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'Special responsibilities of pro-life, pro-Obama supporters'

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Catholics of good will, acting in good faith, have - and will continue ? to differ on how best to respond to the tragedy of abortion in the United States. Some, of course, have placed their overriding focus on overturning *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion in 1973. Others, the *NCR* editors included, have advocated rooting out the causes that lead women to have abortions.

We criticized the U.S. bishops for holding to the former path while seemingly forsaking most other political issues with a moral component.

For example, in an editorial in the Oct. 31st issue, we wrote:

?Another presidential election cycle is nearly ended, and once again the Catholic bishops in the United States have sadly distinguished themselves for the narrowness and, in too many cases, barely concealed partisanship, of their political views.

Cycle after cycle they have promulgated the same message: Abortion trumps all other issues and the only

credible approach to fighting abortion is voting for candidates who express a wish to overthrow *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion. We have persistently criticized the American bishops on this page for such a limited political strategy.?

Meanwhile, we have argued that Catholics, while not agreeing on the political wisdom of overturning *Roe*, should agree to work together to reduce the numbers of abortions occurring in the U.S. We went on to speak about the special responsibilities of pro-lifers who supported the Democratic Party platform that calls for efforts to reduce U.S. abortions.

As recently as our Nov. 14th issue, we wrote:

?Pro-life Catholics who supported Obama have a special obligation to hold the new administration accountable for policies that reduce the 1 million-plus abortions that take place each year in this country. ? Many prominent Catholics, strong pro-lifers among them, lent their prestige to the Obama campaign. They were assured that despite the president-elect's pro-choice views and record, an Obama administration would make reducing the demand for abortion a key domestic priority. We must now work to assure that these commitments were genuine and not simply the tactical maneuvers of a clever campaign.?

We must hold President Elect-Obama and the Democratic Party to their commitments. We accept the responsibility to play our part in doing so. In this light we are hearted to see others thinking the same way, in this case an **Open Letter to President-Elect Obama About Abortion: From a Pro-Obama and Pro-Life Leader** published Nov. 13th on The Huffington Post website.

ttttt- NCR Editors

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