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Symposium

Can the Seamless Garment Be Sewn?
The Future of Pro-Life Progressivism

Foreword:

Pro-Life Progressivism and the
Fourth Option in American
Public Life

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Fides et Iustitia

FOREWORD

PRO-LIFE PROGRESSIVISM AND THE FOURTH OPTION IN AMERICAN PUBLIC LIFE

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I.

The first premise of this symposium is that there is a body of moral-political thought in contemporary America that can be called “Pro-Life Progressivism.” This outlook combines opposition to abortion and euthanasia with a number of positions typically deemed “progressive” or leftward-leaning, such as support for strong anti-discrimination laws, strong anti-poverty programs with governmental involvement, strong environmental protection, skepticism about the use of American military force, and concern for the rights and dignity of those accused and convicted of crimes.

There are actually Americans who hold this combination of positions. That point may require emphasis, because in political debate today the two descriptors “pro-life” and “progressive” are typically seen as opposites, and their combination an oxymoron. Those who are against abortion and euthanasia are “conservatives,” and their opponents, the progressives, emphasize the other issues above.

But the rough combination of views above can be found in a few different movements in America today: a few streams that can serve as sources for a broader political river of pro-life progressivism. The first source, and the major focus of this symposium, is the social justice tradition of the Catholic Church. At various times and places, the Catholic moral-political tradition in America has inspired people to strenuously oppose the taking of human life not only in cases of abortion but also in cases of war—or at least war not justified as a strict necessity for defending others’ lives.¹ The Catholic tradition has also led people to oppose the death penalty as unnecessary

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1. On Catholic peace movements, see e.g. in this symposium, Sidney Callahan, *The Consistent Ethic of Life*, 2 U. St. Thomas L.J. 272, 284-85 (2005). On the development of Catholic just-

killing, a position given impetus by Pope John Paul II in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*) and in his appeals to American officials to commute executions here.² And the tradition has led people to support various other progressive causes, such as anti-poverty programs, environmental-protection measures, and workers' rights, in the name of promoting human dignity and preventing indirect threats to human life.

In a series of speeches in the 1980s, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin drew together the Church's positions on various issues into what he called "a comprehensive and consistent ethic of life."³ He emphasized the link between these positions with the metaphor of the "seamless garment," referring to the robe that Jesus wore to his crucifixion and that the Roman soldiers cast lots for rather than tearing up to divide among themselves.⁴ As befits a symposium at a Catholic law school, many of the contributors to this symposium wrestle with the idea of a consistent ethic of life, critically as well as appreciatively. And the seamless garment metaphor, operating in Professor Sidney Callahan's words as a "framing" device for thought and action,⁵ serves in our title to indicate the symposium's focus on whether the cluster of positions reflected in pro-life progressivism and the consistent-life ethic have intellectual coherence and any prospects for political success: "Can the seamless garment be sewn?"⁶

A quarter century ago, one pro-life progressive writer and activist described the linkage between these issues:

Some of us who went through the anti-war struggles of the 1960s and 1970s are now active in the right-to-life movement. We do not enjoy opposing our old friends on the abortion issue, but we feel that we have no choice. We are moved by what pro-life feminists call the "consistency thing"—the belief that respect for human life demands opposition to abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, and war It is out of character for the left to neglect the weak and helpless. The traditional mark of the left has been its protection of the underdog, the weak, and the poor The unborn child is the most helpless form of humanity, even

war conscientious objections, see e.g. Charles J. Reid, Jr., *John T. Noonan, Jr., On the Catholic Conscience and War: Negre v. Larsen*, 76 *Notre Dame L. Rev.* 881, 884-91, 904-24 (2001).

2. Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*): *The Encyclical Letter on Abortion, Euthanasia, and the Death Penalty in Today's World* 96, 100 (Random H. 1995) (arguing that because of the "positive attitude of absolute respect for life," "even [the lives] of criminals and unjust aggressors," the death penalty ought to be limited to "cases of absolute necessity . . . when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society," which "are very rare, if not practically non-existent"); see also Thomas C. Berg, *Religious Conservatives and the Death Penalty*, 9 *Wm. & Mary Bill Rights J.* 31, 41-43 (2000).

3. Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, *Consistent Ethic of Life* 2 (Sheed & Ward 1987).

4. Callahan, *supra* n. 1, at 277.

5. *Id.* at 276.

6. As my colleague Jennifer Wright pointed out, since sewing requires seams, a more accurate title would be "Can the seamless garment be woven?" We have nevertheless kept the more euphonious "sewn."

more in need of protection than the poor tenant farmer or the mental patient.⁷

As this quote suggests, a second source of pro-life progressivism may be found in the pro-life feminism represented most notably by the organization Feminists for Life of America, which describes itself as “pro-woman, pro-life.”⁸ Pro-life feminists emphasize that women are often pushed into having abortions, not just by direct personal pressure but also by circumstances such as lack of available child care, the prospect of losing a job because of pregnancy, and so forth. Pro-life feminism therefore sees abortion as “a reflection that our society has failed to meet the needs of women,” and it aims at “systematically eliminating the root causes that drive women to abortion—primarily lack of practical resources and support—through holistic, woman-centered solutions.”⁹ Pro-life feminism traces similar views in the writings of founders of American feminism such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.¹⁰ Moreover, seeing abortion as a form of violence, pro-life feminism overlaps and sometimes specifically supports non-violence positions on other issues as well.¹¹ Of course, all of these pro-life feminist assertions are controversial, as Professor Susan Appleton’s critical article in this symposium reflects.¹²

A third source of pro-life progressivism comes from left-wing voices among evangelical Protestants, including the symposium’s keynote speaker, the Rev. Jim Wallis.¹³ While evangelicals tend to be viewed as across-the-board political conservatives, many hold liberal positions on particular questions, and a small group could be considered left-wing on most issues except abortion and sexual morality. A prime exhibit is Wallis, who is the founder of Sojourners, a group located in inner-city Washington DC that publishes materials both on “peace and justice” activity and on spiritual growth and discipline.¹⁴ Wallis also founded Call to Renewal, an ecumenical “faith-based movement to overcome poverty,”¹⁵ and has written several

7. Mary Meehan, *Abortion: The Left Has Betrayed the Sanctity of Life*, 44 *The Progressive* 32 (Sept. 1980) (available at http://www.swiss.ai.mit.edu/~rauch/nvp/consistent/meehan_progressive.html).

8. Feminists for Life of America, *Join Feminists for Life*, <http://www.feministsforlife.org/who/joinus.htm> (accessed Oct. 8, 2005).

9. *Id.*

10. See Feminists for Life of America, *Feminist History*, <http://www.feministsforlife.org/history/index.htm> (accessed Oct. 8, 2005).

11. See Callahan, *supra* n. 1, at 285-87.

12. Susan Frelich Appleton, *Unraveling the “Seamless Garment”: Loose Threads in Pro-Life Progressivism*, 2 *U. St. Thomas L.J.* 295 (2005).

13. Jim Wallis, Address, *Prophetic Politics: A New Option* (U. St. Thomas L. Sch., Minneapolis, Minn., Mar. 11, 2005), in 2 *U. St. Thomas L.J.* 246 (2005) [hereinafter Wallis, *Seamless Garment*].

14. Sojourners, *Sojourners: Christians for Justice and Peace*, <http://www.sojo.net> (accessed Oct. 8, 2005).

15. Call to Renewal, *Call to Renewal: People of Faith Overcoming Poverty*, <http://www.calltorenewal.com> (accessed Oct. 8, 2005).

books, including the latest, *God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It*,¹⁶ from which his symposium address is largely drawn. Wallis's article reflects several of the themes distinctive to Protestant evangelicals: an emphasis on the many Bible passages that condemn injustice against the poor,¹⁷ and on the need to combat poverty by changing both the personal behavior of individuals and the dynamics of social and economic structures.¹⁸ Other evangelicals such as Ron Sider and Tony Campolo have made similar contributions in setting forth a "completely pro-life" position¹⁹ and in promoting the use of faith-based organizations, with government assistance, to lift up the poor by combining economic assistance with personal transformation.²⁰

