

file Religion

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 17, 1994

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Flo McAfee

Am

THROUGH: Alexis Herman

RE: "CLINTON MIXES RELIGION AND POLITICS"

Ron Fournier of AP filed the attached story today.

Date: 08/17/94 Time: 09:39

WASHINGTON TODAY: Clinton Mixes Religion and Politics

WASHINGTON (AP) He's the target of scorn from the religious right, galvanizing an angry political mass with his support of gay rights, abortion and sex education cursed and mocked because of "character issues."

So it may surprise some that President Clinton has quietly reached out to religious leaders and theologians, looking for inspiration during troubled times.

Every two or three months, a small group of 10 to 15 meets in a quiet corner of the White House, usually for breakfast. The participants come from a variety of denominations, from across the country, from the left and the right. Their discussions are informal, off-the-record and frank.

The topic: The role of religion in public life.

"Sometimes I think the environment in which we operate is entirely too secular," Clinton said, welcoming his guests to an August 1993 breakfast. "The fact that we have freedom of religion doesn't mean we need to try to have freedom FROM religion."

The most recent gathering took place last week, as the crime bill lurched to the brink in the House and debate on health care reform slowed in the Senate.

The group, ranging from conservative Catholic scholar Michael Novak to the liberal Edmund L. Browning, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States, privately shared eggs and conversation with Clinton for more than an hour.

Martin Marty, a University of Chicago professor considered a leading expert on American religious history, called the president "a very biblically informed thinker."

"You can always tell if somebody is duking it up for the clergy or if they grew up with it," he said. "No doubt that this fellow is steeped in it."

His voice hoarse and hushed, Clinton spoke briefly about his desire to bring unity to a country he sees as too often divided. "There are all sorts of fissures in the American public on most domestic policy issues," one of the participants quoted Clinton as saying. He asked for advice.

James Davison Hunter, a University of Virginia professor and author of "Culture Wars," brought to the table the viewpoint of his book that the extreme left and extreme right in religion and politics act to exclude more moderate voices from public debate. "To hold an opposite view, one has to be either crazy or evil," Hunter said later.

Clinton seemed to express similar sentiments before the August 1993 meeting: "If people of faith treat issues about which they disagree as nothing more than a cause for a screaming match, then we also trivialize religion in our country."

Taking the notion one step further, Clinton often calls for a more reasoned debate in the political arena. "Sometimes I think the commandment we most like to overlook in this city is 'Thou shall not bear false witness,'" he said at the National Prayer Breakfast in February 1993.

The group reminded Clinton this month that he sometimes drags down the level of discourse. They mentioned his lashing out at Jerry Falwell and the religious right, with one participant telling Clinton, "Don't go out of your way to alienate this group."

The trouble is, he already has. Many Americans see a disconnect

between Clinton's faith and his political and personal actions.

"His views on abortion, gay rights, family values, plus his own womanizing ... convince us that he is not committed to what we believe," Falwell said.

Richard John Neuhaus, president of the Institute on Religion and Public Life, said abortion foes, particularly, find it hard to accept Clinton's plea for more inclusive debate.

"If he believes that is the case, then why has he thrown every ounce of presidential power into supporting abortion?" said the Catholic priest, who has not attended the meetings.

Clinton, a Southern Baptist who carries a family Bible to church nearly every week, turns to religion for inspiration and revitalization.

The August 1993 breakfast came immediately after an introspective summer vacation, with the suicide of close friend and aide Vincent Foster fresh on his mind.

In Arkansas, friends said Clinton joined Immanuel Baptist Church to help come to grips with his 1980 gubernatorial election defeat. Critics said he was drawn solely to the church's televised services. Since he became president, Clinton has attended a Methodist church near the White House almost every Sunday. His wife is a lifelong Methodist.

Like presidents and politicians before him, Clinton recognizes the political benefits of public displays of faith.

Just last Sunday, he promoted his crime bill from the pulpit of a Maryland church, comparing his work to a religious ministry.

"Pray for me," he said, pleading for divine intervention on a political matter. "Pray for members of Congress."

EDITOR'S NOTE Ron Fournier, who covers the White House for The Associated Press, accompanies President Clinton to church most Sundays.

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A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby

801 Pennsylvania Avenue SE ■ Suite 460 ■ Washington DC 20003 ■ (202) 547-5556 ■ FAX (202) 547-5510

for Religion

TO Kenneth L. Woodward
and NEWSWEEK Editorial Board
FROM Catherine Pinkerton CSJ
RE Interview with Hillary Rodham Clinton, Soulful Matters
(10/31/94)

The Editorial Board of NEWSWEEK and particularly Kenneth Woodward are to be congratulated for placing before the U.S. readership a woman whose integrity, competence and willingness to serve the nation have been so brutally criticized in this last year. Many of us puzzle over why the First Lady has become a focus of such hatred for so many citizens, even when she responds with consummate intelligence and grace.

There are undoubtedly as many answers to the question "Why" as there are people involved. But the "whys" may uncover much more about us as a people, about the U.S. psyche and the direction of this nation than about Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Why is there such a propensity among us to constantly shatter and shred the reputations of people who seem larger than life, people who offer their gifts of person and expertise to move us forward as a people?

Why are women of Hillary Rodham Clinton's stature a source of derision rather than of pride in the ability of women to lead and inspire a people?

Why did her reflection on the politics of meaning elicit such negative analysis? Have we lost touch with the potential of politics to achieve justice?

Why were her efforts to assist the President in addressing the needed reform of the nation's fragmented and flawed health care system resented rather than applauded? Whatever our evaluation of the architecture of the Clinton health care proposal, it was a serious effort to provide health care to all Americans, especially the most vulnerable in our midst. Did she upset the powerful forces who have succeeded in transforming each citizen's right to basic quality, affordable health care into a multi-billion dollar industry?

Do the gifted of mind and spirit present us with too great a challenge as we individually struggle for survival in a society which values individualism over the common good, competition over collaboration, consumerism over enoughness?

Are we so daily exposed by the media to the mediocre and the bizarre that we have forgotten what the components of character really are?

Each of us must face our own responses to these questions. I know Hillary Rodham Clinton as a woman of deep and abiding faith. Kenneth Woodward's interview captured her essence.

In a 1994 interview for which I was present, ABC's Carol Simpson asked Mrs. Clinton how she and the President could each morning face the negative portrayal of themselves on the media. Her face betraying her surprise, Hillary replied, "Do you think that is the first thing we do each day, look at the media? What an awful way to begin your day."

She continued in this vein: "Each morning we first pray together, reflect on the Scripture reading, then check where each other is as we face the day. Then we can deal with the media." .

As with any human being, Hillary Rodham Clinton must at times experience deep hurt and utter frustration at the unfair diatribes that come her way. One can only write them off so long as the work of the small-minded whom the media seem to find so very newsworthy. But her faith has brought her that rare gift of balancing power with humility. She doesn't lash out, but continues her journey with consummate grace.

Maybe it is time to ask ourselves the ultimate question Hillary Clinton tries to explore and for which she is a symbol: "How long can we fail to see defining moment in the nation's history as the time for the kind of social change which leads to equity and justice, respect for the common good and for each other? Hopefully, we will not repeat the mistakes of the past and at some future date, revisit this critical time poised on the threshold of the next millenium and say "Hillary, we hardly knew ye because we really didn't know ourselves."

Catherine Pinkerton CSJ is a Lobbyist
for NETWORK; A National Catholic Social
Justice Lobby in Washington, D.C.

To President and Mrs. Clinton;
with respect,
Allida M. Black

CC Lisa, Mayne,
Melanne ✓

Return to me

from HRC
good critique
of Lerner

file Review

Faith and Politics: Hillary Rodham Clinton and "The Politics of Meaning"

by Dr. Allida M. Black¹

Department of American Studies, Pennsylvania
State University at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

This article examines the influence of Paul Tillich and other neoorthodox Protestant theologians on Hillary Rodham Clinton's political philosophy, especially that portion of her politics espoused in the "politics of meaning" speech. After reviewing Mrs. Clinton's views, examining the views of Tillich and Niehbur, and critiquing the treatment both topics have received in the popular and political press, it concludes that any analysis of Mrs. Clinton's politics that does not treat her religious conviction seriously distorts her meaning and her politics. Dr. Black is the author of the forthcoming monograph *Casting Her Own Shadow: Eleanor Roosevelt's Influence on the Democratic Party and American Liberalism, 1945-1962*, as well as an anthology of Eleanor Roosevelt's speeches and articles. She would like to state for the record that she has no religious affiliation whatsoever. Dr. Black can be reached at 5429 North 24th Street, Arlington, VA 22205.

Last April, as her father lay dying, Hillary Rodham Clinton flew from Little Rock to Austin to deliver the Liz Carpenter Distinguished Lecture at the University of Texas. Although she had agreed to give the address months before, she had not written the speech or asked staff members to prepare one for her. Her aides expected an address on children and the problems they and their families face. The media expected a discussion on health care reform and the political dilemmas the Clinton health care package would encounter as it began to take shape.

Mrs. Clinton boarded the plane with another topic in mind—one that related not only to children and families and health care activists, but also to the dilemmas confronting Americans as a whole. "The desperate conditions in so many of our cities" saddened her. She wondered why so many communities became "filled with hopeless girls with babies and angry boys with guns," and "why ... in a country as wealthy as we are, that there is this undercurrent of discontent." The more she asked herself why, the more she "realize[d] that somehow economic growth and prosperity, political democracy and freedom are not enough." Americans "lack a sense that our lives are part of a greater effort, that we are connected to one another, that community means that we have a place where we belong no matter who we are." The country needed to take stock of its behavior and to reassess its attitude toward progress.

