that my purpose in doing this interview is to actually prove to the American people based on my documented inside experiences at the highest levels of the Reagan White House and Department of Justice, that the so-called pro-life position on the abortion issue is actually the moral low ground not the moral high ground as they would mislead you to believe, and to put forward a core, fundamental reframing of the entire abortion
issue that is urgently needed to prevent the ongoing culture war from turning into an outright violent civil war in this country.

With that context, how did I ever end up in the West Wing of the Reagan White House? That’s a very good question. Very briefly, I was working at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University in the late 1970s to early 1981 for a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution whose name was Dr. Martin Anderson. He had a very high-level position at the Hoover Institution and had hired me to be his research associate, researcher and co-writer on his books on the military draft. One day, Ronald Reagan, who was then no longer governor – he had been three terms as governor of California and was now a private citizen and he was made an honorary fellow of the Hoover Institution – came into our office and asked Martin Anderson if he would be Reagan’s Chief Domestic Policy Advisor in Reagan’s upcoming third run for the Republican nomination in 1980. My boss, Martin Anderson, said yes and I went off with him.

**Bonnie Faulkner:** In that position as the top aide to President Ronald Reagan’s chief domestic policy advisor, one of your portfolios, the two major issue areas you were responsible for, was women’s rights. Is that correct?

**Barbara Honegger:** Yes, it is. As a little background, I was a high-level political appointee in both the Reagan White House and Department of Justice. The positions I served in were policy analyst in the White House, Domestic Policy Office, and I was also the top aide to the chief domestic policy advisor to the president beginning with Reagan’s inauguration on January 20th, 1981. I had also been at the top levels of the 1980 Reagan-Bush Senior presidential campaign at their campaign headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, and was also then on the top floor of the Reagan-Bush Senior transition team once Reagan and Bush Senior won the presidential election on November 4th, 1980. In the White House, my desk was actually on the second floor, almost over the Oval Office.

Later in the administration, beginning in 1982, I was also dual-hatted as the director of the Attorney General’s Task Force on Gender Equality in Federal Law at the US Department of Justice, which officially implemented then-candidate Reagan’s first promise to the American people in his acceptance speech at the 1980 Republican National Convention. That promise was that he and the Republicans alleged that they would come up with a “better way than the ERA” to achieve equal rights for women in the United States, and that that way would be to one-by-one identify all laws, regulations, policies, practices and procedures in all almost-50 federal departments and agencies that discriminate against girls and women in the US and correct them one by one. That’s like trying to end slavery plantation by plantation. That was my job inside the White House and the Department of Justice.

**Bonnie Faulkner:** Did President Reagan support the Equal Rights Amendment and, if not, did he give a reason?
Barbara Honegger: Oh, boy. That’s a good one. No, he didn’t, at least politically in public. But the real reason in the lead-up to the 1980 presidential election was, of course, because of a cynical electoral strategy by the Republicans to for the first time politicize the right-wing Christians in this country, the fundamentalist Christians, to try to increase the Republican voting base in an attempt to regain the White House for the Republicans.

Now, it’s very important to give some historical context for this sea change in American politics. The 1980 Republican convention platform meeting, which I was at, at the Republican National Convention in Detroit, I was the only woman at the table at that meeting. I was there because they all assumed that I was one of them, which I wasn’t. Now, there’s an interesting background to that. It turns out that Dr. Martin Anderson, who was a libertarian and a longtime supporter and close associate of Ayn Rand, was also pro-choice and had almost singlehandedly ended the peacetime draft where we went to an all-voluntary military under the Nixon administration. So, I was the chief aide at the Republican National Convention in 1980 to a man who was pro-choice. So was his wife, Annelise Anderson, who is still to this day a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution. Dr. Anderson unfortunately died this January 2015. Both Martin Anderson and his wife, who were the top domestic policy aides to Reagan in the 1980 presidential campaign, were both pro-choice.

Now, many of the men around the table at the Republican convention platform meeting where I was the note-taker and the recorder, they assumed, I suppose, that Martin Anderson, who was there, was also so-called pro-life, but he was not. That’s why I was there. It was at that table that the Republican Party for the first time made the decision not to support the Equal Rights Amendment. Prior to that both the Democratic and Republican Parties had supported the ERA, but the ERA at that point in the summer of 1980 was getting very close to having enough state ratifications to actually pass into a new constitutional amendment. So the Republicans changed their position and for the first time came out against the ERA at that table. It was like someone had stabbed me in the gut with a knife.

The bottom-line answer is, for all of these atrocious reasons, no, Ronald Reagan was not, at least publically, in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Bonnie Faulkner: What about the subject of abortion? What did you learn while at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University about why Reagan, when he was governor of California, first made abortion legal and why he later changed his mind and came out against it?

Barbara Honegger: Yes, this is extremely important for people to understand and very few people either know this or remember it from that period of time. When Reagan was governor of California he made abortion legal in this country under certain circumstances – therapeutic abortions, but that was as the so-called pro-life side says, the camel’s nose in the tent, which then opened up completely. Well, shockingly – shockingly – I learned while I was at the Hoover Institution as a
research fellow there for Dr. Martin Anderson in the late-'70s and up to 1980, that then-Governor Reagan, who signed one of the first US state laws, if not the first state law, making abortion legal in the US, in California, I received documented proof that as governor he had done so for a purely crass, political reason. That reason was, believe it or not – I’m now going to prove this to you – they were hoping that by legalizing abortion that future and potential and likely Democratic Party voters would more likely be aborted than future Republican voters.

**Bonnie Faulkner:** [Laughing] Oh, Barb. How can that be?

**Barbara Honegger:** This is a fact, and I’m going to tell you how I know it and I have the documents to prove it. I have the documents from Reagan’s governorship that were in the Hoover Institution’s collection of his gubernatorial papers where he placed them when he became an honorary fellow at the Hoover Institution, proving this. These are minutes from his then-California Governor Reagan’s Health and Human Services subcabinet meetings.