To these three groups—Catholic social-justice proponents, pro-life feminists, and politically liberal evangelicals—one could add other voices such as columnist Nat Hentoff, self-described "Jewish, atheist, civil libertarian, left-wing pro-lifer."²¹ But despite this assortment of voices, the term "pro-life progressivism" remains strange, even inconsistent, to many people. This strangeness suggests the second premise of the symposium: the pro-life progressive outlook currently faces daunting challenges both intellectual and political.

Beginning with the political: As Jim Wallis details in his address, American politics today offers three fundamental options, none of which encompasses the pro-life progressive combination of positions.²² If you are "conservative at everything, from cultural, moral, and family concerns to economic, environmental, and foreign policy issues," you can vote Republican. If you are "liberal" across this broad range of issues, you can vote Democratic (or Green in Minnesota and a few other states). If your views cut across liberal-conservative lines, you nevertheless have a political option if you are liberal on cultural and moral issues and conservative on economic and foreign policy: this makes you consistently "laissez-faire," as

16. Jim Wallis, *God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It* (HarpersSanFrancisco 2005) [hereinafter Wallis, *God's Politics*].

17. Wallis, *Seamless Garment*, *supra* n. 13, at 252 ("I insist, as an evangelical Christian, that when there are thousands of verses in the Bible about the poor—I can't ignore them."). For compilations of such passages, see *Cry Justice! The Bible on Hunger and Poverty* (Ronald J. Sider ed., InterVarsity Press 1980).

18. Wallis, *Seamless Garment*, *supra* n. 13, at 252 ("There are choices, behaviors, breakdowns in the relationships that cause an entrenched poverty, and there are structures, policies, decisions, and choices that make escape from poverty impossible.").

19. Ronald J. Sider, *Completely Pro-Life: Building a Consistent Stance* (InterVarsity Press 1987).

20. See e.g. Tony Campolo, *Revolution and Renewal: How Churches Are Saving Our Cities* (Westminster John Knox Press 2000); Ronald J. Sider & Heidi Rolland Unruh, *Evangelism and Church-State Partnerships*, 43 J. Church & State 267 (2001).

21. Nat Hentoff, *Pro-Choice Bigots*, 27 The New Republic 21 (Nov. 30, 1992) (available at <http://prolife.liberal.com/articles/hentoff.html>).

22. Wallis, *Seamless Garment*, *supra* n. 13, at 250. Further quotes in this paragraph of text come from the same paragraph in Wallis's article.

Wallis says, and you can vote Libertarian. Although your third-party vote may be practically ineffective, you at least have a party to vote for in presidential elections and in several states. But if you hold what are commonly called conservative positions on family and sexual matters—most notably abortion—and yet are liberal, progressive, or even “radical” on economic or foreign-policy matters, then you must have serious reservations about both major political parties. Nor has a minor party arisen to express this fourth option, the pro-life progressive political outlook.

Consider this list of issues set forth by a leading evangelical Christian scholar explaining why he could not vote for either major-party presidential candidate in 2004:

Seven issues seem to me to be paramount at the national level: race, the value of life, [progressive] taxes, [free] trade, [availability and affordability of] medicine, religious freedom[,] and [adherence by America to] the international rule of law. In my mind, each of these issues has a strong moral dimension. My position on each is related to how I understand the traditional Christian faith that grounds my existence. Yet neither of the major parties is making a serious effort to consider this particular combination of concerns or even anything remotely resembling it

[A]s long as I hold these positions, I am a citizen without a political home.²³

The political tension became especially acute for many American Catholics in the 2004 election. Several bishops indicated their intent to refuse communion to Catholic public officials who voted for abortion rights,²⁴ and at least three bishops even suggested that no faithful Catholic could vote for any candidate who favored abortion rights, no matter what the candidate’s (and his opponent’s) positions on any other issues.²⁵ A

23. Mark A. Noll, *None of the Above: Why I Won't Be Voting for President*, 121 *The Christian Century* 8 (Sept. 21, 2004) (available at http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1058/is_19_121/ai_n6355192/pg_2).