We need a new politics of meaning. We need a new ethos of individual responsibility and caring. We need a new definition of a civil society which answers the unanswerable questions posed by both market forces and the governmental one, as to how we can have a society

that fills us up again and makes us feel that we are part of something bigger than ourselves (Clinton 1993b).

Suddenly, Hillary Rodham Clinton found herself in the midst of a political firestorm because she tried to argue that policy alone cannot solve the problems of violence, drug addiction, greed, and self-absorption that threaten to undermine American communities; and that Americans have a responsibility "to define our institutional and personal responsibilities in ways that answer" this disconnectedness (Clinton 1993b).

The speech, now dubbed "the politics of meaning speech," surprised those unfamiliar with Mrs. Clinton's philosophy. After all, this was the woman dubbed a "feminazi" by radio pontiff Rush Limbaugh and depicted as the prototypical antifamily secular humanist by such diverse pundits as Pat Buchanan and Christopher Lasch (Clift and Miller 1992; Lasch 1992). Republicans had claimed the term family values as the conservative political mantra and refused to share the issue with the first lady. Moreover, public discussion of faith historically has been more associated with presidential aspirants than with the occupants of the White House. Indeed the only recent president who publicly discussed his faith was Jimmy Carter and he did so reluctantly (Ribuffo 1992). And, as several columnists reminded the first lady, Carter's ill-timed discussion of American "malaise" quickly backfired (Weisberg 1993).

Reporters and columnists rushed to ask "what exactly is she talking about?" (*New Republic* 1993) Images of Hillary as clergy appeared in all major weekly newsmagazines and several major newspapers. *U.S. News and World Report* entitled its review "Hillary, From the Pulpit" (Leo 1993). *The New York Times* painted her portrait as Joan of Arc and argued that she was more "preacher than politician" (Kelly 1993). *The National Review* lamented her "Long March through Epistemology" and brusquely dismissed her argument with the tag line "she has ideas above her station" (O'Sullivan 1993).

Nor did all of the problem coverage come from her critics. Michael Lerner, editor of the liberal Jewish monthly *Tikkun*, which had issued a call for a "politics of meaning" a few months before, flew to Washington to meet with Mrs. Clinton and to second her call for reevaluation. Unfortunately for the White House, Lerner's foray into the nation's capital was more an exercise in self-promotion than it was a serious discussion of the problems confronting the nation. Dauntless in his crusade to publicize *Tikkun*, Lerner seemed to claim credit for the speech when he appeared on nationally syndicated radio talk shows to argue *Tikkun's* philosophy must be taken seriously. A few days later the *Sunday Washington Post* published an extensive editorial entitled "Hillary's Politics, My Meaning" in which Lerner unabashedly declared that "the adoption of *Tikkun* magazine's politics of meaning might be the most important development of the entire

Clinton administration" (Lerner 1993). When the White House did not disassociate itself immediately from Lerner, the national press corps soon treated him as the first lady's "guru," writing that "Michael Lerner preaches 'the politics of meaning'—whatever that is—and the first lady is listening" (Allen 1993).

Stunned by the criticism the speech received in the press, the White House ceded ground to its critics. Consequently, when *New York Times* reporter Michael Kelly asked to interview the first lady for a *Sunday Magazine* cover story about her convictions, Mrs. Clinton agreed only to find herself and her views parodied. Photographed in a white suit against a white backdrop, the cover presented a chaste, pearl-clad woman with hands demurely linked in front. Emblazoned underneath was the title, "Hillary Rodham Clinton and the Politics of Virtue" (Kelly 1993). Suddenly, the first lady had gone from being Gloria Steinem to Carrie Nation, from being Bill Clinton's coconspirator to Michael Lerner's protégé.

Why did this happen? Is the first lady to blame for not articulating her philosophy in a more coherent manner? (Page 1993) Are the media to blame for allowing their cynicism to intrude into a spiritual discussion? (Wall 1993; Wills 1990; Lear 1993) Or is this just another example of American reluctance to allow religious values into the political arena? (Carter 1993).

The Speech did not originate overnight. It was not merely an impassioned reaction to the 16 days Mrs. Clinton spent at her father's death bed. It was not an unquestioning adoption of Michael Lerner's call to arms. Instead, it was the logical result of the first lady's 33-year study of Protestant theology. It is the influence of Paul Tillich, Reinhold Niebuhr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, Jr., and other politically active theologians who believed that despite the innate frailty of human nature and the selfishness of many communities, "individuals are never as immoral as the social situations in which they are involved" (Niebuhr 1932).

Furthermore, the concept of "the politics of meaning" did not originate with Lerner and *Tikkun* but was rather appropriated by the journal as a way to unite its divergent philosophies. Although Lerner acknowledges that the phrase was first used by New Deal reformers, he never discusses its origins. Why he refuses to do so is not clear. Perhaps he did not know who coined the phrase, perhaps he did not want to discuss neoorthodox Protestant theologians in a journal founded to critique neoconservative Jewish thought, or perhaps he did not think that it was relevant to contemporary discussion. What is clear from a media standpoint, however, is that his refusal to discuss the origins of the term encouraged the media to interpret Mrs. Clinton's speech as a foray into "New Age mysticism" (Martin 1993; Grenier 1993). While it is difficult to determine who first used the phrase, it is clear that the term was popular among liberals who worked with or read Reinhold Niebuhr—notably, Eleanor Roosevelt. As Mrs. Clinton does now, Mrs.

Roosevelt used her position as first lady to argue that there was a "moral basis of democracy" which must be actively instituted if America were to live up to its rhetoric. Indeed, throughout her career, Mrs. Roosevelt encouraged audiences to recognize that politics had no meaning or value other than the commitment people brought to it (Roosevelt 1940; Black 1992).

Hillary Rodham Clinton knows this. Just as she knows how the press pilloried Eleanor Roosevelt for her venture into moral discourse. Yet Mrs. Clinton strode into this discussion convinced that it was her responsibility as first lady, as a Christian, and as an American to raise the issue. And the questions surfaced once again—what is the first lady saying, why is she saying it, and why is it such a volatile topic?

Politics

What is new about the politics of meaning speech is the reintroduction of the term, not the content. Indeed Mrs. Clinton discussed the issues of community values, individual rights and responsibilities, and spiritual commitment throughout her stay in Arkansas, throughout the 1992 presidential campaign, and throughout her first year as first lady (Clinton 1970, 1973, 1977, 1979, 1985, 1987, 1990, 1992, 1993a,b,c). The drama associated with her reappearance in Austin, after her sudden departure to Little Rock, coupled with her earlier appointment as co-coordinator of the White House Task Force on Health Care Reform, encouraged the national media to take this speech more seriously than the comments she had made before she became first lady.

If there is a coherent theme present in Mrs. Clinton's professional writings and campaign interviews it is that politics is more than elections, legislative debates, policy reviews, and advertising slogans. It is the attitudes and convictions that not only frame the political debate but also shape American mores. It is, to use de Tocqueville's famous phrase, those beliefs and actions that become America's "habits of the heart." As she told a reporter during the campaign, "if you worry as I do about what happens in our inner city, that's not just a political issue, that's a family issue, a cultural issue, an educational issue, [and an issue that affects] the changing economic fortunes of people" (Radcliffe 1993).

Mrs. Clinton believes that to study a problem without examining all the causes of that problem is an exercise in futility. This is, as the *Los Angeles Times* reported, "a complex, rather than purely ideological view of the issues" (Lauter 1993). In some ways, Mrs. Clinton's search for community is reminiscent of Schlesinger's search for "a vital center" in the 1950s (Schlesinger 1949). Both are concerned with tapping the heart of American culture in support of widespread mainstream reform. Both are worried that Americans have forsaken their civic commitment and, therefore, are easily

swayed into suspicious and detrimental action. Both reject extreme claims by the left and the right and try to appeal to traditional American values.

But their enemies are different—Schlesinger's Communism has been replaced by Clinton's "the sleeping sickness of the soul" (Clinton 1993b). And the consensus that the first lady searches for has more respect for diversity and spiritual development than Schlesinger's plea for anticommunist liberalism. "We must work harder to understand our differences and celebrate our diversity," she wrote in a widely distributed Christmas letter because "that spirit of justice, compassion and humility is a first step toward preserving our rich social fabric and defending our sense of community" (Clinton and Clinton 1993).

The first lady knows that this will not be easy. She knows that we will "have to learn to think in new ways" and that it will be a difficult process because it combines a liberal commitment to diversity and rights with a conservative commitment to responsibility. In a broader family spectrum than that championed by Dan Quayle, Mrs. Clinton combines a wider concept of community—"families, friendship networks, ... and voluntary associations"—with a more activist concept of individual responsibility and government service. And she advocates "a new kind of partnership" between government and business that would hold market forces accountable for the damage they have done to communities and families and that would stimulate different kinds of managerial and corporate priorities. As she told one reporter, markets are a "wonderful institution for ordering economic choices, but not for instilling meaning into life or maintaining culture" (Lauter 1993). The marketplace knows prices, not values (Clinton 1993b).

This is a stark variation of the Cold War pitch for consensus. Not only is the threat internal, but the consensus sought is much more diverse and less readily identifiable. It is a heartfelt political appeal for an ardent defense of individual rights balanced against a spiritual appeal to develop community consciousness. It is the struggle, Hillary Rodham Clinton once wrote her minister, to be a "mental conservative and a heart liberal" (Warner 1993). It is, to quote a Bonhoeffer analogy dear to her heart, the "difference between truth-telling and cynical exposure" (Nelson and Martin 1993).

In application, Mrs. Clinton's political philosophy can be broadly defined as follows: to connect American social problems with individual behavior, to promote policies and attitudes that encourage individuals and businesses to respect their communities and to act in ways that promote community values and preserve families, and to insure that individual rights are respected in the process.

