

Platforms Compared

Washington (NC) -- The following is the third installment of a four-part comparison of the 1984 Democratic and Republican party platforms and the U.S. Catholic Conference's 1984 recommendations to both parties' platform committees. The USCC is public policy arm of the U.S. bishops. Its recommendations were presented in testimony to the Democratic platform committee by Auxiliary Bishop Eugene A. Marino of Washington and to the Republican Party platform committee by Auxiliary Bishop John E. McCarthy of Galveston-Houston.

Excerpts from the USCC platform testimony and the platforms, listed in alphabetical order as presented in the USCC recommendations, were prepared by Liz S. Armstrong, National Catholic News Service national affairs writer.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL POLICY

U.S. Catholic Conference:

"The right to eat follows from the right to life. We support a national policy aimed at securing this right, including nutrition programs which help meet the needs of hungry and malnourished Americans, especially children, the poor, the unemployed, and the elderly.

"...The United States should support the maintenance of an agricultural system based on small and moderate-sized family farms both at home and abroad."

Democratic platform:

"The Democratic Party renews its commitment to the family farm structure of American agriculture.

"We will forge a new agreement on a farm and food policy that assures a fair deal for family farmers, consumers, taxpayers, conservationists, and others with a direct stake in the organizational structure of the food economy.

"Our goal is to restore the faith of family farmers that their hard work, ingenuity, efficiency, and good stewardship will be rewarded with profit rather than debt."

Republican platform:

"We will provide adequate resources in programs ranging from food stamps to school lunches for the truly needy. We also recognize that fraud and abuse must be eliminated from those programs. We stress maximum local control consistent with national objectives.

"Our agricultural people have developed the ideals of free enterprise and have based their enterprise on our culture's basic element, the family.

"Family farms and ranches are the heart, soul and backbone of American agriculture; it is the family farm that makes our system work better than any other."

HEALTH CARE

U.S. Catholic Conference:

"Adequate health care is a basic human need to which society must respond according to its best ability. Budget cuts, rising health costs and high unemployment have deprived millions of adequate preventive and acute care.

"While our goal remains a comprehensive national health insurance program, we strongly urge that immediate attention be given to meeting the basic health needs of the poor, half of whom are ineligible for Medicaid under current standards."

Democratic platform:

"As Democrats we believe that quality health care is a necessity for everyone. We reaffirm our commitment to the long-term goal of comprehensive national health insurance and view effective health care cost containment as an essential step toward that goal."

Republican platform:

"The Republican Party reaffirms its commitment to assure a basic level of high quality health care for all Americans. We reaffirm as well our opposition to any proposals for compulsory national health insurance.

The Courier-Journal provides this comparison of the platforms of the two major political parties and the positions of the U.S. Catholic Conference on issues of interest to Catholic voters. It is not intended to support any candidate or any political party but merely as helpful background information.

"We affirm the right and responsibility of parents to participate in decisions about the treatment of children. We will not tolerate the use of federal funds, taxed away from parents, to abrogate their role in family health care."

HOUSING

U.S. Catholic Conference:

"Twenty-five years ago Congress established decent housing for all Americans as a national policy goal. Today, however, we are far from achieving that goal. Housing costs have increased to the point that millions of families cannot obtain decent housing without depriving themselves in other vital areas.

"National housing policy should: (1) provide sufficient resources and programs to meet the housing needs of low- and moderate-income families; (2) ensure the adequate production of new low-income housing; (3) seek to preserve existing housing stock and support neighborhoods by opposing 'redlining' and encouraging rehabilitation and re-investment in central cities; (4) encourage monetary policy and credit allocation systems that provide a sustained supply of affordable credit for housing production; (5) focus effort on the special needs of low-income families, blacks, Hispanics, rural people, the elderly and the handicapped; (6) support the integral participation of housing consumers and tenants in decisions regarding housing at neighborhood, community and national levels; and (7) promote equal housing opportunity within a framework of cultural pluralism."

Democratic platform:

"We must restore government's positive role in helping all Americans find adequate and affordable housing. We reaffirm our commitment to public housing for the most disadvantaged members of our society. We must maintain and expand the flow of mortgage capital and bring interest rates down with sensible economic policies. We must upgrade and replenish housing in minority communities and create more units for poor and low-income people. And we must enforce fair housing standards to prohibit discrimination in the housing market.