Now, I was a research associate at the Hoover Institution, as I said, with Dr. Martin Anderson, who later became President Reagan’s first chief domestic policy advisor in the White House. But at that time, in the late-'70s up to mid-1980, I was a research associate at the Hoover, who happened to be a friend of mine, her job was to go through and organize Reagan’s gubernatorial documents for their archives.

Over lunch one day she told me that she was shocked, that she had found something that disturbed her so much that she needed to show it to me. She had made copies and gave them to me, which I still have. They are minutes of then-Governor Reagan’s Health and Human Services, as I recall the title, Health and Human Services Subcabinet meetings recording the reports to the subcabinet meeting by Reagan’s then head of his Health and Human Services or Health Department, and his name was Earl Brian. Just for the record, this same Earl Brian was later found guilty of federal crimes and was put in prison for them.

Now, what did these documents say? Shockingly, what they showed was the discussion in the subcabinet meetings before Reagan legalized therapeutic abortions in California. The discussion was that they wanted to see what would happen, that there was a lot of pressure to legalize therapeutic abortions and so it would probably be a good political thing to do, and Reagan did this.

Now, some time went by and the shocking document was the second one. The second minutes of the Health and Human Services subcabinet meeting, some time later, a couple of years later or so, Earl Brian reported to Reagan and some of his other top aides at this meeting, in the minutes, that ‘Governor Reagan, a terrible thing has happened.’ This is not verbatim, of course, but it’s the gist of it. ‘Governor Reagan, a terrible thing has happened. We were assuming that minorities, poor minority women were going to be having all these abortions, but Governor Reagan,
there’s some good white Republican wives who are having abortions. We can’t have this.’

So Reagan came out against abortion, and that’s the real reason he came out – for a crass political reason. They were hoping that legalizing abortion in California would differentially cause future potential and likely Democratic Party voters to be aborted relative to Republican Party voters. It is that simple, and I can prove it to you.

I would like to go on record saying this is basically the same mentality about abortion as Adolph Hitler and the Nazis, in World War II in Germany. The reason is, and people don’t know this, Hitler outlawed abortion in Nazi Germany, but only for so-called good, white, Aryan women.

Bonnie Faulkner: Well, now, wouldn’t it also be the case that he would have signed that abortion bill simply to win elections? Was that an issue to win re-election in California, or not?

Barbara Honegger: They were just trying to prevent likely future Democratic voters from being born.

Bonnie Faulkner: Was there also a political concern that being re-elected as governor of California that he’d get more votes if he legalized abortion, or was that not the issue?

Barbara Honegger: I can’t answer that question. It wasn’t in the subcabinet meeting minutes. I’m just going by the documentation.

Bonnie Faulkner: So he changed his mind on abortion when he was still governor?

Barbara Honegger: Yes.

Bonnie Faulkner: I see.

Barbara Honegger: Yes.

Bonnie Faulkner: Describe the white paper on the abortion issue you wrote for President Reagan’s chief domestic policy advisor when you were in the White House. What were your conclusions, how did you argue them and what was the surprising reaction of the president’s chief domestic advisor?

Barbara Honegger: I’m going to begin by telling you how the president’s chief domestic policy advisor reacted to my white paper on the abortion issue, reframing the abortion issue, and then I’m going to tell you and your listeners how I reframed the abortion issue, because once I tell you how he reacted you’re going to want to know what was in my white paper.
When I presented the argument I’m about to give you, which completely reframes the so-called abortion issue, when I gave that to Dr. Martin Anderson, who was then Reagan’s chief domestic policy advisor in the White House in a formal white paper that he had requested me to write as a policy analyst, about a week later after he’d read it he called me into his office and he held it in his hand and he said, “Barbara, this is incredible. This is the only argument I have ever seen that could change Ronald Reagan’s mind on abortion.” That is an exact quote.

You can imagine how pleased and excited I was, and I said, “Marty, that’s great. When are you going to give it to the president?” There was a long pause and this man, for whom I had great respect – he had almost singlehandedly ended the peacetime draft in this country, which I considered to be immoral and so did he, of course – after a long pause he said, “Well, I’m not going to give it to him.” There was another long pause because I was so shocked, and I said, “But, Marty, why not?” To which Martin Anderson replied, “Because I can’t give it to him.” Another pause. “Marty, why not?” He said, “I can’t give it to the president because it would change his mind on abortion.” Stunned, after another long pause I asked what he possibly could mean by that. Dr. Anderson said, right over the Oval Office, “If President Reagan came out on the other side of this issue we would lose the religious fundamentalist Christian vote and the Republican Party would never win another election.” And he was right about that.

Now, you can imagine that that also was like someone hitting me with a knife in the stomach but I stayed in my job because, in a way like Edward Snowden, I just knew that I had to stay. I had to stay on the inside until I had the actual documentation proving the moral bankruptcy of the domestic policies of this Reagan-Bush Senior administration, which I did.

Now I’m going to tell you how I reframed the entire abortion issue in this white paper requested of me by the chief domestic policy advisor to President Reagan. It’s a very fundamental shift, almost a paradigm shift, in the entire way of thinking about the so-called abortion or reproductive freedom issue. I’m going to preface that by saying that the so-called right to life claims of the right to life movement, the claim that a fetus should have a right to life, is not about a right to life. It’s actually about a right to a womb, about a right to a uterus. The right to life is really about forcing a woman’s pregnancy, and you do that by forcing her to, for nine months, use her womb against her will if she doesn’t want to continue the pregnancy. So right to life is really, by the so-called pro-life movement, a demand for forced uterus donation, which is what forced pregnancy and childbirth is. This is literally biological slavery. It’s literally forced labor, and I don’t mean to say that as a pun lightly. Labor and childbirth, it is literally forced labor. This position from the Republican base of the Republicans from the same party that was founded, of all things, by Abraham Lincoln who fought the Civil War and ended slavery, at least officially, in this country.
The great power of adding no forced organ use to the current privacy rights basis of the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision that undergirds women’s reproductive rights at this time in this country, is that the foundation of the right to end pregnancies is that it completely undercuts the currently favored argument of the pro-lifers, that if a fetus were to become a legal person that almost all abortions except maybe to save the life of the mother would have to be made illegal. The reason this argument does not hold water and should never hold water is that to force nine months of uterus donation, of organ donation by a pregnant woman, to force pregnancy and childbirth against her will on a pregnant woman would be to give an unborn fetus far greater rights than we now give to full, adult, American citizens of either gender, women or men.