24. See e.g. Gregory C. Sisk & Charles J. Reid, Jr., *Abortion, Bishops, Eucharist, and Politicians: A Question of Communion*, 43 *Catholic Law* 255 (2004) (cataloging and defending these statements).

25. See Raymond L. Burke, *A Pastoral Letter, On Our Civic Responsibility for the Common Good* (2004) (available at <http://www.priestsforlife.org/magisterium/bishops/04-10-01burke.pdf>) (“[T]here is no element of the common good, no morally good practice, that a candidate may promote and to which a voter may be dedicated, which could justify voting for a candidate who also endorses and supports the deliberate killing of the innocent, abortion, embryonic stem-cell research, euthanasia, human cloning or the recognition of a same-sex relationship as legal marriage.”); Michael H. Sheridan, *A Pastoral Letter to the Catholic Faithful of the Diocese of Colorado Springs on the Duties of Catholic Politicians and Voters* (May 1, 2004) (available at <http://www.priestsforlife.org/magisterium/bishops/sheridanmay2004.pdf>) (“Any Catholic politicians who advocate for abortion, for illicit stem cell research or for any form of euthanasia *ipso facto* place themselves outside full communion with the Church and so jeopardize their salvation. Any Catholics who vote for candidates who stand for abortion, illicit stem cell research or euthanasia suffer the same fateful consequences. It is for this reason that these Catholics, whether candidates for office or those who would vote for them, may not receive Holy Communion until they have

number of people replied that pro-life Catholics should not in good conscience vote for a president who had initiated a preemptive war in Iraq in the face of fairly clear (although discreetly expressed) opposition from Pope John Paul II and other Catholic leaders.²⁶

Some Catholic leaders and commentators argued that the destruction of pre-born life through abortion and embryonic stem-cell research overrode all other political issues, making a vote for the strongly pro-choice John Kerry morally dubious.²⁷ Others countered with the “consistent ethic of life” argument: that the Catholic moral tradition emphasizes the protection of human life and dignity in all contexts, including matters such as the death penalty and war and peace, where conservative positions reflect too great a willingness to take life.²⁸ Such a response, however, is precisely what worries some Catholic thinkers about the “seamless garment” approach: that by treating a whole range of issues as fundamental, it will distract attention from the unique taking of innocent human life involved in abortion and become, in the words of our symposium contributor John O’Callaghan, “little more than a screen behind which abhorrent policies, particularly pro-abortion policies, can hide.”²⁹ O’Callaghan’s symposium paper emphasizes the difference in Catholic moral theory between acts, such as torture or abortion, that are wrong intrinsically or in all circumstances and acts, such as war and capital punishment, that are wrong only in some (even if many) circumstances, the determination of which depends on prudential judgments by proper authorities.³⁰

The debate about the relative importance and status of various moral-political issues runs through several contributions to this symposium. But it is debate that takes as a given the existing options in American politics, and then asks which option is more morally acceptable (or less unacceptable). It does not consider the possibility of a new option, either inside or outside the current political parties.

After losing the 2004 election, Democrats engaged in a post-mortem about, among other things, the party’s strong abortion-rights stance.³¹ Leading voices such as Hillary Clinton spoke of abortions as a tragedy and of the need to reduce them while keeping abortion legal. Democrats for

recanted their positions and been reconciled with God and the Church in the Sacrament of Penance.”).

26. See e.g. Thomas J. Gumbleton, *President’s Policies Are in Opposition to a Culture of Life*, Detroit Free Press (Oct. 20, 2004); Sidney Callahan, *A Pro-Life Case against Bush: It’s About More than Abortion*, 131 Commonweal 15 (June 4, 2004).