The Clinton administration, with her prodding, is "trying to figure out how you begin to reinstall responsibility where it has been undermined." The first lady is resolute in her conviction that unless this issue is addressed and incentives are provided "to alter behavior and require people to be more

responsible, we're not going to get ahead of the curve on the serious problems—like the disintegrating families, crime and drugs—that afflict us. We have not done a good job in expecting people to exercise their rights responsibly and to be held accountable," she told an interviewer. "It's easy to place the blame on the top but it goes all the way down" (Clinton 1993a).

The challenge is to keep the focus on responsible communal policy while at the same time not overshadowing individual rights and action. When seen in this light, Hillary Rodham Clinton's tenure as chair of the Legal Services Corporation and the Children's Defense Fund are prime examples of the first lady's efforts to implement this approach prior to coming to Washington. As chair of these two activist legal organizations, she argued that individuals have economic, political, and social rights that need protection and they have the right to demand recognition of these rights. But she also forcefully argued that once these rights are secured, individuals have the responsibility to use them in ways that not only meet their individual needs but also contribute to the community in which they live. Thus, as chair of the Education Reform Committee for Arkansas, Mrs. Clinton respected teacher union arguments as long as they recognized the need for teacher certification and promoted the Home Improvement Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) by arguing that it was an antidote to "the breakdown in social values" undermining public education (Clinton 1985; Warner 1993).

While she wants all branches of government to develop programs that will encourage responsibility and respect for community mores, Mrs. Clinton also recognizes that the government should not institute programs that restrict the individual right to dissent or to challenge conventional social customs. For example, while Mrs. Clinton agrees that lesbian and gay partnerships should not be against the law, she also argues that the government should try to encourage practices which, while allowing for affectional, ethnic, racial, and religious differences, promote a shared respect of neighborhoods in particular and communities in general. She does not shy away however from suggesting that government should take action to encourage business to operate in a more community-oriented fashion.

Politics can only have this new meaning if Americans begin to abandon the cynicism that has crippled American politics and distorted American values. As she told the audience in Austin, "the signs of alienation and despair and hopelessness are all too common and cannot be ignored." Change is inevitable. But Americans must be on guard to make the changes that come more positive, more assertive, and more compassionate. "As soon as you notice the slightest sign of indifference, the moment you become aware of a loss of character or a serious lessening of enthusiasm, take it as a warning" because, for our society to improve and our politics to succeed, we must

be "willing to build the bridges necessary to fill our spiritual vacuum" (Clinton 1993b).

Faith

Hillary Rodham Clinton has studied Protestant theology longer than she has studied law and public policy. While over time she has changed her political philosophy, she has become more grounded in her faith. She does not hide or downplay her religious convictions. She has said that the person outside her family who had the greatest influence on her life was her youth minister, the Reverend Don Jones. She is on record as saying that meeting Martin Luther King, Jr. when she was 16 changed her life. Many reporters have noted that she keeps passages from the Bible and other theological works in her address book. Furthermore, her best friend has said that the best way to understand Mrs. Clinton is to understand her faith.

While the most objective reporters have dutifully mentioned this, they have not treated Mrs. Clinton's applied Christianity as an intellectual matter, but as "psychobabble," "spiritual babble," or "a mix of New Testament and Bill Moyers" (Page 1993; Kelly 1993; Lauter 1993; Murray 1993). Biographers who have treated her conviction seriously still refrained from making connections between her theological inquiries and her political philosophy (Radcliffe 1993; Nelson and Martin 1993; Warner 1993). So the woman who emerges from these depictions is a Methodist who read neoorthodox scholars, a Democrat who was once a Goldwater Republican and who is now married to the president of the United States, and a mother who is pleased that her daughter chose her mother's church over her father's Baptist one. The contradictions inherent in each of these snapshots go unnoticed.

To understand fully Mrs. Clinton's activism, one must first understand the basic tenets of Methodism, how she questioned those principles, and how they influenced her vision of the world.

This appraisal is superficial. It encourages analysis that focuses on present-day crises without considering the causes of the crises and the context in which they occur. It is ahistorical. To understand fully Mrs. Clinton's activism, one must first understand the basic tenets of Methodism, how she questioned those principles, and how they influenced her vision of the world.

Methodism traces its roots back to 18th century Britain when John Wesley gathered a group of earnest young men to methodically study the Bible. The view of the Gospel that emerges from this methodological inquiry is both realistic and joyous. Wesley's followers admit that the world is evil and has great potential for sin, but they also believe that a person, guided

by grace, can do something to stop society's descent into hell. This doctrine of Christian perfectionism, with its emphasis on active applied Christianity and an ardent desire to connect personal faith with social justice issues, is what separates Methodism from other Protestant denominations. It is also what appeals to Mrs. Clinton (Ahlstrom 1972; Balay 1992).

However, the initial bond that Hillary Rodham Clinton had with the church was not an activist conscience, but her family history. She not only grew up in the Methodist church but can trace her ancestors back to Wesleyan services in England. "As a young child I would hear stories that my grandfather had heard from his parents who heard it from their parents who were all involved in the great evangelical movement [Wesleyism] that swept England," she told a reporter for the *United Methodist Reporter*. Her immediate family were active members of First Methodist Church and a young Hillary Rodham not only attended religious services and Sunday school but also played on church athletic teams, acted in church plays, dined at church potluck suppers, and eagerly joined the church's youth league. From an early age, she felt comfortable in the church and felt a part of its community. "There was a sense in which the church was our second home" (Balay 1992).

Soon after Don Jones joined the staff of First Methodist in 1961, Hillary Rodham's commitment to Methodism expanded and became an act of faith and intellectual conviction. While she had been baptized earlier, she credits Jones with helping her apply her faith on a social level. "He was relentless," she told *Newsweek*, "in telling us that to be a Christian did not just mean you were concerned about your personal salvation" (Clift and Miller 1992).

Not content to discuss theology in an isolated setting, Jones took his youth group, which he now dubbed the "University of Life," into an inner-city recreation center to meet with Hispanic migrant worker associations and African-American gang leaders. There the groups critiqued the music of Bob Dylan, the poetry of e.e. cummings, and the paintings of Pablo Picasso. It was the only time Hillary Rodham had been to Chicago without her parents.

The sessions in Chicago startled Hillary Rodham. Not only was she out of the suburbs, but she was also discussing matters of faith with groups with whom she had no other reason to identify. Jarring images stayed with her—poverty; the tearful response of a young African-American woman to Picasso's "Guernica," "why did my uncle have to die because he was in the wrong place?"; migrant working mothers who had no place to leave their children when they went to work. In the midst of these sessions, Hillary Rodham, with Jones's assistance, organized volunteer child care for working migrant mothers (Warner 1993). Thirty years later she pointed to these meetings when asked to cite "a particularly powerful influence" on her professional and spiritual life. "Faith was something they really had to hang

on to. It was a definite decision—in many ways more difficult to them ... than for us. That made a big impression on me" (Balay 1993).

After the inner-city "University" sessions ended, Hillary Rodham began dropping by Jones's office after school to talk about the experience and to discuss world events and the role individuals could play in confronting them. "She was curious," Rev. Jones later recalled. "When introduced to a lot of new things, she was just insatiable." Here Jones introduced her to the great theologians who would help her crystalize her faith. By her senior year, Jones, who studied under Paul Tillich and describes his own faith as Christian existentialism, and Hillary Rodham had discussed excerpts from Niehbur's *Moral Man and Immoral Society* and the works of Paul Tillich and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. When she finished those, he changed approaches and gave her the sermons of Martin Luther King, Jr., the poetry of the Beats, and the novels of J.D. Salinger to study (Warner 1993; Nelson and Martin 1993).

By the time Hillary Rodham left Park Ridge, Illinois, for Wellesley College she had a clearly defined view of Methodism and Christian service. Bonhoeffer bolstered Methodism's commitment to Christian perfectionism with his unrelenting emphasis on the moral responsibility of every Christian to promote ethical human conduct. Niehbur's passion for political reform and social justice, balanced against his less than positive assessment of human nature, erased any logical reason for cynicism and criticized Christian political lethargy. And Tillich's perception of sin as alienation and estrangement and salvation as self-acceptance and reconciliation dramatically influenced Hillary Rodham's intellectual dedication to Methodism and conviction that to be a Christian and not to act in ways that build community is to turn your back on your faith (Ahlstrom 1972; Niehbur 1932, 1952; Church 1987).

As the following brief review of Tillich's theology illustrates, the view of the world that emerges from these theological inquiries bears a remarkable resemblance to the approach Mrs. Clinton uses in her professional writings and public addresses.

Tillich wrote that "being religious means asking passionately the question of the meaning of our existence and being willing to receive answers. It is the state of being concerned about one's own being and being universally." Consequently, when Hillary Rodham Clinton urged that Americans need to "break through the old thinking that has too long captured [them]" so that they can "redefine" their humanity, she issued a Tillichian call for American spiritual renewal. When Mrs. Clinton argued that Americans have lost spiritual contact with one another, she echoed the concerns Tillich raised when he lamented the "lost dimension of religion," the spiritual wasteland modern Americans encountered when they lost sight of their relationship to their world. When she told Americans that "part of the greatest challenge

of living is defining yourself in your moment, of seizing the opportunities that you are given and making the very best choices you can make," she merely paraphrased Tillich's call for a "radical realization of our predicament." Lastly, when she assumed that when moved to action Americans can reclaim the innate goodness and compassion that once characterized American communities, she embraced Tillich's belief in "the in spite of": his assertion that "in spite of the loss of dimension of depth [Clinton's "the lack of meaning in our collective lives"], its power is present, and most present in those who are aware of the loss and are striving to regain it with ultimate seriousness" (Clinton 1993b; Tillich 1958).