Now, let me prove that to you. In my white paper for Dr. Anderson that he read and said, ‘This is the only thing that could change Ronald Reagan’s mind on abortion’ and that’s why he wasn’t and couldn’t give it to him, because it would change his mind on abortion likely, I’m going to tell you about a very important case that’s very little known in this country that’s called *McFall v. Shimp*. I quoted this case liberally in my white paper.

The *McFall v. Shimp* case is extremely important and even more important was the judge’s decision in that case. That was a case in which Mr. McFall was dying and he needed a transplant. He needed a transplant of his bone marrow in order to save his life. He found out that his cousin, Mr. Shimp, was a compatible donor and he asked Mr. Shimp if he would donate some bone marrow, which wouldn’t kill Mr. Shimp but it would inconvenience him and put him through some pain and some recovery period.

Mr. Shimp, after great thought and talking to his family, said no. So Mr. McFall sued Mr. Shimp to try to force him to be strapped onto an operating table and to have his bone marrow forcibly taken from his body to be put into Mr. McFall’s body to save Mr. McFall’s life.

The judge in this case, when he looked at this – and the most important thing, I should mention, in this argument Mr. McFall who wanted to force the organ or bodily tissue “donation,” from Mr. Shimp, his cousin, the main argument he used to force it was the third trimester portion of *Roe v. Wade*, which is the only part of *Roe v. Wade* that gives an exception to the otherwise almost absolute right under *Roe v. Wade* of a pregnant woman to end her pregnancy. In the third trimester of *Roe v. Wade* she’s not allowed to under all circumstances – only to save her own health.

They used a portion of *Roe v. Wade* to try to force a full-grown, male citizen of the United States to have his bodily tissue taken forcibly from his body and given to another full, adult, male citizen of the United States. Bonnie, I wish you could read, and I will give you to put on your website, the short decision of that judge in that case. The bottom line and the gist of that decision was the judge ruled against Mr. McFall. He said even though it would be hard for any of us – this is the gist of it –
even though it would be difficult for any of us to imagine that someone like Mr. Shimp might decide not to help his cousin, Mr. McFall, to force him to give up one or more of his organs or bodily tissues against his will with the force of the state, let alone his entire bodily processes, to save the life of another person would undercut the absolute foundation of our entire system of law.

This is extremely important and I'm going to give you that decision to have on your website. This is incredibly important and very ironic, actually, as this latest round of escalating violence against abortion clinics that also provide reproductive healthcare of all kinds for women and especially poor women, was actually triggered by the expose of Planned Parenthood's recent provision of fetal organs for research purposes. We're really focusing here on a fundamental redefinition and reframing of the entire abortion issue so that we focus off of the fetus and actually off of the woman and onto an organ, the uterus. We see that forced pregnancy and childbirth is a special case of forced organ donation, which would, as the judge in the McFall v. Shimp case, actually undercut the entire foundation of not only US and American federal law but also all of British statutory and common law.

The great and growing danger in this post-9/11 surveillance state that routinely invades the privacy of every American on a daily, 24/7 basis – the danger of basing reproductive freedom and rights on Roe v. Wade or only on Roe v. Wade, is that the Supreme Court decision was founded merely on an inferred so-called right to privacy in the 14th Amendment. This is extremely dangerous today. Reproductive rights have to be re-founded on a far more fundamental legal and moral basis. That new basis, additional basis, beyond and in addition to privacy rights, has to be on the absolute immorality of any and all forced organ taking and use because the uterus is an organ. To force pregnancy and childbirth is to force labor and is to force organ donation, because the uterus, the womb, is an organ.

The Supreme Court and the lower courts have repeatedly and consistently ruled in this country, also, that it is illegal to force any American, any person, to give even a single drop of their blood to save another person's life. There are a few exceptions. For instance, forced DNA samples for determining paternity in a pregnancy and biological samples taken, for instance, to try to contain an epidemic.

A mother, under our current Supreme Court and lower court rulings, can not be forced to give a single drop of her own blood to save her own newly born child's life, against her will, although she would, of course, certainly, almost voluntarily, do so. The important concept here is voluntarism. To force pregnancy and childbirth, therefore, in this fundamental reframing, is to force nine months of the taking by the federal or the state government of the uterus of an adult American citizen – the mother – on behalf of a fetus that is not yet separately alive, and which is not even a born citizen like the woman. The 14th Amendment explicitly states that only persons born are US citizens – but it would also allow nine months of forced non-voluntary taking of her entire bodily processes, which is what a pregnancy is. American women themselves – most people do not know this – were only formally
recognized themselves as legal persons under the 14th Amendment by the Supreme Court in the early 1970s, which happened to be a case brought by a female Air Force officer.

**Bonnie Faulkner:** Now, Barbara, were there other arguments that you made in your white paper besides the argument of forced organ donation in order to argue your case in favor of abortion rights?

**Barbara Honegger:** Yes, there was. It’s not exactly on point to this interview but yes, there was a second argument. Dr. Anderson, when he told me that my white paper contained the only arguments that could change Ronald Reagan’s mind on abortion, it included both arguments. The other major argument was that I actually used the data from the Centers for Disease Control, the CDC, and worked with the White House librarians. What I did was I compared the death versus – in other words, the mortality rate and the wound rate of males going to war in every one of our American wars from the Revolutionary War to the Civil War to World War I to World War II to the mortality rate, the danger of dying from so-called routine pregnancy and childbirth by American women and to the equivalent of the wound rate, which I determined – I had to make a decision. I decided that the parallel to the wound rate of men going to war, Americans going to war over the history of the United States would be something like the pregnancy complication rate of women who had to go into the hospital and stay there for more than a day.

