

op-ed

Gender would cloud issues for female candidate

BY GERARD OLACK

The 1984 Presidential campaign is in full gear for the primaries. There are conventions, polls, "votes," and talk of vice-presidential running mates. But, now the term "running-mate" may have a more literal meaning, for there is discussion on having a woman as a candidate for vice-president.

Is this country ready for a woman president though? That is the question to consider since the vice-president is next in line for the presidency should any tragedy occur to the president. The answer is that we are ready, but hesitant. The fact that this

question is being discussed demonstrates our hesitancy, but we are accustomed to seeing women as leaders of countries. Some of the memorable ones are: Golda Mier, Israel; Indira Ghandi, India; and Margaret Thatcher in England. Few people accept the argument that all women are indecisive, especially after the resolve shown by Thatcher during the

Falkland Islands conflict. Also, any argument that women are biologically inferior has its facts mixed up. Tests show women have more stamina than men on the whole.

Should there be a women vice-presidential candidate at this time? Of course, but her ticket should not win. The only reason why I say this is because there will be much too much press

attention on her. Look at the attention Sandra Day O'Connor and Sally Ride received for their firsts, as Supreme Court Justice and astronaut, respectively. Such attention just because of one's sex in a campaign for public office causes other issues and qualifications to be overlooked. If her ticket is elected, it will be burdened with the belief that it only won because of the woman on the ticket, not because it was a good ticket. This will make working with the Congress even more difficult. Her qualifications won't be recognized, though they will have been overly scrutinized — because she is a woman. This is unfair.

Once a woman runs on a ticket, though, the novelty

will wear off. This will allow other women to run with much less publicity — thus keeping issues and qualifications in the public eye, not sex. It will be less important as an issue, after the first time. It would be nice if people are considered as people, not as man or woman, black or white. But don't construe this into denying one's sexuality or race.

Now there may be an exceptional woman who will be able to keep the attention on qualifications and positions — not on one's sex. Then I have no qualms about her ticket winning, but why should she settle for vice president?

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"Should there be a woman vice-presidential candidate at this time? Of course, but her ticket should not win."



Objection limits U.S. security

Civic responsibility must accompany refusal to fight

BY JOHN FLANAGAN

I support the laws of the United States which provide for humane treatment for those, who for reasons of conscience, totally refuse to bear arms or to serve in the military service of this country; provided they accept some other form of national or community service; and provided further that this can be done without injury to the rights and duties of others or society itself.

I support the Catholic Church's teaching that "those who serve their country as members of its Armed Forces should regard themselves as agents of security and freedom on behalf of their people. As long as they fulfill this role properly, they are making a genuine contribution to peace."

I do not support the concept of Selective Conscientious Objection (SCO) precisely for the reasons noted above, and because SCO evades one's civil responsibility. I believe in positive peace, self preservation, active defense of our freedoms, full (not selective) responsibilities of American citizenship, and that every American citizen in this

nation is obligated to participate in the preservation of our freedoms. We have a right to life, and our nation has a right to survive and pass our liberty on to our children. I believe that the price to exercise the freedoms we enjoy in America is to be alert to the threat, and to be adequately prepared. In short, peace can only be maintained by a strong defense, accompanied by a strong resolve in a society where everyone should contribute equitably and fairly to the common good. We delude ourselves when we think that aggression is not a threat to our life and liberty; and that all we need do is show our "goodwill" and we will be safe. History proves otherwise.

For well over 15 years our nation failed to teach patriotism — love of country. We need to show gratitude to those in our Armed Forces, and we must thank our Veterans, especially the Vietnam Veterans, for their unselfish sacrifice. We need to teach respect for service to God and country; not evasion of responsibility and duty to the common good.

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S. African policy: change gradually

BY JOHN HILDEBRAND

In his article "Apartheid Has Not Changed" (Oct. 6) Dr. Louis Mitchell attacked South Africa and its policy of apartheid. He referred to it as "the evil racist institution that rules South Africa" and a "people eater." I disagree.

Apartheid, for those not familiar with the term, is the separate development of peoples within a nation. In South Africa this means separate development for whites, blacks, and Asiatics. South Africa has followed this policy for close to 300 years. It was not until the 20th century that South Africa was criticized for it.

As for South Africa itself, blacks have not suffered as much as Dr. Mitchell suggests. Blacks in South Africa have the highest standard of living, the best medical care, medical facilities, and housing in all of Africa because of government efforts. While the difference in average income between blacks and whites in the United States has begun to grow again, the difference in income between blacks and whites in South Africa has decreased. South Africa has been called "the most Christian nation in all of Africa" by the *Christian Science Monitor* — ironic, isn't it?

Dr. Mitchell even attacks the newly proposed constitution for South Africa, because it only makes small concessions. If change is to occur in South Africa, it must occur slowly, not all at once. Apartheid is a full, working part of South African society. It cannot be torn from the system, but must be slowly replaced if it is to be removed.

In South Africa there is a Christian, democratic nation prospering despite outside pressures. She has endured Western economic sanctions and communist-backed guerrillas and 'freedom fighters.'

Perhaps Dr. Mitchell could point his accusing finger at more deserving victims — the continued racial violence in the Punjab (India), religious fighting in Ireland and Sri Lanka, or political oppression in Southeast Asia. If I had a choice I would prefer to see a South Africa without apartheid, but until such a time they can bring about that change on their own, we should be devoting our efforts to more worthy causes.

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