Public Reaction

"She's very committed and commitment often looks like ambition to an outsider," Brooke Shearer, a dear friend of Mrs. Clinton, admitted in 1992 (Abbott 1993). Indeed, Hillary Rodham Clinton's commitment to discussing personal values in a public arena, especially those expressed in the politics of meaning speech, has been interpreted by many in the political press as some sort of spiritual power play. "Yes, she is ambitious," Michael Kelly declared in his profile of her for *The New York Times*, "but she is ambitious to do good. And she is a radical in the sense that she thinks it's possible to make the world better, as she defines better" (Kelly 1993). Paul Gigot of the *Wall Street Journal*, following Kelly's lead, opined that "Mrs. Clinton now says her ambition is to find a new 'politics of meaning' ... She wants to lead nothing less than a 'remaking of the American way of politics, government, indeed life.' And you thought health care was a challenge" (Gigot 1993). *Business Week* concurred, declaring that Hillary Clinton's spiritual commitment is incompatible with "the hard work of running the government" (Nussbaum 1993). And in an article lampooning the speech, *Insight*, a *Washington Times* publication, declared that Roseanne Arnold's flippant discussion of her hallucinogenic experiences as Joan of Arc is just as sincere a demonstration of faith as Hillary Rodham Clinton's plea for community, writing:

you're skirting the fringes of hypocrisy here, Hillary, and I point this out to you as a friend and a fellow seeker of a meaningful life. But actions speak louder than words, and I don't see you giving up any power at all, not in search for meaning, not for spiritual values, not for anything (Grenier 1993).

Why did The Speech provoke such a harsh response? All Mrs. Clinton said was that American politics has lost its vision and its compassion, that the nation has become too self-absorbed for its own good, and that Americans are facing a spiritual crisis.

Is this a new argument? No.

Is this a grab for power? Again, no.

Is this a new role for the first lady to play? Not really. Eleanor Roosevelt wrote articles and gave lectures pleading for racial justice and social compassion while she lived in the White House and argued throughout World War II that the greatest danger to American democracy was not fascism, but America's behavior at home. Nancy Reagan invoked the collapse of family values when she urged Americans to "just say no." Even Barbara Bush implored Americans to rediscover community when she discussed Literacy Action and her husband's "thousand points of light."

So if Hillary Rodham Clinton's message is not new, why are so many afraid of it? Because, with one speech, she, whether intentionally or by fluke, struck at the heart of America's love-hate relationship with politics and religion, and its continuing struggle to reconcile feminism with family values and rights with responsibilities.

Americans are trapped in a cultural and spiritual oxymoron. All polls indicate that we are becoming an increasingly religious nation, with more Americans attending church services than all weekly sports events combined (Ribuffo 1993; Marsden 1990). Yet, while private faith is increasing, Americans are increasingly uncomfortable with political leaders who discuss their faith in public. As Gary Wills points out, "if religion intrudes too obviously, this is treated as an anomaly" (Wills 1990). Stephen Carter agrees, declaring that American "public culture more and more prefers religion as something without political significance, less an independent moral force than a quietly irrelevant moralizer, never heard, [and] rarely seen" (Carter 1993). Or, to use a more concrete example, when Hillary Clinton uses a depth of faith more commonly associated with Pat Robertson and Jesse Jackson to promote values espoused by Martin Luther King, Jr., Americans get nervous.

The American community of faith was not the only part of the nation put ill at ease by Mrs. Clinton's call for a politics of meaning. Americans more committed to secular politics also did not know how to respond to The Speech. Uncomfortable with religion, but committed to reforming community, they view religion as a sign of oppression rather than acceptance and openness. They are, therefore, opposed to any influence it might have in the political arena because they assume that its influence will restrict the good along with the bad. Plus, traditional liberals and conservatives are uncomfortable with her plea because she appeals to both groups to abandon the parts of their programs that fail and to adopt the successful suggestions of their rivals. This approach threatens existing political postures that have defined the political arena for the last two decades.

This leads to a final question. Should the White House be involved in this discussion at all, and if so, should the first lady initiate the public dialogue?

The presidency has been used frequently as a bully pulpit. Presidents from Teddy Roosevelt to Franklin Roosevelt to Lyndon Johnson to Ronald Reagan

unabashedly urged their constituents to embrace their particular vision of American society. However, when these men discussed values the values were connected to a specific political policy—the New Nationalism, the New Deal, the Great Society, the Reagan Revolution—rather than a specific crisis of mores and attitudes. Moreover, historians have proved repeatedly that the president helps set the moral tone of the political discourse.

If the president is charged with presenting a vision of the nation to the public, and is responsible for explaining why specific policies will complement that vision, why should that discussion be limited to pragmatic, quantifiable issues when so many of the problems in contemporary America defy such easy quantification and classification? The president should be accountable not only for presenting the program that s/he wants to implement, but also for telling the nation *why* that particular approach will work and *how* it will address the cultural and social problems that are intrinsically connected to every economic and diplomatic philosophy. If the president opts not to do this, to keep his/her real motivations secret, the public is denied both the information it needs to assess the program and its commander in chief as well as the communal inspiration that is necessary for the program to work.

As the president's partner, the first lady has a unique opportunity to augment her husband's administration. Traditionally this support has become a mixture of social, entertaining functions balanced against the promotion of a specific "cause"—White House restoration, the environment, mental illness, drug abuse, illiteracy—which somehow connects to the president's overriding theme. As a review of those projects illustrates, all are value-laden issues. Otherwise, "just say no" would never have been sold as a public service theme.

Hillary Rodham Clinton's most public foray into this arena is both a logical extension of the first lady's role and a radical departure from it. She promotes the traditional values of family, compassion, service, and community while she helps shape the public debate on health care and welfare reform. She preaches the values of family and community in heartfelt, theological eloquence, has testified before five Congressional committees in two days, and continues to help orchestrate the most important domestic initiative of her husband's presidency.

She is not simply a mother, a wife, a lawyer, a lay theologian, or a skilled political arbitrator, but is all of these rolled into one. She is a feminist, who is guided by faith and empowered by education, who is committed to restoring family values, broadly defined, to the center of the political arena.

She presents her complexity to the public in a way that challenges the nation to confront its propensity to stereotype that which it does not understand. She is not simply a mother, a wife, a lawyer, a lay theologian, or a skilled political arbitrator, but is all of these rolled into one. She is a feminist, who is guided by faith and empowered by education, who is committed to restoring family values, broadly defined, to the center of the political arena.

Regardless of one's opinion of Hillary Rodham Clinton's interpretation of the Bible or her politics, she is an integral part of the political landscape for, at least, the next three years. If she continues to address the "sleeping sickness of the soul" which undermines America's respect for community and spiritual values, in all likelihood, the majority of Americans will react with some sense of dis-ease. Yet this is exactly why Mrs. Clinton should continue discussing this dilemma. Americans need to understand that they should practice what they believe and that when different creeds and communities are respected, individual faith is not a threat to democratic government.

As Gary Wills has written:

Religion has been at the center of our major political crises, which are always moral crises—the supporting and opposing of wars, slavery, or corporate power, of civil rights, of sexual codes, of 'the West,' of American separatism and claims to empire. If we neglect the religious element in all those struggles, we cannot understand our own corporate past; we cannot even talk meaningfully to each other about things that will affect us all (and not only the 'religious nuts' among us) (Wills 1990).

In short, if Americans neglect to treat Hillary Rodham Clinton's faith as seriously as we treat her politics, we will never understand her motivation, her policies, or her politics. ■

Notes

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April __, 1995

file Religion

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INITIALS: *JM* DATE: *4/18/2014*

MEMORANDUM FOR LEON PANETTA
HAROLD ICKES
ERSKINE BOWLES

FROM: GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS
ALEXIS HERMAN/FLO MCAFEE
ABNER MIKVA/JAMES CASTELLO/STEVE NEUWIRTH
CAROL RASCO/BILL GALSTON
MELANNE VERVEER

SUBJECT: RELIGION

President Clinton has a powerful message to share with the American people about the role of religion in American life. The President, like most Americans, believes that the government should protect -- but not sponsor -- religious expression. As the President showed in Oklahoma City, he understands that religion and religious institutions offer our communities support, values and hope. Religion is an important part of the President's own life. And he wants to create an environment in which religious discourse draws people together, rather than pushes them apart.

The American people seem intensely concerned about moral drift in the nation, and about the many outside influences that are shaping their children's character. In some respects, people may be far less interested in the Washington legislative process than in concepts like family, individual responsibility, community and religion.

Unfortunately, many, if not most, Americans remain unaware of the President's views. We believe the White House should develop a strategy by which the President can exercise genuine leadership on the issues of religion and values. The President cares deeply about these issues. These issues also offer a thematic basis to tie together various Clinton initiatives, from welfare reform to education to urban economic development.

The window of opportunity for the President to seize the initiative and define the debate may be small. We expect that in the coming months -- and perhaps promptly -- congressional Republicans will introduce either a constitutional amendment on religion and school prayer, or some form of religion legislation. Dole and Gramm have already expressed support for action in this area. Without a reasonable alternative, these Republican initiatives could set the standard for debate and even prove attractive to citizens who generally fear state involvement in religion but yearn for a return to morality and virtue in our communities.

The themes articulated by the President in Oklahoma City -- in particular, how we raise our children and what kind of communities do we want to live in -- lay an important groundwork for further Presidential discussion of values and religion.

Several other Presidential efforts could also be built upon. In 1993, with bipartisan support and to the accolades of "conservative" and "liberal" religious leaders, the President signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. (President Bush had been unwilling to support similar legislation.) The President has demonstrated his commitment to the Act on several occasions. White House Public Liaison has coordinated a substantial effort of outreach to the religious community, including private meetings at the White House and Presidential speeches at prayer breakfasts and other religious events. Each of our offices has engaged in a dialogue with religious leaders, several of whom have offered to support the President in this area.

