

# COURIER-JOURNAL

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GOV. CUOMO

## In This Corner... The Archbishop Vs. the Governor



ARCHBISHOP O'CONNOR

By Liz S. Armstrong  
NC News Service

New York Gov. Mario Cuomo and Archbishop John J. O'Connor of New York traded comments Aug. 3 on the issue of religion and politics after Cuomo earlier had challenged the archbishop on the propriety of Catholics voting for candidates who favor abortion.

Cuomo asserted at a dinner in Washington that religion and politics should be discussed but warned against those who "start taking private belief and begin to lay it on everyone." Archbishop O'Connor, clarifying an earlier statement, denied he ever told Catholics they could not vote for politicians backing legal abortion.

The governor, in answering questions at the International Platform Association meeting in Washington, said that Archbishop O'Connor had said that "to be a good Catholic you could only vote for the right-to-lifers." In response, Cuomo said, "what I said is that the design of this country, its greatest strength, is that people are free to believe their own thing."

Cuomo said he was "delighted with the archbishop's clarification" that the archbishop was not telling people how to vote.

On June 24 Archbishop O'Connor had said, "I don't see

how a Catholic in good conscience can vote for a candidate who explicitly supports abortion."

Cuomo seized that statement as fodder for his own ongoing comments on the role of religion in politics, saying in a New York Times interview published earlier Aug. 3 that "now you have the archbishop of New York saying that no Catholic can vote for (New York Mayor) Ed Koch, nor for (New York's Democratic Sen.) Pat Moynihan, or Mario Cuomo — anybody who disagrees with him on abortion."

Archbishop O'Connor said in a statement issued late Aug. 3 that "I have never said anywhere at anytime that 'no Catholic can vote for' Koch, Moynihan, Cuomo or anyone else who disagrees with the church on abortion."

"Nor," the archbishop added, "have I ever made such a statement to the governor or anyone else as, 'OK, now I want you, Mr. Governor, to insist that everybody believe what we believe.' It would indeed be foolish for me to make such statements, just as in my judgment it would be foolish for anyone to imply that I have in fact made such statements."

Cuomo had been expected to give a speech to the International Platform Association on the topic "Religion and Politics," which was supposed to have been a

last-minute substitution for a speech on another topic, "A Case for the Democrats in 1984."

Instead, after receiving an award for "the greatest keynote address in American history" at a political convention for his speech to the Democratic National Convention, he told anecdotes but did not talk formally about either Democrats or religion and politics. He told his audience instead that he would discuss the latter only if someone asked him about it. Eventually, someone did.

He noted that the issue "is very much in the news now because President Reagan has introduced it in various forms. He, frankly, is wrapping himself in it," which is acceptable, Cuomo said.

"I want to be free to be Catholic, but that means you have to be free to be a Sikh, or ethical humanist, or whatever you choose," Cuomo said to the platform association, a public-speaking group. "The point where I start jeopardizing your freedom by interpolating my personal beliefs upon everyone else, all religious freedom will suffer," he added.

In his Aug. 3 statement, Archbishop O'Connor said that "as archbishop of New York it is neither my responsibility nor my desire to evaluate the qualifications of any

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## Vatican Stresses Moral Perspective On Population

Mexico City (NC) — The Vatican's chief delegate to the International Population Conference said Aug. 8 that "it is simplistic and unreal to identify population policy with population control."

"To see all progress as dependent on a decline in population growth betokens shortness of vision and a failure of nerve, and it often results in policies or initiatives that violate human dignity and threaten the common good," said Bishop Jan Schotte, vice president of the Vatican's justice and peace commission.

"It is a challenge to the global community to pursue social justice and to find new ways to accelerate the process of development," he said.

Bishop Schotte, who headed a seven-member delegation, reiterated the church's condemnation of abortion.

"Among all the human rights, the most fundamental is that of the right to life itself," he said.

The bishop told delegates from more than 140 countries that the Holy See wants to bring into the United Nations-sponsored conference "an ethical or moral perspective on the human problems." He characterized the Vatican's stand on population issues as a commitment to "making life more human" for all.

Bishop Schotte said that some recommendations before the conference recognize the value of the family, but are inconsistent in their approach to the issue.

He expressed serious concern over some proposals regarding the family, respect for life and an indiscriminate recourse to artificial means of birth regulation. The Vatican delegation has pushed unsuccessfully to have recommendations which it finds objectionable deleted.

Bishop Schotte said that population and development policies "have to do with the well-being of individual persons and the common good." He said that "socio-economic development is not simply a matter of economic philosophy or strategies."

Development "must be an ongoing process that respects the value and individuality of every person, and in which each person is free to take responsibility for his or her own destiny and growth," the bishop said.

"The Holy See expresses its concern about the setting of quantitative population growth targets," Bishop Schotte

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## U.S. Bishops: Illogical For Candidates to Split Personal, Public Morality

Washington (NC) -- Bishop James W. Malone of Youngstown, Ohio, president of the U.S. Catholic Conference, Aug. 9 rejected political candidates' claims that personal morality should not influence policy decisions and warned against candidates' use of religion to appeal to voters.

In an unusual statement authorized by the officers of the USCC, public action agency of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the conference president also reiterated that the bishops' conference "does not take positions for or against political candidates."

The statement said the bishops' opposition to "the direct taking of innocent human life (by abortion or by direct attacks on non-combatants in war)" is not merely a policy statement of a Catholic group but "a direct affirmation of the constant moral teaching of the Catholic Church."

Bishop Malone's statement, which a USCC spokesman said was intended first for Catholic and other voters and then for politicians and the bishops as teachers, followed issuance of the hierarchy's 1984 political responsibility statement and its testimony prepared

for the Democratic and Republican platform hearings.

It also came in the midst of a heated 1984 presidential campaign in which religion has become an issue. A day earlier, Vice President George Bush told the Knights of Columbus at their annual convention in Denver that the

Reagan administration shares the values of the Knights and other Catholics.

The statement had not been expected to be released until the end of August but was made public after The New York Times earlier the same day reported on portions of the document the

newspaper said it had obtained.

"It would be regrettable if religion as such were injected into a political campaign through appeals to candidates' religious affiliations and commitments," Bishop Malone wrote.

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## Where Pope Will Visit

St. Joseph's Oratory, the highest spot in the city of Montreal, can be seen from all sections of the city and countryside. Pope John Paul II will visit there Sept. 11. (NC Photo)

