

RNC *For Life* REPORT

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CANDIDATES LINING UP FOR 2000 PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

All Claim to be "Pro-Life" But Who Deserves the Label?

Lamar Alexander has announced his intention to seek the Republican presidential nomination for the third time. Mr. Alexander describes himself as personally pro-life, but he opposes a human life amendment. He has said that the states should impose restrictions on abortion, which even the current Supreme Court allows (such as parental involvement). Alexander's spokesman, Stephen Schmidt, said the right to life issue is not on his agenda. "This campaign is about fixing public education, reducing taxes and strengthening the national defense." (The *Boston Globe*, 3/10/99)

Gary Bauer, former president of Family Research Council, co-chairman of RNC/Life, and former director of domestic policy in the Reagan White House, has formed a presidential exploratory committee. Gary's belief in the inherent right to life is well known. He has said he would not choose a pro-choice running mate and could not support such a ticket. In a recent interview with San Antonio talk show host Adam McManus, he said: "If we want to stop abortion on demand, all we have to do is make sure that the federal judges that are appointed by the next Republican president believe and operate on the idea that all of our children are welcomed into the world and protected by the Constitution of the United States."

Pat Buchanan is again an announced candidate for the Republican nomination. Always consistent, Pat

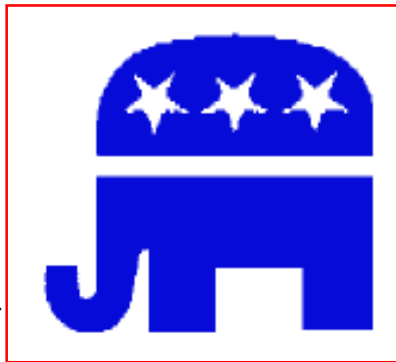
is unconditionally pro-life. Adam McManus interviewed him as well and Pat summed up his position this way: "I am right to life all the way. I believe that every human life is sacred. We do not have the right to take innocent human life of the unborn or of the elderly or of the sick or of the handicapped. And I believe we have to have respect for life across the

board. [As president] I will appoint pro-life justices to the Supreme Court. I will have a vote on the Human Life Amendment to the Constitution, even if the vote is lost. That is what I believe."

Gov. George W. Bush of Texas announced the formation of an exploratory committee and during press in-

terviews, he said he wants abortion to be "rare" (a phrase reminiscent of Bill Clinton). Bush said he would support a human life amendment to the Constitution as long as it excludes babies conceived as a result of rape or incest, or in cases where the life of the mother is threatened, and that he would allow abortions for those reasons throughout the entire nine months of pregnancy. When asked about retaining the pro-life plank in the 2000 Republican Platform, Gov. Bush responded that the Republican Party should retain a pro-life "tenor," raising concerns about his support for re-adoption of the current platform language. Bush rules out changes in current law "until America's hearts change."

Pro-life leaders have been watching as a steady stream of Republican politicians and fund-raisers have



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visited Governor Bush in recent weeks, among them Lew Eisenberg, Henry Kravis and John Moran, all intimate cronies of the radical pro-abortion Governor of New Jersey, Christine Todd Whitman. The three, who helped Whitman organize the Republican Leadership Council, have raised millions for pro-abortion Republicans and Democrats.

Elizabeth Dole — In a letter released last week by her campaign, Elizabeth Dole assured her backers that the right to life is not among her priorities. She let it be known that, as far as she is concerned, the national debate over the right to life is a “dead-end debate.” Describing the pursuit of a human life amendment to the Constitution, a goal that has been adopted by Republican National Conventions since 1976, as irrelevant and highly divisive, Mrs. Dole effectively dismissed the right to life cause and specifically called such an amendment one that diverts attention from so-called “urgent” issues like “sexual harassment,” “the financial security of women,” and “women’s health.” She went on to say

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— Alan Keyes

that she considers herself pro-life with rape, incest and life of the mother exceptions. She recommended that, as a party, “we should agree to disagree,” and concentrate on “what we agree upon most,” like stopping partial-birth abortions, enacting parental notification requirements, and continuing the ban on public funding of abortions.

Steve Forbes supports regulation and restriction of the practice of abortion, and opposes euthanasia and assisted suicide. He has pledged to appoint Supreme Court Justices like Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas. Although Forbes frequently says in his speeches that “life begins at conception and ends at natural death,” he holds exceptions for rape, incest and life of the mother, and says that before we can change the law about abortion, we must have “a change of heart” and seek a “consensus.” He has lots of company among those presidential

contenders who appear to be trying to stake out a position that is pro-life “enough” to attempt to secure some pro-life voters, yet not so pro-life as to alienate the pro-abortion wing of the Party. Although Forbes financed television ads calling for the New Jersey Legislature to override the veto of a partial-birth abortion ban by pro-abortion Governor Christine Todd Whitman, he nevertheless supported her in her re-election campaign. In a recent interview with Tim Russert on Sunday, March 21, Forbes would not say that her radical pro-abortion agenda would prevent him from supporting her should she decide to run for the U.S. Senate. Mr. Russert asked, “Will you campaign for her [Whitman] if she’s a Senate nominee?” Mr. Forbes replied; “She hasn’t announced yet, and I think that her views, even though I disagree on a lot of her views, will probably be better than the Democrat.”

In reality, there would be no difference between Whitman and the most liberal Democrat they could find on most issues of importance to the pro-life cause. For instance, she and President Clinton have exactly the same disregard for innocent human life. She supported his veto of the federal partial-birth abortion ban and then vetoed the New Jersey partial-birth ban.