At the same time, the Education Department has pursued several relevant initiatives, including a Family Involvement Initiative that now includes 33 different religious organizations. Secretary Riley meets on a regular basis with religious leaders both in Washington and in his travels around the country. The Secretary met most recently with Cardinal Bernardin in Chicago and spoke last week at the National Catholic Education Association. Secretary Riley has established his credibility with many of the participants in the coming school prayer debate, including leading religious conservatives. The Secretary, in coordination with the White House, recently worked with and supported a broad spectrum of religious groups that issued a statement setting forth the extent to which current law actually permits student religious expression in our schools. The Secretary also supported another broad coalition of organizations that agreed to address school-religion issues in a spirit of decency and good will.

We believe that several options should be considered promptly:

Presidential speeches: Determine whether the President will give one or more speeches to address the role of religion and values in American life. These speeches could set forth the President's vision and broad themes, including the themes the President began to articulate this past weekend in Oklahoma City. The Vice President, Secretary Riley and Attorney General Reno might make follow-up speeches on more specific topics, such as proposed legislation or an executive order. We have attached at Tab 1 two schedules of upcoming events that might provide forums for such Presidential speeches.

Convene religious leaders: The President could address religious leaders at the White House and ask religious organizations to support a spirit of community and healing.

Executive Order: Review options for an executive order that might address, for example, agency enforcement of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the Equal Access Act (concerning religious activities at schools). Several groups have proposed that the President order enforcement of these statutes at civilian schools on defense installations.

Legislation: Develop a legislative strategy -- do we support any legislation, and if so, what type? The Justice Department is drafting legislative options that could codify the extent to which religious expression is currently permitted in public schools.

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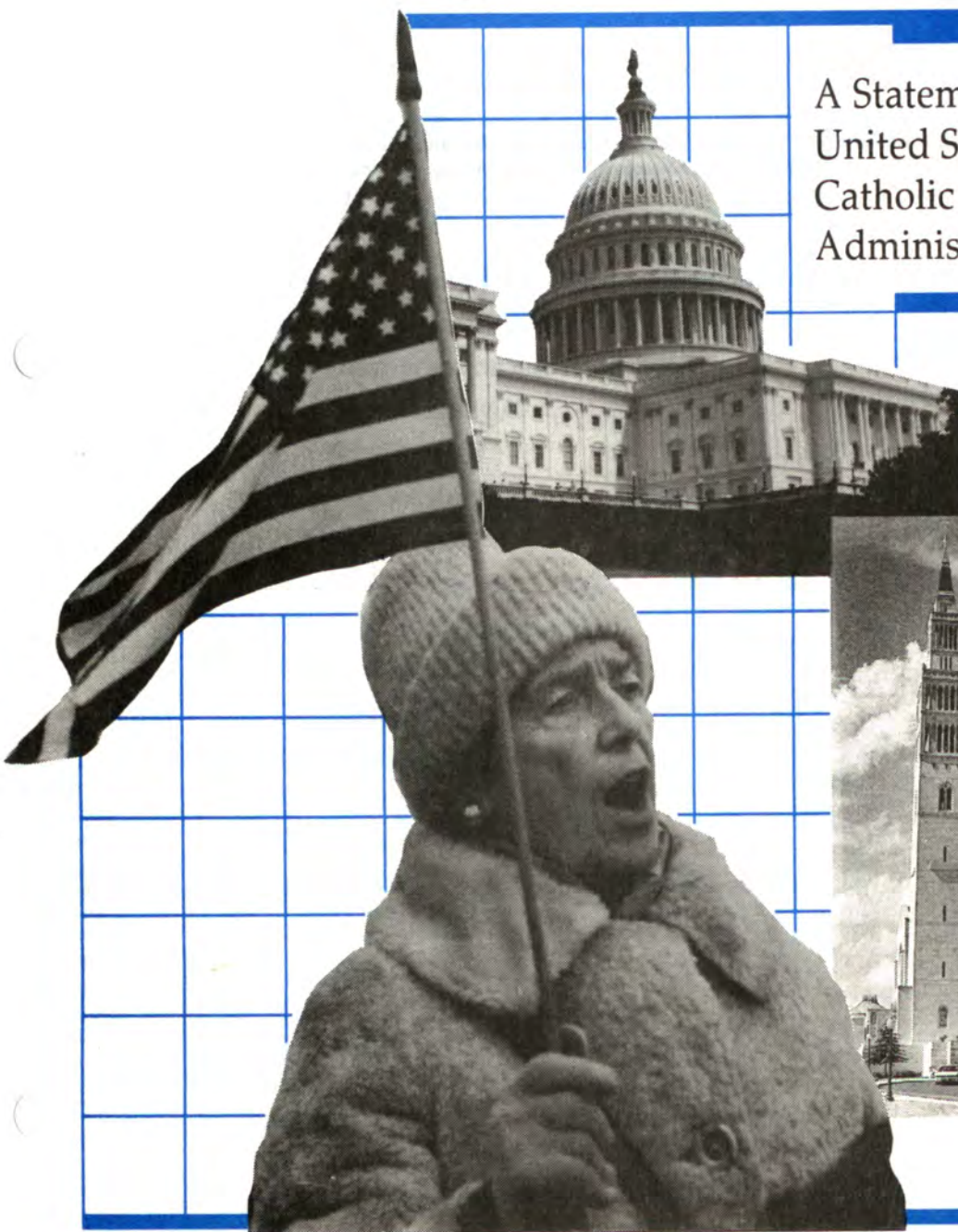
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POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY

Revitalizing American Democracy

A Statement of the
United States
Catholic Conference
Administrative Board



September 1991
Bilingual Edition

Advocacy for or against public-policy *issues* is not partisan activity. Church organizations may and properly should support public policies and legislative proposals that affirm and promote human rights and oppose policies and proposals that violate them. Two examples of permissible issue involvement are the Church's public support for the referendum to nullify Maryland's new, unrestricted abortion-on-demand law, and the Church's opposition to initiatives intended to reinstitute the death penalty in the District of Columbia. Homilies, bulletin announcements, and other communications which inform the consciences of parishioners are altogether appropriate.

The following guidelines are intended to encourage and facilitate appropriate Church and church-organization participation in political action:

EDUCATE

DO... share the Church's teaching on human life, human rights, social justice, and peace.

DO... highlight the moral and ethical dimensions of public-policy issues.

DO... facilitate voter education through the provision of such materials as candidates' statements, voting records, or questionnaire responses. (Take care to ensure that the materials include the views of all candidates for a given office, cover a range of issues and take no position on the issues covered, and are not otherwise biased.)

DO... sponsor multi-issue candidate forums which involve all eligible candidates for an office or offices. (While audience members need not maintain neutrality on the issues or candidate responses, the sponsoring organization must do so.)

ACTIVATE

DO... urge parishioners to register and to vote.

DO... encourage active participation in church sponsored voter registration efforts, "get-out-the-vote" campaigns, candidate forums, and other non-partisan voter-education initiatives.

DO... sponsor letter-writing campaigns designed to support or oppose specific legislative proposals or government policies, and to educate policy makers. (This may involve the distribution of such background information as the names, addresses, and phone numbers of public officials.)

BUT TAKE CARE to avoid partisanship — direct or indirect support for or opposition to a candidate for public office, a select group of candidates, or a political party. Churches and church owned buildings should not be made available to just one candidate or party, nor should the distribution of partisan campaign materials be permitted in church or through official Church or parish channels. (Distribution of partisan literature on public property adjacent to church buildings is permissible. While distribution of such material in church parking lots may be difficult to control, Church authorities should not authorize such action or otherwise give the impression that it represents the position of Church or parish leadership.)

Responsible Citizenship

It is hoped that these considerations and guidelines will contribute to a renewed political vitality in our City. If this election year is to engage the values of District residents, campaigners and voters alike must share responsibility for making it happen. All citizens are encouraged to vote; to demand positive, substantive campaigns and fair media coverage; to become involved in the campaign or party of their choice; to study the issues, inform their consciences, and take principled stands on candidates and issues.

Let us pray that Christians will provide leadership in promoting a spirit of responsible political involvement. May we follow the example of Jesus in giving special concern for the powerless, and may all our actions be guided by a deep love of God and our neighbor and a true spirit of citizenship.

*Publication of The Maryland Catholic Conference
188 Duke of Gloucester Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-2515
and
Office of Social Concerns
Archdiocese of Washington
P.O. Box 29260
Washington, D.C. 20017*

Responsible Citizenship: Revitalizing Politics in the District



Concern regarding participation in the political process by the Catholic laity, Church leaders, and Church organizations has prompted the Maryland Catholic Conference and the Archdiocese of Washington Office of Social Concerns to prepare these considerations on political involvement, which are approved for use in all parishes.

Decline and Renewal

Today, as people in other parts of the world embrace democratic values and struggle to take part in the political order, many Americans seem increasingly disillusioned with politics. In 1988, the last presidential election year, barely half of those eligible to vote did so. In 1990, only a third voted, the lowest turnout since World War II.

While some causes of this decline in political involvement are structural, such as unnecessary barriers to voter registration, others are more attitudinal. Candidates seem more interested in tactical combat than in civil debate. Too often, they seek to reduce support for their opponents, rather than to win support for their own causes. Campaigns focus more on symbols and soundbites than on qualifications and issues. The news media seem more interested in campaign tactics than in issues and character. And voters often seem to be motivated by narrow self-interests, unconvinced that involvement

makes a difference. The result has been elections with low participation, campaigns without substance, and winners without clear mandates.

In such a climate, it is essential that we set about to advance and strengthen democratic values, to reclaim them for ourselves and our posterity. Let us begin to do so.