27. See e.g. *supra* nn. 24-25.

28. See e.g. *supra* n. 26.

29. John P. O’Callaghan, *Sacred Monkeys and Seamless Garments: Catholics and Political Engagement*, 2 U. St. Thomas L.J. 355, 357 (2005).

30. *Id.* at 364-67.

31. See e.g. Alexander Bolton, *Democrats Seek Nuance on Abortion*, The Hill (July 26, 2005) (available at <http://www.thehill.com/thehill/export/TheHill/News/Frontpage/072605/democrats.html>).

Life of America, a small policy and lobbying organization that had generally been shunned by the national party machinery, developed a package of measures to reduce abortions ninety-five percent over the next ten years.³² The proposed “95-10 Initiative” would rely primarily not on measures to restrict abortion, but on measures to assist pregnant women and young mothers with child-bearing and -raising, to encourage alternatives to abortion such as adoption, and to avoid unwanted pregnancies in the first place. The package includes increased funding for children’s nutrition and health care, domestic-violence shelters, and college abortion-counseling day-care centers (based on statistics showing that one out of five abortions are performed on college women); tighter restrictions against health insurers treating pregnancy as a “pre-existing condition,” which pressures pregnant women by making it hard for them to change jobs; tax credits and a national adoption referral system to encourage adoption as an alternative to abortion; and (initially) a requirement that employers providing health insurance include contraceptives approved by the Food and Drug Administration.³³ As Professor Appleton’s symposium article indicates, some of these proposals could enjoy support from pro-choice advocates.³⁴

The introduction of the 95-10 initiative in Congress was delayed several weeks in late 2005 by, among other things, the emergencies arising out of Hurricane Katrina. That delay symbolizes a broader point. America has a host of pressing social needs that appear to require, among other things, a commitment of money—needs that include reconstructing the Gulf and addressing the conditions of poverty that made so many residents of New Orleans especially vulnerable to the hurricane’s aftermath. The approach of Democrats for Life to reducing abortions reflects the general tenor of political progressivism to address social needs through a commitment of social resources. But progressives in general already fight an uphill battle in getting the government to commit these resources. Adding “pro-life” to the progressive agenda—to seek to reduce abortions through a commitment of social resources, rather than solely or predominantly through restrictions on abortion—adds another set of demands to an already crowded docket. As Dean Mark Sargent puts it in his symposium paper, the question is whether pro-life progressivism can achieve more than just minor adjustments in one party or the other, adjustments that are likely to be “ephemeral and vulnerable to political expediency.”³⁵

32. Democrats for Life, *Democrats for Life Introduce the 95-10 Initiative*, http://www.democratsforlife.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=48&Itemid=45 (accessed Oct. 18, 2005).

33. *Id.*

34. Appleton, *supra* n. 12, at 296-97.

35. Mark Sargent, *The Coherence and Importance of Pro-Life Progressivism*, 2 U. St. Thomas L.J. 387, 397 (2005).

Thus, if pro-life progressivism or the consistent ethic of life are to become a fourth option in American law and politics, the moral and intellectual case for that approach must be compelling enough to motivate such commitments of social resources. Accordingly, several contributors to this symposium seek to explain the intellectual coherence of the approach and to sort out the relationships among its various emphases. Others raise criticisms from a variety of perspectives. Is pro-life progressivism a fresh and authentic combination of religious faith and social justice? Does it make appropriate distinctions between non-negotiable principles or goals and provisional, revisable means for achieving those goals? Can it affirm the role of the state in promoting social justice without simply recycling bureaucratic solutions that have proven flaws? Can it offer an agenda that is indeed “pro-woman” while also being “pro-life”?

The premise of this symposium is not that pro-life progressivism or the consistent ethic of life constitute *the* proper option for American law and politics today—only that this approach deserves a full hearing and has not yet received it. These articles bring the topic into the pages of legal scholarship for virtually the first time. We hope that they will set forth the pro-life progressive or consistent-life position, clarify questions concerning its meaning, and subject it to critical scrutiny as to both its intellectual coherence and its practical and political viability.