John Kasich, currently a Congressman from Ohio’s 12th district, said the following in New Hampshire on 2/17/99 in response to a question about his views on abortion: “Well, I’m pro-life.” “I think there are legitimate exceptions on rape, incest and life of the mother.” “Here’s what we have to do as Republicans. We can have our position, but we don’t have to be narrow.” In November, 1997, when pro-abortion extremist Christine Todd Whitman was running for re-election as Governor of New Jersey, her campaign appeared to be faltering, largely because pro-life voters were so outraged at her veto of a ban on partial-birth abortions. Congressman Kasich flew to New Jersey to campaign for Whitman, who squeaked by with barely 1% of the vote. In June of ’98, when pro-abortion Republican Congresswoman Marge Roukema faced a strong challenge from pro-life Assemblyman Scott Garrett, Kasich traveled again to New Jersey to assist in her reelection campaign. Mr. Kasich’s views appear to be in conflict, as evidenced by a March 25, 1999 story by Roger K. Lowe in The Columbus Dispatch. On the one hand, he said if he wins the Republican presidential nomination, he will choose

a running mate who opposes abortion. He also said if elected president, he would nominate Supreme Court Justices who are “anti-abortion,” and that he thinks the pro-life plank should remain in the Republican National Platform. However, in commenting on the fact that his wife, Karen, disagrees with him and supports abortion on demand, Mr. Kasich said that while he believes that abortion is the taking of a life, there may be ways to find compromises with those on the other side. “Compromise is a part of life,” Kasich said. “I can't always have things my own way. I'm looking for common ground.”

Between people who would support the killing of innocent unborn babies, and those working to restore legal protection of their God-given right to life, there is no common ground — there is only a chasm.

Alan Keyes has formed a “testing the waters” committee in order to help him make the decision to run for the Republican nomination in 2000. Alan is well known among pro-life Americans for his unambiguous stand that the right to life is God-given and must be protected under the law. His comments on the Alan Keyes Show, 3/1/99, go to the heart of what is at stake in the politics of 2000. Mr. Keyes, declaring that he will never vote for a pro-abortion person again, said: “I don't care what party label they wear. My vote is not going to go for death any more, ever.” “New Jersey's Gov. Christine Todd Whitman is out there thinking that she is going to run for the U.S. Senate. And the only way that she could ever win a state-wide office again in NJ is if pro-life conservatives are willing to hold their nose and cast their votes for her. And I believe that any pro-life conservative who does so is actually casting a vote for the culture of death and deserting the cause.” “Abortion becomes a very good benchmark for determining what kind of principles that individual has, and how that is going to work itself out on key issues that come up . . . later on.”

Senator John McCain, who would also exclude some babies from legal protection, is considering a run in 2000, and did an interview with Wolf Blitzer on Tuesday, March 2, 1999, during which he was asked this question: “Senator, could you pick a vice-presidential running mate who was a supporter of a woman's right to have an abortion — a Governor Pataki, a Governor

Wilson, a Governor Whitman, a Rudy Giuliani? Could you pick one of those, or any Republican who supports abortion rights, to be your running mate?” Senator McCain replied: ... “I believe that I could. I obviously have not thought that much about it. But I think you have to judge your running mate on their over-all credentials . . .”

Voters who are truly pro-life judge the vice presidential running mate by the same criteria as they judge the presidential nominee because he is but a heartbeat away from the presidency. A Republican ticket bearing a pro-abortion candidate is unacceptable.

Senator McCain joined 70 liberal, mostly pro-abortion Republicans at a meeting of the Republican Leadership Council (RLC) on February 13, 1999, at the posh Doral Country Club in Miami, FL, where he called for the Party to move to the center and work toward inclusiveness. “Inclusiveness” to the RLC means excluding the pro-life plank from the Party Platform and from the policy agendas of Republican lawmakers.

Dan Quayle has announced the formation of an exploratory committee. In the years since he became Vice President, Dan Quayle has appeared to equivocate on his once solidly pro-life position, making conflicting statements in television interviews and by campaigning for the re-election of pro-abortion radical Governor

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Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey.

On March 23 the former Vice President issued a statement on the sanctity of life which clarified his position: “I believe human life is sacred. Whether it is an unborn child, the gravely disabled, or the elderly, all have a fundamental right to life. That is why, during my years in Congress, I supported a human life amendment, and I continue to support an amendment to overturn *Roe v. Wade* today.” “In both the House and Senate, I consistently voted for the strongest possible measures to protect human life because I believe that ending an innocent life can be justified only when necessary to save another life. I support retaining the pro-life platform of the Republican Party.”



The Quayle statement also said that his running mate or nominee to the Supreme Court must share his pro-life commitment. As President, he would move to ban partial-birth abortions, prohibit taxpayer funding of the abortion industry, and work to encourage adoption and crisis pregnancy centers.

Senator Bob Smith of New Hampshire has announced his intention to run for the presidency in 2000. He is a consistent pro-life leader with a perfect pro-life voting record for his entire 13 years in Congress. Senator Smith introduced legislation in 1995 to ban the procedure of infanticide, better known as partial-birth abortion. He also took a lead role in efforts to stop federal funding of human embryo experiments and led the successful effort to eliminate federal funding of abortions by preserving the Hyde Amendment from attack by pro-abortion advocates. He is the prime sponsor of the Human Life Constitutional Amendment and a bill establishing the personhood of the unborn child from the moment of conception.

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