I did this and what I found, and I made a chart in my white paper, and it showed that so-called routine pregnancy and childbirth is extremely dangerous and we know, we know for a fact, that it’s far more dangerous to the life and health of a woman than having an abortion.

**Bonnie Faulkner:** What were some of your experiences at the Reagan White House with other staff members regarding women’s reproductive rights and women’s rights in general.

**Barbara Honegger:** That’s a great question, too, Bonnie. To answer that question I just want to remind your listeners that I was the highest-ranking top political appointee for gender equality and women’s rights in the federal government under the first half of the first Reagan-Bush Senior administration, with my office effectively over the Oval Office on the second floor of the West Wing, so this was a very high-level position.

Now, I’m going to tell you about an incident in the West Wing of the White House, actually in the domestic policy office itself, that involved another policy analyst. His name was Gary Bauer. Gary Bauer to this day is a major advocate for the so-called pro-life position and anti-abortion position in this country. He’s very well known in those circles. When I was in the White House Gary Bauer’s wife was pregnant and she had her baby. Gary Bauer was told that his wife had just had her baby. He was on the phone. He got off the phone and he was angry.
Those of us who worked with him in the White House said, “What’s going on? Why are you angry?” He was furious that his wife had been given painkillers during childbirth. One of us, it wasn’t me but another woman who worked with us in the domestic end of things in the White House, said, “But why? Why should you be upset with that?” With indignation in his voice about his own wife he said, “Well, pain in childbirth is the moral punishment for all women for Eve getting Adam to eat the apple and without the pain of childbirth,” he further complained, “women will have everything.” Gary Bauer, God help us, soon took over from Dr. Martin Anderson, my boss. He became the chief domestic policy advisor to President Reagan, two domestic policy advisors after Martin Anderson who resigned in about February of 1982 returning to the Hoover Institution at Stanford University.

That’s just one example of the mentality of this fundamentalist Christian – and I use that with a KKKristian – this fundamentalist KKKristian mentality, which is like an American Taliban mentality, within the Reagan White House. It was shocking. It was obscene, it was immoral, and I committed myself to expose it as soon as I had the documentation to prove it, and I did, as you’re about to see.

**Bonnie Faulkner:** You resigned publicly from the Reagan administration. What led to your public resignation and the weeklong mainstream media publicity that surrounded it?

**Barbara Honegger:** That’s a really important question, Bonnie, and I’d like to preface my answer by just saying that if you can imagine someone like myself who is a very committed progressive, politically, I was in a great moral dilemma the whole two and a half years I was in that administration. I decided, very much like I imagined Edward Snowden and people like him, whistleblowers, that I really needed to bide my time until I had documented proof of what was going on inside the administration in an attempt to attack all civil rights in the United States before I resigned, and then to release that proof to the American public, and that’s what I did.

There was really an accumulation of shocking affronts to my conscience and to equal rights by the very highest officials of the Reagan-Bush Senior administration that I had personally experienced in meetings with them inside the White House and the Department of Justice at the highest levels, including Reagan’s attorney general, Ed Meese, who had previously been Reagan’s White House counsel, one of the troika inside the White House. He moved on to be attorney general.

Given that context I just want you to know that after about two and a half years in the administration what happened to actually trigger my public resignation – and I would say that I was the first public resignation of conscience from the Reagan-Bush Senior administration. As I mentioned earlier, my formal position was head of the so-called ERA alternative, that the then-presidential candidate had promised the American people in his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention in the summer of 1980. It was the president’s promise to the American people.
To carry out that promise in federal law at the Department of Justice where I was
double-hatted – I had an office in the White House and in the Department of Justice –
my job, which I did, was to research using a very sophisticated computer program
the entire text of all of the US code of federal law and the text of all of the US code of
regulations, and find all examples of gender discrimination against girls and women –
or for that matter against boys and men, but there was very little, maybe 1%, 99%
against girls and women – in the entire code of federal law. I did that.

When I was done with that research, which produced computerized outputs that I
then had to go over and produce the actual documents, the actual reports that were
then published by the Government Printing Office and constitute seven volumes that
were published by the Government Printing Office. I have these seven volumes to
this day. These seven volumes were the factual foundation of the so-called ERA
alternative that President Reagan had promised in his acceptance speech. That so-
called ERA alternative, to remind you, the president said that he wanted to, instead
of the ERA, instead of a constitutional amendment which the Republican Party had
for the first time come out against, he wanted to identify every law and regulation in
the federal code that discriminated against females, girls or women, and propose a
correction to them that Congress would then have to vote on one by one. This was
kind of like ending slavery plantation by plantation instead of with the
Emancipation Proclamation. So that was my job, to identify all of those and publish
them, which I did with the Government Printing Office.

The next step, just before my decision to resign from the White House and the
Justice Department, I took those seven volumes, I had them delivered to President
Reagan’s chief of staff to give to the president, to let him know that his ERA
alternative, the factual foundation, the first step, had been completed. I had those
seven volumes, which stand about a foot and a half high, that’s how many hundreds
and hundreds of laws and regulations that still discriminate against girls and women in
this country to this day, because they still haven’t been corrected – I had those
delivered to Jim Baker, Ronald Reagan’s chief of staff in the White House.

About a week went by and I got a call at my desk in the Justice Department that I
had an appointment the next day to meet with Jim baker, the White House chief of
staff. I was there for my appointment, he ushered me into his office, closed the door.
It was just the two of us. He sat down on his side of the desk and I was on the other
side of the desk. Between us was this stack, a foot and a half high, of seven volumes
of laws and regulations that to this day still discriminate against girls and women in
this country just because of the accident of the gender of birth.