"...Government has a positive role to play in ensuring housing opportunities for less fortunate Americans, including the elderly and the handicapped, not served by the private market."

Republican platform:

"Federal housing blighted stable low-income neighborhoods, disrupting communities.... Only government could have wasted billions of dollars to create the instant slums which disgrace our cities.

"We will, over time, replace subsidies and welfare projects with a voucher system, returning public housing to the free market.

"Despite billions of dollars poured into public housing developments, conditions remain deplorable for many low-income Americans who live in them.

"The Republican Party therefore supports...home ownership of public housing developments by current residents. We strongly believe in open housing. We will vigorously enforce all fair housing laws...."

"Private property is the cornerstone of our liberty and the free enterprise system. The right of property safeguards for citizens all things of value: their land, merchandise and money, their religious convictions...."

HUMAN RIGHTS

U.S. Catholic Conference:

"The dignity of the human person requires the defense and promotion of human rights in global and domestic affairs. With respect to human rights internationally, there

is a pressing need for the United States to pursue a double task: to strengthen and expand international mechanisms by which human rights can be protected and promoted, and to take seriously the human rights dimensions of U.S. foreign policy.

"We also support a policy which gives greater weight to the protection of human rights in the conduct of U.S. affairs. The pervasive presence of U.S. power in many parts of the world creates a responsibility to use that power in the service of human rights."

Democratic platform:

"Regional multilateral action to protect and advance human rights is an international obligation.

"A Democratic president must not overlook human rights, refusing to condemn repression by the regimes of the right or of the left. Insistence that governments respect their obligations to their people is a criterion that must apply equally to all.

"A Democratic administration will place protection of human rights in a core position in our relations with Latin America and the Caribbean.

"The Democratic Party supports an active role by the United States in safeguarding human rights in Northern Ireland...."

"The Democratic Party condemns the Soviet repression by proxy in Poland."

Republican platform:

"A well-rounded human rights policy is concerned with specific individuals whose rights are denied by governments of the right or left, and with entire peoples whose communist governments deny their claim to human rights as individuals...."

"By focusing solely on the shortcomings of non-communist governments, Democrats have missed the forest for the trees, failing to recognize that the greatest threat to human rights is the communist system itself.

"We share a deep concern for peace and justice in Northern Ireland and condemn all violence and terrorism in that strife-torn land.

"We stand in solidarity with the peoples of Eastern Europe...and all captive nations who struggle daily against their Soviet masters."

IMMIGRATION

U.S. Catholic Conference:

"...We support immigration reform legislation which, among other things, provides a generous legalization program for undocumented aliens and preserves the traditional U.S. policy of giving priority to family reunification. At the same time, we are deeply concerned about the potential impact of proposed employer sanctions for hiring undocumented aliens upon U.S. citizens and legal aliens of Hispanic origin. We are also concerned about the possible expansion of the present H-2 temporary workers program into a system of guestworkers which could erode labor standards and compound the problems of domestic farmworkers."

Democratic platform:

"Our first priority must be to protect the fundamental rights of American citizens and aliens. We will oppose any 'reforms' that violate these rights or that will create new incentives for discrimination against Hispanic Americans and other minorities arising from discriminatory use of employer sanctions. Specifically, we oppose employer sanctions designed to penalize employers who hire undocumented workers.

"We strongly oppose...guestworker programs as a form of legalized exploitation."

Republican platform:

"We affirm our country's absolute right to control its borders. Those desiring to enter must comply with our immigration laws. We will preserve the principle of family reunification."

NEXT: Mass media to world's regional conflicts

and Opinions

Coverage Questioned

EDITOR:

I fail to see why front page coverage should be given in the Courier-Journal (9/5/84) on the latest method of killing the unborn, innocent babies, by abortion! Why?

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geous man for resisting Soviet attempts to break his spirit and purpose. This intense struggle of striving to preserve individuality as well as trying to obtain freedom should serve to remind Americans of a precious virtue we possess today. Let's hope and pray Andrei Sakharov's effects aren't done in vain.