II.

The symposium papers are bookended by keynote addresses by two public figures. Jim Wallis, as already noted, reviews the three major political options in America today and calls for a fourth option that is “traditional, concerned with issues like family values, sexual integrity, and personal responsibility, while also being very progressive, even populist, even radical, on issues like poverty and racial justice.”³⁶ Wallis looks beyond the immediate political obstacles to the “fourth option”; he argues that successful social movements like the civil rights movement “don’t worry about politics, politicians, and elections,” but rather “change politics, politicians, and elections.”³⁷ Representative James Oberstar (D-MN), a leading pro-life liberal in Congress, closes the symposium by emphasizing, like Wallis, the passages in the Bible that emphasize concern for the poor. He quotes the Catholic bishops’ statement that the American people must be “‘judged in the light of what they do for the poor, what they do to the poor, and what they enable the poor to do for themselves.’” “These are the same

36. Wallis, *Seamless Garment*, *supra* n. 13, at 250.

37. *Id.* at 254.

bishops,” Oberstar adds, “who call for an end to abortion and are roundly criticized for it.”³⁸

Between these exhortations are papers from the three symposium panels. The first panel, “Perspectives on Pro-Life Progressivism,” includes two papers setting forth the pro-life progressive position and two papers challenging that position from the left and right. In their papers, John Carr of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and Professor Sidney Callahan, ethicist, psychologist, and a leading Catholic pro-life feminist, both lay out the basic principles of the consistent ethic of life.³⁹ Carr specifically addresses the relationship between life issues and other aspects of a pro-life progressive agenda; he argues that in the U.S. bishops’ formulation, “life clearly comes first” because “[without it] nothing else is possible,” but “without dignity, life is not truly human” and “[t]herefore, those things which make life truly human [such as] faith and family, work and education, a decent place to live, enough to eat, and access to health care, are not luxuries or optional benefits, but human rights integrally linked to the right to life itself.”⁴⁰ Callahan traces the extent to which the consistent-life ethic has been accepted and “borne fruit” within the Catholic Church as a whole, not just among bishops, and assesses its prospects for affecting American culture.

The first critic of pro-life progressivism, leading feminist legal scholar Susan Appleton, argues that “if the ‘pro-life’ part of the project’s name signals a commitment to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and impose restrictions on abortion, then . . . the ‘progressive’ part of the name is contradictory and disingenuous.”⁴¹ While Appleton agrees that economic and other obstacles to women choosing childbirth should be attacked, she argues that any restrictions on women’s right to choose abortion “remain, necessarily and unavoidably, incompatible with progressives’ asserted commitment to gender equality.”⁴²

From the other side, Kevin Schmiesing of the Acton Institute, a pro-free-markets think tank,⁴³ argues that economic progressivism, with its reliance on state intervention to ease poverty, is not the only approach consis-

38. James L. Oberstar, Address, *Faith and Values in the Public Arena: An American Catholic in Public Life* (U. St. Thomas L. Sch., Minneapolis, Minn., Mar. 11, 2005), in 2 U. St. Thomas L.J. 426, 428 (2005) (quoting U.S. Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* (1986) (available at <http://www.osjspm.org/cst/eja.htm>)).

39. John L. Carr, *The Consistent Life Ethic: A Look Back, A Look Around, A Look Ahead*, 2 U. St. Thomas L.J. 256 (2005); Callahan, *supra* n. 1.

40. Carr, *supra* n. 39, at 262.

41. Appleton, *supra* n. 12, at 295-96.

42. *Id.* at 309.