Jim Baker put his hand on the top of this stack of seven volumes, and he looked me
in the eye and with his Texas drawl – I will never forget the moment – he said,
“Barbara, I can’t imagine a better advocate for America’s girls and women than you
but I’m sorry to have to tell you that this issue is no longer anything that this
president or this vice president want to expend any further financial or political
capital on.” That is an exact quote.

That hit me in the gut, just like a knife, but I realized that I had to accept that
decision at that point. I thanked Jim Baker for being honest and I asked him if I could
have the seven volumes back. He said, “Yes, because obviously we don’t need them
anymore.” I took those seven volumes, shook his hand, left his office, which is on the
main floor of the West Wing of the White House not far from the Oval Office – I left
his office and I walked out of the front door of the West Wing of the White House,
out of the gate of the White House, and straight down many blocks to the
Washington Post, where I walked into the office of Meg Greenfield, the op-ed
director and editorial page editor of The Washington Post. She was not there at the
time. I left them with a lengthy handwritten note that I got a copy of, a Xerox copy of.
I left them for her and let here know what had just happened.

As it happened, Meg Greenfield is a feminist, a very passionate feminist. She’s now
unfortunately deceased. She saw the importance of these volumes. To make a long
story short, it wasn’t long before the White House senior correspondent, my
political godmother, Sarah McClendon, made an appointment for the three of us to
get together in Meg Greenfield’s office. That day Meg Greenfield came out of her
inner office into her lobby where Sarah McClendon, the senior White House
correspondent, and I were sitting. She brought those seven volumes, put them on
the coffee table in front of me, and put her hand on them like Jim Baker had. She said,
“Barbara, do you realize what these are?” I said, “Well, what do you mean?” She said,
“These are a Richter scale nine. The fact that Jim Baker, the White House chief of
staff, has rejected the president’s equal Rights Amendment alternative, you have no
idea what this is. It is a political Richter scale nine.”

She asked me in that meeting to take my time and write up what happened and turn
it in to her through Sarah McClendon, the senior White House correspondent, which
Sarah did, to her as the text, the draft, of an op-ed piece for The Washington Post. On
August 23rd, 1983, Meg Greenfield published my op-ed, which is the longest fact-
based opinion piece ever published in The Washington Post. It took up the entire
page of The Washington Post and has been reprinted in Historic Documents of 1983
by Congressional Quarterly. You can read it online.

**Barbara Honegger:** I won’t go into the details of this op-ed but suffice it to say that
it exposed the Reagan-Bush Senior administration Justice Department’s secret plot,
their secret plan, to try to make it far more legally difficult for any American to win
any workplace discrimination case under any of the then-56 civil rights laws
including the Civil Rights Act itself in any court in the United States. My public
resignation of conscience and my Washington Post op-ed then triggered an entire
week of escalating national and international publicity that only ended with the
shoot-down of KAL 007 on September 1st of that year, 1983.
What’s so important to understand here is that the Reagan-Bush Senior Justice Department had this secret plot to try to destroy the enforcement authority of all the civil rights statutes on the entire books of US federal law. By this secret plan that I ended and prevented from succeeding with my op-ed piece in The Washington Post, there was going to be an attempt through the courts to reduce the protection under the law, this equal protection under the law guaranteed by the 14th Amendment, to reduce that protection for minorities to the same lower level of protection at that time in 1981-82 of American females because we did not have an Equal Rights Amendment or as strong protection under federal law.

Bonnie Faulkner: The issue of women’s rights, including that of abortion, is headlines today. The Colorado Springs Planned Parenthood clinic, where three people were killed and nine injured, is being described by the media as a mass shooting. The medical facility had been the scene of protests most weekends. What, in your opinion, is behind the recurring violence at abortion clinics? What politicians at the highest levels of government are most responsible for the rhetoric against women’s reproductive rights?

Barbara Honegger: What we just saw in the Colorado Springs Planned Parenthood clinic shootings is, of course, a major escalation of the war against women’s reproductive rights, and this is a serious escalation of the violence. Why is this happening? In my very informed opinion, the extreme religious right in this country, which is the foundation today of the base of the Republican Party, wants to turn what they call the culture war into an outright violent civil war because violence always favors the right wing.

In fact, the entire Republican Party with fewer and fewer outlier exceptions, are part of this mentality and their major central issue is to be against abortion rights. In particular, to answer your question about which politicians, tea party libertarian Republicans, former representatives Ron Paul and his son, Senator Rand Paul, and, of course, the new Republican speaker of the house, the third person before he has his finger on the nuclear button as commander-in-chief under our Constitution and chain of command, and a potential future presidential candidate, Paul Ryan are the main ones that come to mind. But, their position on the abortion issue is phenomenally hypocritical and they have to know it.

Bonnie Faulkner: Many of these prominent male libertarian and tea party politicians say that the writer Ayn Rand is the inspiration for their political philosophy. Why is this both incredibly ironic and hypocritical?

Barbara Honegger: It’s incredibly ironic and hypocritical because Ayn Rand herself was a passionate atheist who explicitly declared in multiple televised interviews that you can see on YouTube that abortion is an absolute moral right. Paul Ryan himself – he’s now the Republican speaker of the house – told the Atlas Society, for instance, which is devoted to promoting Ayn Rand’s ideas and philosophy, that Ayn Rand inspired his entire political philosophy. This is an exact quote: “If I had to
credit one thinker, one person, it would be Ayn Rand.” Paul Ryan also declared that Ayn Rand’s work was required reading for his congressional staff and interns.