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Series Offered To Parishes

EDITOR:

Rochester Area to Life, in cooperation with area churches, is planning a series of monthly programs of prayer and information on the vital life issues of abortion, the handicapped, infanticide and euthanasia. The first in the series will take place Tuesday, Sept. 25, at St. Lawrence Church, 1000 North Greece Road. The prayer will begin at 7:30 p.m., followed by a showing of the film, "A Matter of Choice." A question and answer period will follow.

From 4 to 5 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 7, the nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary parish at 152 Main St., Brockport, will play host to the program. St. Charles Borromeo Church, 3003 Dewey Ave., will sponsor a prayer at 7:30 p.m. and a speaker at 8 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 15.

Anyone wishing to have his parish included in the series should contact Carol Leary at 621-8106.

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Jesus Is In Tabernacle

EDITOR:

Father Hohman's explanation as to why the Blessed Sacrament is now reserved in a less conspicuous place in many of the newer churches leaves me unsatisfied and confused.

I quote, "Therefore we do not have to find him (with a small 'h', incidentally) in a particular space or external place, but rather in our hearts."

I'm afraid that statement will only lead support to

those who claim that they needn't go to church to find God. They can worship Him in their own homes, or in the woods, or wherever.

But our blessed Lord is waiting for us in the tabernacle, body and blood, soul and divinity. He has revealed to many chosen souls of His longing for our visits and His great loneliness left alone so much of the time.

Indeed, there is a very real difference between Jesus present in the tabernacle and Jesus present in our hearts.

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Abortion Is Top Issue

EDITOR:

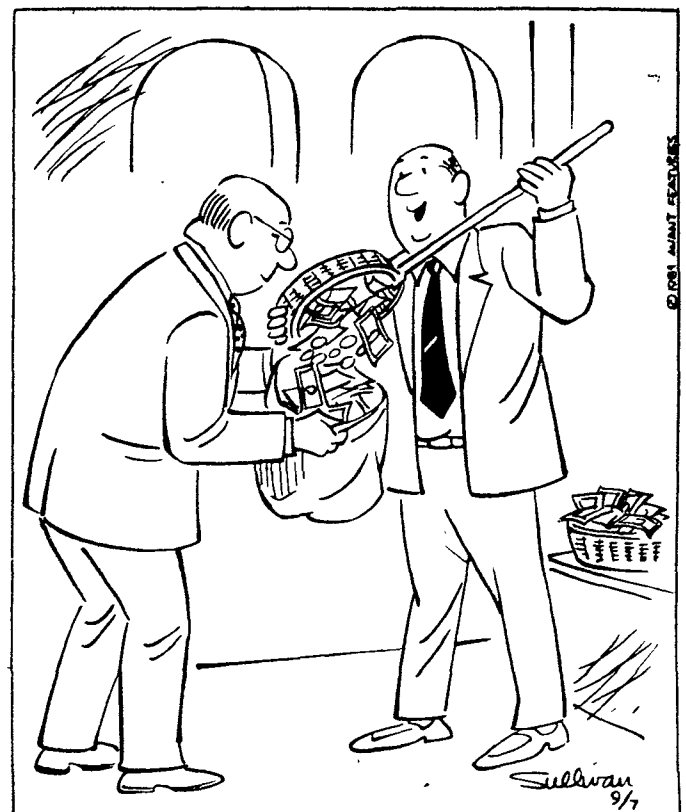
In reading the Aug. 22 Courier-Journal editorial entitled "Is Cuomo 'Mushy' on Abortion," I'm left with the feeling that the editor might also be "mushy" on abortion. Opposed to it, yes -- but not enough to say that only one presidential candidate stands clearly against it and should therefore be supported. I acknowledge that there are other issues, but they pale in comparison. Where else are more than

one million a year dying -- but in the womb? To quote Mother Teresa of Calcutta: "Abortion is the greatest destroyer of peace today."

This is certainly the issue we must first address -- by

voting for the candidate who has the courage to speak and act against the greatest evil of our time.

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"I LOVE THE WAY WE ALWAYS GET A BIG UPSURGE IN ATTENDANCE AFTER ONE OF PRESIDENT REAGAN'S LITTLE JOKES."