43. See Acton Inst., *Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty*, <http://www.acton.org> (accessed Oct. 18, 2005).

tent with Catholic social teaching.⁴⁴ Schmiesing traces the development of pro-market thought among Catholics from the New Deal's opponents to today's neoconservatives such as Michael Novak. Citing Pope John Paul II's "critical appreciation" of capitalism in the 1991 encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, Schmiesing summarizes the concerns about "inordinate reliance" on state solutions for economic and social problems: the state may imperil human freedom and "vitiating the [private] institutions that most effectively promote the common good."⁴⁵ He concludes that differences between Catholic conservatives and progressives over economic and social policy "might be disagreements over means rather than ends" and there is a "possibility of meaningful dialogue" between them on the limits of market mechanisms on matters such as the family.⁴⁶

The second panel, "Pro-Life Progressivism in Law and Policy," moves the discussion to a more specific level. Law professor Helen Alvaré, former spokesperson for the Catholic bishops on pro-life issues, assesses the practical and philosophical obstacles to the consistent-life ethic, including a divide between pro-life groups' emphasis on showing "the truth" about the full personhood of the unborn and progressive groups' emphasis focus on "solidarity" with the less fortunate.⁴⁷ She suggests that a focus on policies to strengthen marriage and families can address many of the real underlying causes both of abortion and of economic deprivation and thus unite truth-telling with solidarity. Kevin Doyle, as chief capital defender for New York State, represents the consistent-life ethic's opposition to the death penalty. He offers "six tactical and strategic imperatives for advancing a consistent pro-life agenda," the last of which is to recognize that "our greatest enemy" is a mass culture that is "eroding our hearts and minds" through violence, noise, and superficiality.⁴⁸ Finally, philosophy professor John O'Callaghan explains why the "seamless garment" metaphor may lead Catholics into confused thinking that equates absolute norms against certain acts with the prudential judgments that must be made "in the pursuit of the various goods of human life."⁴⁹

The symposium concludes with papers on "The Political Future of Pro-Life Progressivism." Political scientist Ted Jelen presents findings, sobering for the pro-life progressive, based on surveys of the political opin-

44. Kevin E. Schmiesing, *Another Social Justice Tradition: Catholic Conservatives*, 2 U. St. Thomas L.J. 310 (2005).

45. *Id.* at 323 (citing Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus* (May 1, 1991) (available at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_01051991_centesimus-annus_en.html)).

46. *Id.* at 326.

47. Helen L. Alvaré, *The Consistent Ethic of Life: A Proposal for Improving Its Legislative Grasp*, 2 U. St. Thomas L.J. 328, 333 (2005).

48. Kevin Doyle, *Can the Seamless Garment Be Sewn? The Future of Pro-Life Progressivism*, 2 U. St. Thomas L.J. 378, 378, 384 (2005).

49. O'Callaghan, *supra* n. 29, at 370.

ions of Catholic laity and clergy. He concludes that neither laity nor priests “exhibit attitudes consistent with Cardinal Bernardin’s ‘seamless garment,’” instead behaving more as “‘issue specialists,’ who approach specific questions of policy individually, without regard for an underlying theological rationale.”⁵⁰ To the extent that the consistent-life position is a priority for the Catholic Church, Jelen remarks, “much work remains to be done” with those in the pulpit as well as those in the pew.⁵¹

Finally, to close the symposium papers, Dean Mark Sargent of Villanova Law School offers a more hopeful, if still cautious, prognosis for some version of “pro-life progressivism.” Among other things, Sargent defends the coherence of the approach against the charge that it equates absolute principles with prudential judgments. In his view, even a pro-life, anti-abortion policy requires prudential judgments—such as whether to try to enforce bans on abortion in addition to reducing pressures to abort—while decisions on matters such as military force and anti-poverty policy are not purely prudential but are significantly constrained by moral principles.⁵² And although Sargent acknowledges the challenges to pro-life progressivism—both legitimate intellectual criticism and practical political obstacles—he sees opportunity for change “if Americans begin to feel more profoundly” a disgust with a political landscape that “sever[s] faith from a commitment to social justice.”⁵³

50. Ted Jelen, *American Catholics and the Structure of Life Attitudes*, 2 U. St. Thomas L.J. 401, 421 (2005).

51. *Id.* at 422.

52. Sargent, *supra* n. 35, at 391-92.

53. *Id.* at 399.