The current right-wing tea party so-called revolution within the libertarian wing of the Republican party which is led by Ron Paul, Rand Paul and Paul Ryan, the new speaker of the house, is based on Ayn Rand’s so-called political philosophy but they have actually perverted and twisted her actual position on the abortion issue 180 degrees from what she believed. They are really the libertarians and tea parties for liberty, what they call voluntarism, but only for men on this issue, not for women. Rand and Ron Paul and Paul Ryan and the Republican Party in general say they are for smaller government and they say they are for limiting the reach of the federal government and the state governments but they are for the government reaching inside women’s very bodies, inside their uteruses, inside their wombs to force pregnancy and childbirth and are against equal rights for women. There’s an outright war on equal rights for women, especially reproductive rights. Yet Ayn Rand herself explicitly supported absolute abortion rights.

**Bonnie Faulkner:** Let’s hear a short clip from Ayn Rand:

Ayn Rand: *Why I support abortion, for the very simple reason that I support individual rights, for the simple reason that neither the state nor any community nor yourself have any right to tell a woman what she should do with her life. And also for the reasons that an embryo is not alive and for the reason that one of the most disgusting frauds among many of today’s frauds is the idea that the enemies of abortion call themselves defenders of life or pro-life movement or something like that. So that they advocate the rights of the embryo, of an unborn entity, and refuse to recognize the rights of the living person, the woman.*

Do you believe that women’s rights and specifically women’s reproductive rights should be founded on a stronger legal basis than the Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade* of 1973? And if so, why and what would that legal basis be?

**Barbara Honegger:** I would like to say that the answer is not instead of privacy rights, which is the current basis under *Roe v. Wade*, which needs to be retained as a basis, as it is today – but it is vital and urgent that a stronger, morally obvious and legally permanent foundation be added to the privacy rights foundation already under *Roe v. Wade*. That morally obvious, stronger and more legally permitted foundation would simply be to codify in US federal law the simple principle that it is illegal in the United States to force any organ donation for any purpose.

**Bonnie Faulkner:** There is a culture war being fought in the United States over women’s rights. How would you describe this culture war and how dangerous do you feel it is?
Barbara Honegger: There is an urgent need, in fact, to reframe the so-called abortion issue, to prevent the right wing in this country from escalating the culture war, which is precisely, in my opinion, what I call the American Taliban Christian fanatics behind this attack inside, this time, the Colorado Springs abortion clinic, actually want. They want to escalate these attacks to inflame and trigger a more violent culture war.

On the issue of women and women’s rights, the Republican Party itself has literally become like an American Taliban. They are ideological extremists who are intentionally creating a poisonous environment that feeds domestic terrorism in this country and are trying to ignite a violent culture war on the American homeland. It's important to remember that in the wake of 9/11 and since 9/11, the American homeland itself has been officially made into a battlefield command by the Department of Defense, by the Pentagon. This battlefield command is now called NORTHCOM.

I am doing this today to prevent that culture war turning violent from happening by exposing the utter and complete hypocrisy and moral bankruptcy of the Republican Party and tea partiers’ position on the abortion issue, based on my personal experience inside the highest levels of the Reagan White House and Justice Department. There is an extreme and growing danger of basing women's reproductive rights and freedoms on privacy rights, which is the basis in Roe v. Wade, in this post-9/11 massive invasive surveillance state era of 24/7 routine invasions of privacy of all Americans by our government. This is especially urgent with the upcoming 2016 elections in which we will be electing this time not just the president and members of Congress but also effectively the majority of the Supreme Court of the United States for the next two to three decades, given the number of aging progressive justices on the Court who will almost certainly retire or resign during this next administration.

Given what everyone today now knows, it would be literally, in my opinion, insane to vote for any Republican in this upcoming election. To do so would literally open this nation to becoming an American Taliban-like Christian theocracy, which would also be unconstitutional in the extreme, by the way, as our Constitution explicitly states in its language that there shall “never be any religious test for any office or public trust under the United States or any state.”

It is time, finally, for this abortion issue to be fundamentally reframed and re-visioned to expose what it is, religious extremists’ radical attempt to use the coercive power of the federal and state governments to try to force women to donate the use of their organs, their uterus, on behalf of unborn non-citizen fetuses. This is immoral, it must remain illegal, and it would undercut the very foundation of centuries of both American and British statutory and common law.

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I’ve been speaking with Barbara Honegger. Today’s show has been “We the Men vs. We the People.” Barbara Honegger is a leading researcher and author. She is a former senior military affairs journalist at the Naval Postgraduate School, the premier science, technology and national security affairs graduate research university of the Department of Defense. She held high-level positions in the federal government during the Reagan administration including White House Policy Analyst, Special Assistant to the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, and Director of the Attorney General’s Anti-Discrimination Law Review at the US Department of Justice. Her pioneering book, October Surprise, is the deep story behind the Iran side of the Iran-Contra scandal. Her research into what happened at the nation’s military headquarters on September 11th is available in a three-hour video presentation, “Behind the Smoke Curtain: What Happened at the Pentagon, What Didn’t, and Why It Matters” at Amazon.com.

Guns and Butter is produced by Bonnie Faulkner, Yarrow Mahko and Tony Rango. To leave comments or order copies of shows, email us at Faulkner@GunsandButter.org. Visit our website at GunsandButter.org to sign up for our email list and receive our newsletter. Follow us at #GandBRadio.

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**Bonus Material – Extended Interview Discussion with Barb Honegger**

**Bonnie Faulkner:** What were the attitudes of some of the other male staff that you worked with and how they tried to justify them?

**Barb Honegger:** Well, yes, there was another shocking incident that happened actually the night that Reagan was shot, the assassination attempt on President Reagan. I was in the White House when that happened and this was with Dr. Martin Anderson, my boss, the chief domestic policy advisor’s deputy. His name was Ed Grey. Ed Grey was a magnificent guy. I really liked him a lot as a person. He was the deputy domestic policy advisor to President Reagan, in the West Wing of the White House, also close to being over the Oval Office.

The night that President Reagan was shot – and we had learned that he was going to survive, which itself was a kind of a great miracle for the country – Ed Grey was in his office and so was I. We were the only two who were still in the White House. Something told me, “Don’t leave. Just stay.” I didn’t think anyone else was there and I was getting hungry. It was close to midnight. The White House Nest, the restaurant, as it were, can get you something to eat 24/7 because they have to get the president or the first lady something to eat 24/7. I was about to go down to the WH Newt and get something to eat and bring it up to my office, on the second floor of the West Wing.

