



Healthwatch

by Steven Bailey N.D.

The issues of public health and human rights offer one of the clearest distinctions between the two major presidential candidates. One of the major health concerns of ours and future generations is our immediate policies regarding waste disposal and environmental hazards (including on-the-job exposures).

The present administration has made a dramatic swing in the attitudes between the government and industry. Whereas the previous administration had worked toward strengthening the E.P.A., and improving job safety, President Reagan has consistently appointed key personnel, and portrayed a policy that favors the growth of business exclusive of worker and environmental concerns.

In this election, trade unions have been portrayed as an endorsement liability, yet we owe much to these organizations for current job safety legislation, and our relatively high wage levels for the labor industries. While there exists a number of public cases of pension abuse, and individual graft in some union hierarchies, the benefits of unions to the American worker far outweighs these individual problems. History has shown the willingness of corporations such as Johns-Manville (Asbestos) to intentionally misrepresent job dangers, in order to elude responsibility for the deaths, injuries, and ill-health created by their

policies, and resultant work conditions.

On environmental and worker related health issues, Mr. Mondale stands head-and-shoulders above President Reagan and his appointees such as Mr. Watt and Mrs. Burford.

Human rights issues weigh heavily on the health of our population. While we join South Africa as the only western (non-third-world) nations without a national health insurance program, neither candidate offers a strong hope of changing this in the next four years.

Of a more immediate human rights issue is the affordability of health care to all people. With annual health costs now exceeding 10% of the G.N.P. the ability of non-insured middle or lower income people to pay for health care becomes increasingly more prohibitive.

While the technocracy of America has provided the ability to transplant baboon hearts to human infants, we continue to contribute to more and more birth defects with the acceptance of undernourishment in low-income mothers. The Society for the Protection of the Unborn through Nutrition (SPUN), presents a well-documented case, attributing over one-half of America's birth defects to improper or deficient pre-natal nutrition.

The numbers of people living

below the poverty level have increased steadily under the trickle-down policies of the Reagan administration. While income level shows an inverse relationship to the number of birth defects, each major birth defect represents a cost of approximately one million dollars to the government in life long support, assistance and services rendered to each handicapped person. We need to recognize the economic absurdity of holding back pre-natal programs for the poor at minimal costs, while inflicting future generations with the monumental costs of supporting unnecessarily handicapped individuals for life, not to mention the human suffering associated with each individual handicap.

While there are a multitude of health and human rights issues that will be affected by this election, space does not permit a more in-depth coverage of these issues. I feel that Walter Mondale is the clear choice for promoting a strong national health program. The challenges of the 80s in environmental and human rights issues, need an ambitious and dedicated effort, something we cannot expect with a return of Mr. Reagan to the White House.

School Lunch menu

November 5
Spaghetti and Meat Balls
Toasted Salad
Warm Garlic Bread
Fruit Crisp
Milk

November 6
Mexican Tacos
Lettuce and Tomato
Buttered Whole Kernel Corn
Fresh Pear Half
Birthday Cake
Milk

November 7
Sausage Pizza
Celery Chunks with Ranch Dip
Apple Wedges
Trail Mix
Milk

November 8
Chickenwich
Tater Tots
Orange Half
Cookie
Milk

November 9
Fish 'n' Chips
Carrot Circles
Peanut Butter Bar
Applesauce
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