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Blast From the Past: Nat'l Right to Life Cmte

Michael Sean Winters | Oct. 29, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

I have my differences with the National Right to Life Committee. I think they drank the GOP Kool-Aid on health care, or at least they sipped it. But, there was a certain non-partisan consistency in their stance, as exhibited by the fact that they decided to score the autumn vote on the Stupak Amendment after it became obvious to some Republicans that they could scuttle the health care bill if they first assured the defeat of the Stupak Amendment. If NRLC was simply singing from the GOP hymnal, they could have decided not to score that vote.

This week, while doing research, I came across something that I had either forgotten or never known. During the debate over welfare reform in the mid-1990s, one of the reforms would have rewarded states with additional block grants if they lowered the rate of illegitmate births in their states. This was dressed up in familiar language about the traditional family and all that and the provision was strongly urged by the GOP. But, the NRLC's Wanda Franz opposed the measure and said at the time: "Being born out of wedlock didn't make it into the Ten Commandments - killing did."

I disagree with the NRLC on many things, but there is an institutional willingness to stand up to partisans on both sides for which I have a certain admiration.

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