As I did, I walked by Ed Grey’s office and I noticed that the door was ajar and there was a light coming from it. I thought, “I should probably go in and turn out that light.” So I knocked, just in case someone was there, and I heard Ed’s voice, “Hello. Come on
“I cracked open the door and he said, “Barb.” I said, “Ed, you’re still here.” He said, “Barb, you’re still here.” He said, “Well, come on in. I didn’t know you were here.” So we went in and, obviously, this was a very emotional moment. We were communing with each other after a tremendous miracle that both PR and Jim Brady, the White House press secretary, had actually survived this assassination attempt, because Brady got the bullet that was intended for the president. Of course, Reagan got a bullet, too, but Brady got the bullet in the head.

So I sat down with Ed Grey and we decided to call the White House Nest and have dinner delivered, as we did. As we were sitting there talking to each other we both had the sense that we probably wanted to think and talk about something else. So however it came up, I asked Ed Grey, “Ed, can you explain to me why you and Ed Meese and the president, apparently, are against affirmative action?” He smiled and he said, “Well, sure. The reason we’re against affirmative action is because we believe that we have the right to discriminate against anyone we want.”

I said, “But why? This is against all of the Supreme Court and lower court rulings in this country and against the vast majority position of the American public.” He said, “The reason is that we believe that the first amendment free association clause supports our right to discriminate for anyone we want and, therefore, inadvertently, against anyone we want.” I came back and I said, “Well that’s fine in a public men’s club or something like that, but in the open economic marketplace the courts have determined that it’s not constitutional to do that. They have regulated this right under the constitution for free association in this way.”

Then he came back to me with what I think is really the nub of the whole thing from the right wing’s point of view – and we’re talking basically about white males in this country, and originally, propertied white males. He said, “Well, you know, this is our country. White males founded this country. We are the founding fathers. This is our country. We’re under siege and the minorities are trying to take it away from us.” Well, that really got to the bottom line and the nub of the whole thing. And because we liked each other as individuals we agreed to disagree about that issue.

Then something truly historic happened. There was a slight knock on the door and into the room came Ed Meese, who was the counselor to the president. Ed Meese, soon to become attorney general of the United States at the Department of Justice – He was then part of what was called the troika, the top three advisors and functionaries around President Reagan in the West Wing of the White House and those were the famous Ed Meese, this man, Jim Baker, the White House chief of staff, and Michael Deaver who basically represented the first lady, Nancy Reagan, in this group of the troika.

So a knock on the door from Ed Meese and the counselor to the president, Ed Meese, walks in. Meese had been one of the top aides to President Reagan who was in the hospital next to his gurney when he was taken into the hospital right after he was shot in the assassination attempt about 1:00 in the afternoon right after lunch,
earlier that day. That was, as I recall, May 30, 1981. Well, Ed Meese comes in and I said, “Ed,” and Ed Meese, by the way, was my boss, the chief domestic policy advisor Martin Anderson’s boss. So it went President Reagan, Ed Meese, my boss, Dr. Martin Anderson, and then me as his chief aide and policy analyst, in the domestic policy council.

So Ed Meese walks in and I say, “Ed, would you like me to leave?” Meese says, “Oh, no, Barb. You know, you’re one of us. Stay.” So Ed Meese pulls up a chair. Now it’s three of us in Ed Grey’s office and Ed Meese turns to Ed Grey and he says, “Ed, this is very important, might be one of the most important questions I ever ask anyone in my life.” He said, “We’re not sure that Ronald Reagan, that President Reagan, is going to survive and if he does, that he’s going to be mentally competent enough to continue as president.”

Ed Meese then told us that “they,” presumably he and Baker and Deaver, that “we,” Ed Meese said, had decided not to invoke the amendment of the Constitution that would make Vice President Bush acting president. So Ed Meese turned to Ed Grey and he said, “Ed, because we’ve decided not to invoke the Constitution and make Vice President Bush acting president while Reagan is in the hospital and recovering, we just want you to know, and we’ve all decided that I should come and ask you, that while Reagan is in the hospital, if he’s not able to make his own decisions, because you are his press secretary and all the time that he was governor of California and now you’re his deputy domestic policy advisor, that we believe that you think more like Ronald Reagan than anyone else in the world. We want to know if you would be willing to make the decisions that we would portray to the American public and the world as the president’s decisions during this time.”

Now, I can’t begin to tell you, Bonnie, how unconstitutional and illegal that is. Ed Grey balked at that. To give him credit, he said, “I don’t know how I can do that, Ed,” to Ed Meese but Ed Meese prevailed upon him to at least consider it. As fate would have it, it was not necessary but I was present and I’m for the first time making this public, this incredible moment that I was privy to in the West Wing of the White House the night that Reagan was shot.

There were other major experiences, Bonnie, that actually were very important in leading to my decision to publicly resign from the Reagan White House and Justice Department. The first of those is truly shocking. I had two hats, my hat at the Department of Justice and my hat at the White House. While I was in my office at the Department of Justice in the Civil Right Division, this was in 1982, the right wing Republicans were putting forth something called the Human Life bill. That was a proposed law in Congress, and they had also proposed something called the Human Life constitutional amendment. Now, these were spearheaded out of the office of then-Senator Jesse Helms. You may remember him. He was a very far right wing radical, in my opinion.
The bottom line of what the Human Life bill and Human Life constitutional amendment proposal said was that under the 14th amendment of the Constitution that they were trying to define the unborn, that is fetuses, as persons under the 14th amendment. And additional language in these different bills and proposed constitutional amendments also stated that you could not abort based upon gender discrimination, in other words, just because it was a male or a female, you could not aboard just because of its race, for instance, black or Hispanic or Asian, etc.

