FROM: Phyllis Schlafly

68 FAIRMOUNT, ALTON, ILLINOIS 62002 / (618) 462-5415

RELEASE: NOVEMBER 26, 1982

HUMAN SERVICES AND ETHICS

Recently I appeared on an academic forum on which the West Virginia Commissioner of Welfare discussed "Human Sevices in the 1980's: The Ethical Debate." His speech was a good example of how self-serving social service professionals try to paint themselves as pious guardians of society's ethics, while conservatives are depicted as beasts who would stomp on the hungry and the helpless.

First, he set up a strawman at whom to shoot darts, Ayn Rand, whom he called the most influential spokesman for the Reagan/Goldwater welfare philosophy. That is false; most conservatives have little or nothing in common with Ayn Rand, who prefers a sort of atheistic anarchy without government or taxes.

Then the Welfare Commissioner moved from philosophic generalities to political particulars, painting Tip O'Neill-type views as ethical, while implying that Reaganaut views are not ethical and calling them "radical." He said: "The actions of Congress and of the states, based on their ethical beliefs about human services, have prevented the kinds of radical changes proposed by the Reagan Administration."

There isn't a shred of evidence that the liberal high-tax spenders are any more motivated by "ethical beliefs" than the low-tax conservatives. The most important human service that government can provide is to make sure that our nation remains free and independent. That's the sine qua non of all government, an eminently ethical position, and the priority of most conservatives.

The Welfare Commissioner concluded that "the great ethical debate of the 1980's, at least as human services are affected, is between those who believe government has a responsibility to meet the fundamental social and economic needs of its citizens and those who do not." That's not the great debate at all.

The great debate is between those who are trying to perpetuate their own tax-paid jobs and those who believe that the social-service liberals have betrayed their stewardship and need to be told by their master, "Thou canst be steward no longer." So, let's ask some ethical questions.

What about the ethics of conducting the welfare system so that it has produced a 55% rate of illegitimate births? This incredible result has come about since the liberals started their spending programs in the 1930s. The high illegitimacy rate among welfare recipients appears to be the direct consequence of the financial incentives offered to teenage and young-adult women for illegitimacy. Is that ethical?

What about the ethics of spending tax funds to kill unborn babies in abortions that are not medically indicated? Is it the liberal position that abortion is the ethical side and that saving lives is the nonethical side?

What about the ethics of allowing one fifth of the young men and women who receive student loans to be deadbeats who fail to repay their loans after they graduate and have well-paying jobs? Is it ethical to loan the taxpayers' money to college students and then wash your hands about whether or not it is paid back?

What about the ethics of spending our tax funds to finance political advocacy and lobbying at Congress and State Capitols? Funny thing, I don't hear any human-service professionals objecting to the ethics of taking taxes from nonliberals and using them to lobby for liberal causes.

A new group has sprung up in Washington called the Fairness Committee Against Tax-Funded Politics. Since it was started by a group of conservatives, naturarally, it operates on voluntary donations rather than tax funds.

The Committee has compiled a list of roll-call votes in House and Senate which involve the use of tax funds for political advocacy. Here are some examples of the types of votes that the Committee has monitored and will be watching in future months.

At least a dozen amendments were voted on by the Senate and House to prohibit the Legal Services Corporation from lobbying Congress, the State legislatures, local officials, local referenda or initiatives. LSC is supposed to be spending its tax dollars to provide legal services for the poor -- not to lobby.

Another amendment involved trying to stop the use of tax dollars to subsidize activities of policy advocates appearing before the Economic Regulatory Administration. Another was an amendment to prevent the Civil Rights Commission from lobbying Congress or state legislators with tax funds.