As we prepare for this year's elections, let us each take steps to build confidence in the political process. Let us ask candidates to trust us enough to share their values and vision, and not resort to empty rhetoric or negative campaign tactics. Let us ask the media to focus less on who's ahead or whose TV ads are more clever, and focus more on candidate qualifications and positions.

Most importantly, as citizens, let us consider our own responsibilities: To register and vote, to study issues and assess candidate positions and qualifications, and to join with others in advocating for

important values. Together, by renewing our commitment to public life, we can invigorate our electoral processes and help make them opportunities for informed debate about the future.

Election Year Challenges

The key to a renewal of public life is a reorientation of politics that more appropriately reflects the common good — a reconciling of diverse interests for the well being of the human family. This is an urgent task in this election year.

How can our nation respond to the needs of vulnerable children? We live in a society that accepts the death of 1.6 million unborn children a year through legalized abortion. We live in a nation where one out of four pre-school children grows up in poverty. We live in a world where nearly 40,000 children die every day from hunger and malnutrition. The lives of vulnerable children — born and unborn — are central electoral issues for 1992. There are others.

How can our nation bring to bear the strength of a powerful market economy on the need for just policies that confront poverty, homelessness, joblessness, and declining real income?

How can our society best combat continuing prejudice and provide equal opportunity for African Americans, Hispanic Americans, women, immigrants, and other victims of discrimination?

How can our society support families in their irreplaceable moral role, offering real choices in finding and affording decent education, housing, and health care?

How can our nation pursue the values of justice and peace in a world afflicted with violent conflict, denial of human rights, and global poverty?

How can we deal with our global responsibilities and meet our obligations to future generations without mortgaging our economic future?

What alternatives can we offer to the violent solutions which society often applies to our most difficult problems — alternatives to abortion in dealing with problem pregnancies; to the death penalty in combatting crime; to euthanasia in

dealing with age and illness; to military force in confronting international injustice?

These are just some of the key issues that should be addressed this election year. They and all campaign issues should be measured by how they touch the human person — do they enhance or do they diminish life, human dignity, and human rights?

Religion and Politics

While it is increasingly acknowledged that major public issues have moral dimensions and that religious values have public consequences, there often is confusion and controversy over the participation of religious groups in public life. The Church joins the public debate to share its experience in serving the powerless and to add its values to the political dialogue. It seeks a community of conscience within the larger society whose members measure public issues against these central values. Its objectives are neither partisan nor ideological; rather, by focusing on the fundamental dignity of the human person, they cut across political categories.

This kind of participation does not involve religious tests for candidates, or telling people for whom they should vote. Rather it seeks to lift up the moral dimensions of public issues. It encourages all people of good will to use their voices and votes to enrich the social and political life of our City and our nation. It encourages Catholics, as both believers and citizens, to use the resources of our faith in building a society that is more respectful of life and human dignity.

The Church's Role in the Political Order

Christians believe that Jesus' commandment to love one's neighbor extends to the entire community. Jesus came to "bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, new sight to the blind and to set the downtrodden free" (Luke 4:18). He called upon us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and comfort the victims of injustice (Matt: 25). His example and His words invite individual acts of charity from each of us. They also encourage understanding and action on a broader scale, one that necessarily involves the institutions and structures of society, the economy, and politics.

Involvement in this broader, pastoral realm means involvement in the affirmation of human rights and the denunciation of human rights violations. It encourages us to call attention to the moral and religious dimensions of secular issues, to keep alive the values of the Gospel as norms for social and political life, and to advocate for peace and justice. Such a ministry inevitably touches upon public affairs and involves political consequences.

The Church's responsibility in this area falls on all its members. As citizens, we are called to become active and responsible participants in the political process. It is the laity who are primarily responsible for activity in political affairs, for it is they who, in the words of the Second Vatican Council, "can work for the sanctification of the world from within, in the manner of heaven" (*Lumen Gentium*, 31). The hierarchy also has a weighty responsibility. As teachers and pastors, they must provide norms for the formation of conscience, support efforts to promote peace and justice, and provide guidance and leadership when human rights are in jeopardy.

Drawing on our own experiences and exercising our distinctive roles, bishops, clergy, religious, and laity should join together in common witness and effective action to bring about Pope John Paul II's vision of a well-ordered society based on truth, justice, charity, and freedom (*Familiaris Consortio*).

The Church's role in the political order includes —

- Making clear the teachings of the Church and the responsibilities of the faithful;
- Analyzing issues for their social and moral dimensions;
- Measuring public policy against gospel values;
- Participating with other concerned parties in debate over public policy; and
- Speaking out on issues involving human rights, justice, and the life of Church in society.

Unfortunately, the Church's efforts in this area are sometimes misunderstood. Its participation in public affairs is not a threat to the political process or to pluralism, but an affirmation of their importance. The Church recognizes the legitimate autonomy of

government and the right of all, including the Church, to be heard in the formulation of public policy. As Vatican II declared:

"By preaching the truth of the gospel and shedding light on all areas of human activity through her teaching and the example of the faithful, she [the Church] shows respect for the political freedom and responsibility of citizens and fosters these values. . . . She also has the right to pass moral judgments, even on matters touching the political order, whenever basic personal rights or the salvation of souls make such judgments necessary" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 76).

A proper understanding of the role of the Church will not confuse its mission with that of government, but see as its ministry the advocacy of human rights and social justice. As Pope John Paul II pointed out in his recent encyclical, "The social message of the Gospel must not be considered a theory, but above all else a basis and motivation for action. . . . Today, more than ever, the Church is aware that her social message will gain credibility more immediately from the witness of actions than as a result of its internal logic and consistency" (*Centesimus Annus*, 57).

Guidelines for Church Involvement

While individual citizens (excepting civil servants employed by the federal government) are free to engage fully in *partisan* politics, churches, and other institutions which qualify for tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code are not. Emphasis on the word "partisan" is significant. Individuals may engage in partisan politics by actively and publicly supporting a political party and the candidates of their choice. The Church and church organizations may not be involved in partisan politics — expressions of preference for a political party and of direct or indirect support for or opposition to specific candidates are not permitted. (Officials and employees of the Church and other tax-exempt organizations, acting in their individual capacities, may participate freely in the political process. Such persons should make clear, however, that they are acting in their own behalf and not as representatives of their organizations.)

Clinton tells teachers school choice shouldn't include private education

By Carol Innerst
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton went on a Bush-bashing spree yesterday. First he blasted the president's push for vouchers to help pay private-school tuition, then he claimed the six national education goals as his own.

The Democratic presidential nominee, addressing a warm and gleeful audience of about 4,000 delegates to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) biennial convention in Pittsburgh, said he went to a Catholic school for two years and "will always treasure" the experience.

"We didn't have much money, but I'm darn glad the taxpayers didn't have to foot the bill for me going," he said to applause.

"People ought to have some measure of choice in the public schools they attend," he said. "But that doesn't mean that in the present circumstances, with a school system that is already underfunded, with radical inequalities among school districts in this country, that we ought to go for the private voucher system."

"I am opposed to that."

The delegates gave him a standing ovation.

Deputy Bush-Quayle campaign manager Mary Matalin counter-

attacked with a reminder that before Mr. Clinton "prostrated himself in front of the pooh-bahs of the AFT to swear that private-school choice is now the farthest thing from his mind," he had encouraging words for Wisconsin state Rep. Annette "Polly" Williams' plan for private-school vouchers in Milwaukee.

"Bill Clinton used to say that we needed new thinking in education," she said in four-page response to the Clinton speech. "But when he had a chance to push for true education reform — private and religious school choice — he backed off. So once again he has sold out to the same old special interests."

Mr. Clinton, who has been endorsed by the 796,000-member AFT and the 2.1-million-member National Education Association, said, "I haven't always agreed with the AFT on all issues."

He was referring to 1983, when he angered the unions by making veteran teachers take a competency test.

"I believe in the national education goals that I worked so hard to write," Mr. Clinton said. "I believe in the call for national standards of what our children should know and a meaningful way of measuring whether those kids know it or not. You know as well as I do that most of the national testing we have today is

a hoax."

The six national education goals were adopted by the president and the nation's governors after Mr. Bush convened an education summit at the University of Virginia.

The governors, led by Mr. Clinton, were determined to leave the session with a draft of national education goals to guide education reform. Mr. Clinton was largely responsible for writing the goals.

President Bush's "America 2000" plan is an education strategy formulated to achieve the goals. It calls for a voluntary, national assessment system to monitor student progress, a system Mr. Clinton endorses.

But the Democratic nominee said he has "grave reservations" about the president's proposal to put a new school in every congressional district. He said the problem is that "we have not yet found a way to make ideas that work travel very well across district and state lines."

"My opponents on the other side, many of whom have worked with me for years in the cause of education reform, are trying to convince the average American taxpayers and parents that because you are for me and because the NEA has endorsed me and because most people who have worked in education are for me, that somehow I'm not for reform," Mr. Clinton said.

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8/13/92



DATE: August 13, 1992

FROM: William Ryan

O -202-541-3200

H -202-686-1824

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**USCC LABOR DAY STATEMENT CITES
THE LINK BETWEEN WORK AND FAMILY**

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"Let us recommit ourselves to protect families and defend children by refocusing on the crucial connection between decent jobs at decent wages and healthy family life," the statement urged.

The Labor Day statement, entitled "Work and Family: Old Values, New Challenges," was issued by Bishop James W. Malone of Youngstown, Chairman of the USCC Committee on Domestic Social Policy. USCC is the national-level action agency of the nation's Catholic Bishops.

"Unfortunately, far too many families in this country have little reason to celebrate this Labor Day," said Bishop Malone.

"Presently, more than ten million Americans are looking for work; millions more have stopped looking; another ten million are underemployed-working at part-time jobs or jobs that do not provide a decent wage. Society has a moral obligation to reduce joblessness because it is through work that families are sustained, children are nurtured, and the future is secured," Bishop Malone said.