While I was at my office in the Department of Justice, because I knew that President Reagan and his top troika were against the Equal Rights Amendment, and that the Republican Party had for the first time in history come out against the Equal Rights Amendment, I called up Jesse Helms's office in Congress, in the Senate, and I asked for his top aide on the abortion issue. That gentleman came on the phone and I played my Colombo routine. I led him to believe that I agreed with him that we should not have an ERA and I said, "You know, this is Barb Honegger. I'm the equal rights non-gender discrimination director of the attorney general's task force here at the Department of Justice, and I've noticed that there might be a major political problem with the language of your proposed human rights bill and human rights constitutional amendment." He said, "Well, what's that?" I said, "Well, the problem is that if this were to pass, either the bill or the constitutional amendment, you are making unborn females persons under the 14th amendment and giving them equal rights in the womb but because you're against the ERA, you want to take those rights away at the moment of birth on. That's not going to fly politically."

There was a pause on the phone and Senator Jesse Helms's top aide on the abortion issue, who was involved in writing those very bills and constitutional amendment proposals, said, "Oh, yes, Ms. Honegger. You're right. We just realized that ourselves so don't worry. We have rewritten the language of the proposed bill and constitutional amendment to remove sex and race as characteristics of the unborn that would not be allowed to be aborted."

Let me just say what that means. What that means is that the right wing Republicans were actually willing to change the language of their proposed human life bill and human life constitutional amendment so that it would be okay to abort girls in the womb, it would be okay to abort blacks in the womb, just to make sure that there wouldn't be an inadvertent Equal Rights Amendment for girls and blacks from the moment of birth on.

This is shocking. This is absolutely unconscionable and reprehensible and it underlines the truth about what they're really about. They don't want anyone but white males to have full rights in this country, and when you talk to them one-on-one they will admit that.

But there were other reasons, and they had built up over the two and a half years that I was in the White House and the Department of Justice. Another shocking experience was the keynote address to the American Bar Association annual
convention, and I believe it was in either 1981 or 1982, in that period, it's on record, you can read it, that Ed Meese, this same man, actually advocated that there is no privacy right whatsoever under the US Constitution. He also advocated publicly in his keynote address to the American Bar Association that the 14th amendment protections of our US Constitution should not be applicable to citizens as citizens of the 50 United States states, but only to US citizens as citizens of the United States itself, the federal government. And therefore, that any state – and he used the example of Mormon majority Utah – any state of the 50 states of the United States should therefore, the about to be Attorney general of the United States himself argued publicly, that any state of the United States should be able to legally outlaw all abortion, to have a state religion, like Iran, to outlaw all but state allowed religious newspapers, etc.

In effect, the about to be attorney general of the United States was saying that the 14th amendment, which is the constitutional fruit of the Civil War, as well as the famous Marbury v. Madison Supreme Court decision should be null and void. It is therefore no coincidence that the southern Republicans who want to ignite a culture war in this country so they can refight the Civil War as so-called states’ righters. They want to go back to the Constitution literally before the Civil War and before the 14th amendment when slavery was legal in the south and women were not recognized in the Constitution. American women, remember, Bonnie, only received the right to vote in this country in the suffragette movement in the 1920s, and as I mentioned before, full adult American women citizens were only officially recognized as persons under the 14th amendment itself by the Supreme Court in the early 1970s in a discrimination case in the workplace brought by a female military officer in the Air Force.

So that’s the first incident that comes to mind. The second incident, which is almost as shocking, was the day that the Republicans, led by Phyllis Schlafly, succeeded in killing the Equal Rights Amendment. As you may recall, and this was in, as I recall, 1982, there is a period of time after the proposed constitutional amendment is passed by Congress for a certain number or percentage – I believe it’s 2/3, it might be 3/4 – of the state legislatures have to ratify it.

At the time of the Republican Convention in 1980, it had not yet reached the requisite number of states and there was a huge push by the Republicans, because for the first time they came out against the Equal Rights Amendment, to kill the Equal Rights Amendment and actually prevent the requisite number of state legislatures from ratifying it.

Well, that actually happened, and I believe it was in 1982. In any case, I was in the White House at the time, and because I was the top political appointee for women’s rights, so-called, I was also then already head of the so-called ERA alternative, which they had no intention of really doing anything about, I was invited to the banquet at a big hotel in Washington, D.C., celebrating the death of the ERA. I’m here to tell you that Phyllis Schlafly was up on the stage, up the main table at the diet. She was
surrounded by people like Morton Blackwell, who was a passionate right-wing political flack in the White House, and at the moment where they announced the death of the ERA, the band played “Ding Dong, the Witch is Dead.” “Ding Dong, the Witch is Dead.” I felt like someone had put ten knives into my gut at that moment.

It’s extremely important, Bonnie, for your listeners to understand that the main argument of the right wing Christian theocratic fanatics in this country who are behind the abortion clinic violence and want it to escalate into an outright shooting war, because the right wing cannot prevail in elections without a fear climate in this country, the bottom line of how they have increased their numbers of supporters ever since the 1980 election is by misleading Christians themselves to believe that abortion is murder.

But fundamentalist Christians, these evangelical fundamentalist Christians, believe in the literal word of the Bible, but the Bible is very clear itself that abortion or killing a fetus, is not murder. And everyone who is a Christian hearing this program needs to go to the Old Testament, they need to go to the Book of Leviticus, which is the law that they believe was given to human beings by God, and you will see that the only mention in the Bible is in Leviticus and it says – and this is not a precise quote but this is gist of it – if a man hit a woman, strike or attack a woman who is pregnant, if the fetus dies it is a mere misdemeanor. In other words, it’s not even a crime. But if she dies, it’s an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. He must be killed. So it’s only the woman’s dying that is murder, not the fetus and the evangelical Christians and fundamentalist Christians believe that they should follow the exact words of the Bible. Well, those are the exact words of the Bible and abortion is not murder, according to their belief from God Himself.