Even those who do work often do not make enough to support a

family, said the Bishop, who noted that in 1990 there were over two million families with children where a family member worked nearly full-time for the full-year, and yet they remained poor.

"Our society has become too tolerant of high levels of unemployment and much too tolerant of poverty-with terrible costs for families and children," the Bishop said.

Bishop Malone noted that almost 13% of children in this country rely on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (welfare) for at least part of their family's income, and the country is engaged in a debate about welfare and work.

"Our Bishops' Conference strongly advocates changes in the welfare system that 'assist recipients, wherever possible, to become self-sufficient through gainful employment,'" Bishop Malone said. "We believe that everyone who can work should work. What we need are new approaches to welfare -- not 'workfare' but 'family-fair' -- policies that offer poor families real opportunities to leave poverty and dependency behind, policies that do not discourage marriage and earnings, that do not simply cut off health care, housing, child care and other essential help as families leave welfare for work and education."

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"Labor unions have been and continue to be the vehicle for millions of workers to defend their dignity, protect their rights and ensure that their work provides a decent living for their families," Bishop Malone declared. "Catholic social teaching supports the labor movement in its efforts to offer real participation in the economy for workers and their families."

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"On this Labor Day," said Bishop Malone, "let us commit ourselves to support families by confronting widespread joblessness, wages that leave children in poverty and policies that force parents to choose between their jobs and their children."

Copies of the Labor Day statement are available from the Office of Domestic Social Development, 3211 Fourth Street, NE, Washington, DC, 20017.

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LABOR DAY STATEMENT

WORK AND FAMILY: OLD VALUES, NEW CHALLENGES

September 1992

*Bishop James W. Malone, Bishop of Youngstown
Chair, U.S.C.C. Committee on Domestic Social Policy*

This Labor Day, we focus on work and family, a central relationship that defines not just what we do but who we are. For most Americans, work is a distinctly human and very personal means of expression and creativity. It provides for our material needs, offers economic security for our families and allows us to contribute to the larger community.

Unfortunately, far too many families in this country have little reason to celebrate this Labor Day. Millions of Americans are without work. Many are working but still cannot provide adequately for their families. Others do not have the skills or lack opportunities for decent work. Still others work at jobs without meaning or dignity or fear that their health, safety or job security is at risk in the workplace.

Families Facing Unemployment

Presently, more than ten million Americans are looking for work; millions more have stopped looking; another ten million are underemployed - working at part-time jobs or jobs that do not provide a decent wage. Society has a moral obligation to reduce joblessness because it is through work that families are sustained, children are nurtured, and the future is secured. American society often equates freedom and personal well-being with work, so much so that people who are unemployed feel lost and without dignity. Indeed, long periods of unemployment can leave them with psychological scars as well as obvious economic difficulties.

Each day that people go without work society tells them that their talents aren't needed, that their skills don't matter -- in a real sense, they aren't needed and they don't matter. When a head of household is out of work, unemployment can devastate a family, undermine its stability, lead to the loss of its health care, and place its future in peril. Joblessness is a clear threat to family life.

Working Poor Families

Even those who do work often do not make enough to support a family. Almost two-thirds of all poor families with children had a family member working during the year. Census figures report that in 1990, there were over 2 million families with children where a family member worked nearly full-time for the full-year, and yet they remained poor. In fact, a fifth of our children are growing up poor. Most of these poor working families are white two parent families; although African American and Hispanic families are more likely to be jobless and poor. Our society has become too tolerant of high levels of unemployment and much too tolerant of poverty -- with terrible costs for families and children.

Work and Welfare

Almost 13% of children in this country rely on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), commonly called welfare, for at least part of their family's income. Our country is presently engaged in a vigorous debate about welfare and work. Some warn that welfare is becoming a way of life rather than an economic safety net for families who fall on hard times. States are slashing benefits and passing laws which cut benefits to children in order to try to influence the behavior of their parents. For example, some state legislatures have imposed financial penalties on mothers who have an additional child while receiving public assistance.

Others point out that benefits are inadequate for families and that poor families are becoming the political scapegoats of this recession. They believe lecturing poor families is no substitute for concrete programs and policies which offer help in the transition from welfare to work. Too often, welfare policy encourages families to break up to survive and to stay on welfare in order to have a decent place to live or to provide health care for their children. We can't make real progress by shaping

policy that reflects society's prejudices against the poor, ill-fitting stereotypes and the temptation to balance budgets by cutting assistance to those with great needs but little clout.

Catholic social teaching is pro-work, pro-family and pro-child. Our Bishops' Conference strongly advocates changes in the welfare system that "assist recipients, wherever possible, to become self-sufficient through gainful employment." We believe that everyone who can work should work. What we need are new approaches to welfare -- not "workfare" but "family-fair" -- policies that offer poor families real opportunities to leave poverty and dependency behind, policies that do not discourage marriage and earnings, that do not simply cut off health care, housing, child care and other essential help as families leave welfare for work and education. Our number one priority should be to create real opportunities for meaningful work so that families can live in dignity, contribute to our national economy and build our local communities.

Threats to Workers' Safety and Security

Recently, Americans were shocked to read about the working conditions at the poultry processing plant in North Carolina where 25 workers died in a terrible fire behind locked doors. It was a grim reminder that some workers literally take their lives in their hands when they go to work. Workers' safety is a matter of life and death.

We are also experiencing a resurgence of child labor law abuse which, at a time of industrial realignment, also threatens poor families. Too many children now spend their time working in fast food restaurants, fields and factories rather than in school, learning and preparing for the future. Child labor laws must be strengthened and enforced and families provided with adequate means to raise children.

A growing threat to workers' security is the hiring of permanent replacements for striking workers during labor-management disputes. Labor unions have been and continue to be the vehicle for millions of workers to defend their dignity, protect their rights and ensure that their work provides a decent living for their families. Catholic social teaching supports the labor movement in its efforts to offer real participation in the economy for workers and their families. Our tradition contradicts those who dismiss the positive role of genuine collective bargaining or undermine its effectiveness through anti-union measures such as the permanent replacement of striking workers.

Old Values, New Challenges

In our recent statement, Putting Children and Families First, the American bishops call for new public, private and community initiatives to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families. While they remind parents to invest more time in raising children, they also call on government, business and labor to support families. In addition to the policies already highlighted, the bishops call for national leadership:

- to reform our tax laws to include a refundable children's tax credit and an expanded earned income credit to recognize the economic consequences of raising children;
- to reform the health care system to make it accessible and affordable for all families;
- to fight discrimination, hunger and homelessness that undermine the dignity of many families;
- to finally enact a family and medical leave law, so parents don't have to choose between their jobs and their children at moments of crisis.

We need a new sense of community and commitment to the common good. We call on workers to give an honest day's work for an honest day's pay; owners and managers to treat their employees with fairness and justice; unions to really represent workers and to seek creative new partnerships and strategies for the future; and policymakers to return with renewed vigor and imagination to the challenges of full employment, tax and welfare reform, and workers' health, safety and rights.

Labor Day reminds us that people work not only for self-respect, but out of a profound regard for others. The job is a means for workers and their families to participate in the larger community and to contribute to the common good. Work is an expression of our creativity and our humanity and for the Christian it is much more. It is the way in which we use our God-given talents and abilities to participate in the continuing process of creation.

On this Labor Day, let us commit ourselves to support families by confronting widespread joblessness, wages that leave children in poverty and policies that force parents to choose between their jobs and their children. Let us recommit ourselves to protect families and defend children by refocusing on the crucial connection between decent jobs at decent wages and healthy family life.

Additional copies available from the Office of Domestic Social Development, U.S. Catholic Conference, 3211 Fourth Street, NE, Washington, DC 20017, (202)541-3185.



LABOR DAY STATEMENT

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DATE: August 13, 1992

FROM: William Ryan

O -202-541-3200

H -202-686-1824

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

Government Is Not God's Work

By Robert H. Meneilly

RELIGION can be the greatest thing on earth or the worst. It can be the greatest healing therapy in society, or the greatest hazard to a society's health. It can be a democratic republic's greatest good or its worst threat.

Look at the hot spots of the earth and you see religious extremists lighting the fuses — whether in Northern Ireland, Israel, Bosnia or California. Religious extremists are breeding all kinds of "culture wars." Religion can breed all kinds of harassment, bigotry, prejudice, intolerance and deception.

Religion is peculiar. When it is not in earnest, it doesn't hurt anyone, but it doesn't do any good either. When it is in earnest, it is a most powerful force for good or evil. If religion can persuade someone that an idea is the will of God, that person, not wanting to displease Almighty God, may feel compelled to act on it.

We Christians must face up to the fact that our Christianity has propagated, in the name of Jesus, devilish acts, bloody wars, awful persecutions, hate crimes and political chaos. We have seen this evidenced on television, with leaders of Operation Rescue harassing neighbors and demonstrating at women's clinics in the most detestable and criminal ways — in the name of Jesus! The hate that certain extreme elements of the Christian community have cultivated

Robert H. Meneilly is the senior pastor of the Village Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This article is excerpted from his sermon of Aug. 15.

toward neighbors of a homosexual orientation resembles the environment of hell. It causes the community to wonder if they have ever heard of the first and second greatest Commandments of God.

One of the not-so-obvious Christian movements in our country is what has become known as the religious right. So many wonderfully good and well-meaning people are being drawn in and are supporting its agenda, without realizing what they are doing or considering the ultimate consequences.

The movement is led by some very charismatic leaders, like Pat Robertson, James Dobson, Tim La Haye, Jimmy Swaggert and Jerry Falwell. Their message sounds good, righteous and very Christian on the surface. Who can listen to clean-shaven, well-dressed and patriotic-sounding Pat Robertson talk about his Christian Coalition and not think, "That is exactly what this country needs — good old American patriotism?"

The thousands of good Christians who gather to hear James Dobson talk of his Focus on the Family Crusade may think: "Wow, that's the greatest, and every American should hear and heed: Discipline our kids, don't spare the rod and spoil the child; indoctrinate them with our exclusive doctrines. Make divorce impossible; don't teach about sex until kids are more mature and can understand it because that leads to promiscuity. Preach Mom at home in the kitchen and Dad bringing home all the bacon."

Focus on the Family appears to have a commendable mission. But it is a mission that is out to get the state to legislate what Mr. Dobson's religion can't seem to do. Any religion that needs the government to support and subsidize it doesn't deserve to

survive. It is not the state's business to carry out the church's ministries!

The religious right's mission is twofold. First, it seeks to gain control of the Republican Party apparatus at the state and local levels, with the eventual control of the Republican National Committee itself. Its second objective is to elect its candidates to hundreds, even thousands, of lower level public offices.

Once elected, they can begin to implement Mr. Robertson's Christian Coalition extremist views, and from there they can seek higher offices.

A pastor dissects
the religious
right's new goals.

They have put out a detailed manual, spelling out how to get in and manipulate the political process.

To be sure, any person should be free to run for any office, whatever his or her political party or religious affiliation. But these so-called stealth candidates, who conceal their ultimate purpose until elected, are mighty dangerous for local communities and the nation.

In office, these folks come out of their closets. They begin pushing their agenda on our schools, ranging from the teaching of creationism, gutting sex education programs and putting an end to school breakfast programs for the needy and day care for children of working parents — on the grounds that such programs undercut the family. In their view, children should eat at home with their

parents, even when there may be no parents there or no food.

The religious right is also big on censorship of books, including any fantasy yarns involving witches — even those in the long tradition of children's literature, such as "Snow White" and "Hansel and Gretel." They claim that these lead to devil worship and witchcraft.

These extremists always refer to the United States as a "Christian nation." But look at history honestly. The very idea that the United States should be officially Christian was explicitly rejected by James Madison and the other Framers of our Constitution who insisted on a system of separation of church and state that guarantees religious freedom for all. "Christian nation," like "family values," are code words for an evangelical socio-religious perspective, used to marginalize, if not blackball, non-conformists.

The religious right extremists have been conniving in every political way to get state-mandated prayer and Bible reading back into the public school, ever since the Supreme Court declared it to be unconstitutional in 1963. Let's face it, fellow Christian Protestants, that old tradition clearly promoted a generic form of Protestantism, without any concern for our Roman Catholic, Mormon, Jewish, Unitarian or Muslim neighbors. The Pennsylvania law that was struck down by the Supreme Court was explicit: "At least ten verses from the Holy Bible shall be read, without comment, at the opening of each school day."

Voluntary prayer in the public schools has always been legal. Children are perfectly free to say grace over lunch and read the Bible in their free time. We need to resist government-prescribed prayer programs.

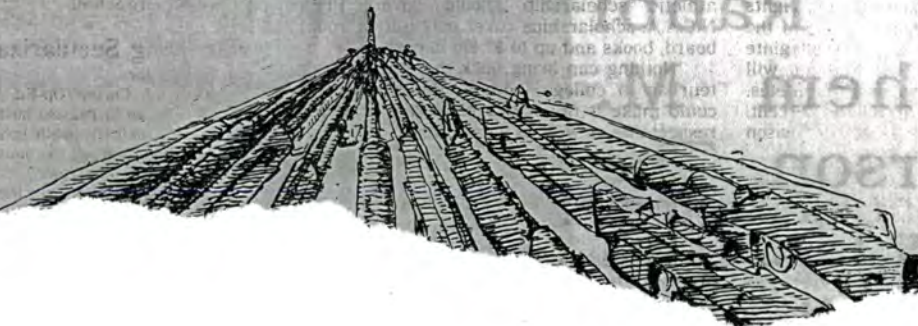
The Supreme Court put the responsibility back upon parents, where it belongs. A religion that must depend upon the state to do what it cannot do is not worthy of existence. Even Christianity.

This religious right confronts us with a threat far greater than the old threat of Communism. When the state and the church become entwined, it is religion that is the loser.

I tremble for my country when I hear zealous religionists plugging their good neighbors and women's health groups in the name of Jesus, who said: "A new commandment I give to you; love one another as I have loved you."

I tremble for our nation when I hear extremists discrediting our public school system, the only truly ecumenical program left in our community. The public school takes the poor and the handicapped, the abused and foster children, the Christian and the Muslim, the Roman Catholic and the Jew. They do more of the Lord's work every day than most other institutions. I fear for all our schools if we afford government support to private schools, for soon the funding state is sure to impose regulations. It is our freedom of religion that will ultimately lose.

It may sound judgmental for one religionist in a pulpit to stand up and warn people about the threat of differing religionists. I pray that what I do today is discernment in love, not judgment in any hate. To love our neighbors as ourselves requires tolerance, but it also requires looking out for the best ultimate welfare of both state and church. It means being humble, not self-righteous.





Office for Media Relations

United States Catholic Conference

3211 Fourth Street, N.E. Washington, D.C. 20017-1194 (202)541-3200 FAX (202)541-3129 TELEX 7400424

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First Lady's Office

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FROM:

Msgr. Frank Maniscalco

COMMENT:

File

Bishop

**Office of the President**

3211 Fourth Street NE Washington DC 20017-1194 (202) 541-3100 FAX (202) 541-3166 TELEX 7400424

Most Reverend William H. Keeler, D.D.

Archbishop of Baltimore

President

July 14, 1993

Honorable William Clinton
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President,

I write on behalf of the Catholic bishops and people of the United States to strongly object to certain characterizations of those who oppose abortion-on-request by Dr. Jocelyn Elders, the nominee for the post of U.S. Surgeon General, which were made as a part of Dateline NBC last night.

Her characterization of the Catholic Church as a "celibate and male dominated Church" is contemptuous and implies that Catholics do not have a right to contribute to the debate on this issue.

Furthermore, her suggestion that those who find abortion morally repugnant are not interested in life beyond the womb flies in the face of your own recognition during our March meeting of the Church's many contributions to life at all stages. Additionally, Mrs. Clinton in a meeting with representatives of our Conference gratefully acknowledged the contribution of the Catholic Church to health care for the poor, mother and child programs, child-care programs, and education.

While we certainly disagree on some matters of public policy, I would expect that those men and women who serve in senior positions in your Administration would at least recognize the manifold contributions of the Church on behalf of the poor and the suffering.

With all best wishes, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend William H. Keeler
Archbishop of Baltimore
President

M. Joycelyn Elders, M.D.

810 Marcia Cove

Little Rock, Arkansas 72206

DETERMINED TO BE AN
ADMINISTRATIVE MARKING
INITIALS: JE DATE: 7/14/2014

August 5, 1993

PERSONAL & ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The Most Reverend William H. Keeler
Archbishop of Baltimore
President
National Conference of Catholic Bishops
3211 Fourth Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20017 1194

Dear Archbishop Keeler:

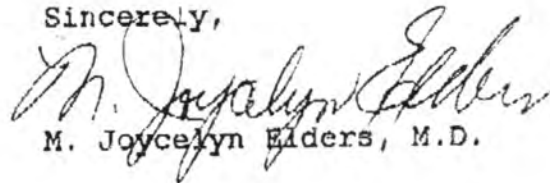
{ Alexis Herman shared with me her conversation with Msgr. Robert Lynch, Executive Director of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops regarding my nomination. I am, of course, aware of the controversy that has arisen concerning statements I made during my tenure as Director of the Arkansas Department of Health. I am distressed that some have interpreted my remarks as evidence of bigotry against particular religious denominations.

I abhor bigotry in all its forms. I grew up in a segregated community and know first hand the baleful effects of prejudice and discrimination. I do not consider myself a bigot, and I regret any impression that I may have left to the contrary. I am willing, indeed eager, to engage in a constructive dialogue.

As I told Bishop McDonald, the Bishop of Little Rock, I never meant to malign or blaspheme the Catholic Church. If my statements have caused any offense, I sincerely apologize. I respect and admire the many contributions that church-based programs and church-inspired people have made to education, health care and social justice. As a deeply religious person myself, I am respectful of sincerely held religious beliefs, even when those beliefs are at odds with my own convictions about the wisest public policy choices. I believe that religious organizations are fully entitled to make their voices heard, and have every right to participate in public debate over the many pressing issues this country faces.

At the state and local level I participated in constructive conversations with religious, civic and social groups with one goal in mind: to bring the citizens of Arkansas together in common cause against the problems that beset us. I hope that, if confirmed as Surgeon General, I can continue to bring Americans together to contribute to that ongoing conversation, ever mindful of the rich diversity of backgrounds, viewpoints and beliefs of our people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M. Joycelyn Elders". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

M. Joycelyn Elders, M.D.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 5, 1993

The Most Reverend William H. Keeler
Archbishop of Baltimore
President
National Conference of Catholic Bishops
3211 Fourth Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20017-1194

Dear Archbishop Keeler:

Thank you for your letter concerning my nomination of Dr. Joycelyn Elders to be Surgeon General of the United States.

I understand and share your desire that all Americans, including Catholics, actively participate in the debate regarding significant issues such as abortion. I have personally known Dr. Elders for many years, and I can assure you that, as a religious person herself, she respects the deeply held beliefs of others. I know that she will bring the full measure of that respect to her position as Surgeon General of the United States.

I join Mrs. Clinton in expressing gratitude for the contributions of the American Catholic Church to alleviating ignorance and suffering in this country. I look forward to working with you, the Bishops' Conference, and members of my Administration as we address the problems facing our nation.

Sincerely,

