

Eagle Forum Report

founded by Phyllis Schlafly

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Life and Liberty

THE SHORTENED PLATFORM IS SHORT ON LIFE

by Kris Ullman, President, Eagle Forum

The Purpose of the Platform

Ronald Reagan articulated the importance of a clear, strong statement of beliefs for the Republican Party. “Our Platform is a banner of bold unmistakable colors with no pastel shades,” he said in 1976. The first platform adopted after the Supreme Court struck down all state laws regarding abortion was also the first to contain the pledge, authored by Eagle Forum founder and platform delegate Phyllis Schlafly, “to seek enactment of a constitutional amendment to restore protection of the right to life for unborn children.”

For nearly fifty years, the platform of the Republican Party continued to be a bold banner declaring Republicans’ commitment to the right to life of the unborn.

Sadly, the 2024 Republican Party Platform, adopted by the Platform Committee on July 8, 2024, is no longer the bold banner supporting the sanctity of life, but a faded flag with the undefined sentence, “We proudly stand for families and Life.” This document should more accurately be termed a ‘campaign agenda,’ not a traditional party platform.

Party platforms are supposed to be statements of first principles tra-

ditionally written by party activists. Phyllis Schlafly explained in 2008, “One of the main features of any political convention is the adoption of the platform, a statement of Party principles and goals. Some people take party platforms very seriously; others think they are a waste of time. A party platform is like a creed. It symbolizes what we think is worth our work and sacrifice. A party platform is published in the hope that like-minded Americans will join our cause. A party platform is the standard to which public officials may be held accountable.”

The RNC and the Trump campaign had a very different view of the Platform. In a letter to the delegates, Ambassador Randy Evans, wrote, “This will not be ‘your parents’ platform. Instead of an ‘unnecessarily verbose treatise’ filled with ‘Washington jargon’ limited by the ‘shackles of lobbyist influence’, our Mission will be a streamlined platform reflecting President Trump’s vision for America.” [capitalization and punctuation in original.]

It sounds like Republican Party officials think strong pro-life language is a vestige of the past, too wordy for average Americans to understand, and backed by lobbyists instead of grassroots voters. The 2024 Platform has been pared



Gayle Ruzicka, Tabitha Walter, and Kris Ullman

down to 16 pages from the 54 pages of text in 2016. Quin Hillyer, a columnist for the Washington Examiner, described the new platform as “an anemic little thing compared to what once was expected from party conventions.”

Intimidation in The Room Where It Happened

Eagle Forum Executive Director Tabitha Walter was one of the few non-delegates allowed in the Committee room for the brief platform meeting. In years past, not only were outside observers allowed to watch, but the press covered the proceedings with C-SPAN airing the deliberations on live TV.

This year, the officials in charge prohibited the press from being in the room. Guest passes, requested months in advance, were denied via email shortly before the orientation on Sunday night. Thankfully, Tabitha

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was able to get credentials only moments before the start of the meeting on Monday morning.

Tabitha Walter said, “I was still reeling from the slam of the gavel closing out an unprecedented Republican Platform Committee meeting when a colleague said, ‘I believe there was a spirit of intimidation in that room.’ Nothing could have summed up my feelings more succinctly.”

She reported that upon entering the building, all platform delegates and guests were required to place their cell phones and smartwatches in a locked Faraday bag. The campaign and RNC claimed it was for confidentiality reasons.

But there wasn’t much business to transmit to those locked out of the meeting. Usually, delegates are given the platform and their subcommittee assignments the night before the formal meeting begins to give them time to read through every page and craft amendments to submit the next morning.

This year, the delegates arrived Monday morning empty-handed. After listening to a few opening remarks, delegates were handed paper copies of the platform with a number assigned to each delegate. That specific number was noted above the text of the section on “life” — presumably to identify anyone who may leak a picture of it outside of the room. The delegates tried their best to read the draft despite the voices of pre-vetted speakers booming in their ears. It was soon evident that the 112 delegates would not be divided into subcommittees and have no opportunity to participate in crafting the document.

Walter described how, “in the committee room, I sat with pro-life individuals there to help delegates submit and defend strong amendments to clarify the GOP’s commitment

to protect all life, born and unborn. We wore buttons that said, ‘Republicans Are Pro-Life,’ so it was easy to pick us out. Once the campaign staff noticed that I was taking notes and checking my copy of the rules, they assigned a staff member to sit beside me, attempt to read my notes, lean in to listen to my conversations, and follow me out of the room when I went to get coffee. Dozens of campaign staffers trolled the aisles to monitor both guests and platform delegates.”

She said when it was time to get down to business, several delegates tried to make points of inquiry or offer amendments. But the only votes allowed were procedural. The first vote was to disallow the use of any devices by delegates and their guests. As the vote was underway, a campaign staffer walked through the committee room with a large green poster that read, “VOTE YES.” After the motion passed, a delegate asked why campaign staff were allowed to use their devices and take pictures of delegates who opposed the restriction. U.S. Senator Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) who was presiding over the meeting simply said, “They are working.”

One specific delegate was tapped to offer the remaining motions: to limit debate to one minute per delegate, to end debate, and to adopt the platform as written.

Several delegates tried to offer substantive amendments but were told it was either an “inappropriate time” or their minute had expired.

Debate on the adoption of the unamended platform draft lasted less than 15 minutes. Delegates were still standing in line to speak when the motion was made to end debate. Once again, the neon green “VOTE YES” sign made its appearance and 84 members obeyed.

Utah Eagle Forum President and Platform Committee member Gayle

Ruzicka described her experience to the press, “It’s never happened before. I’ve done this several times. There were no subcommittees. They didn’t allow any amendments. They didn’t allow any discussion. They rolled us, that’s what they did. I don’t understand why they did it. And I’m extremely disappointed that we do not have any pro-life language.”

Pro-Life Party’s Platform Doesn’t Protect Pre-born

Gayle Ruzicka went on to say, “There are good things in this platform . . . that I support and that I would want, but I didn’t vote for this because . . . this is the first time we don’t have a pro-life platform. The platform simply says that we oppose late-term abortion. Well, what about before that? It doesn’t anywhere mention the unborn baby at all.”

This new platform removes the explicit pro-life principles that have long been the bedrock of the pro-life plank since 1984 — Republicans believe in the fundamental right to life of the unborn which cannot be infringed and support passage of a human life amendment to the Constitution and legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment’s protections apply to unborn children. The foundational statements Phyllis Schlafly fashioned, fought for, and considered her greatest legacy have been deleted.

Opposition to the use of federal funds for abortion and organizations, like Planned Parenthood, that advocate for it, has also been deleted. No longer does the Platform denounce infanticide, sex-selection and disability-related abortions, euthanasia, assisted suicide, and embryonic stem cell research. The new platform seems to define “pro-life” as mere opposition to “late-term abortion.”

The new language says “We be-

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lieve that the 14th Amendment . . . guarantees that no person can be denied Life or Liberty without Due Process,” but does not apply these protections to the unborn. Without clarifying that unborn children are included in the definition of ‘persons,’ the reference is meaningless. As Princeton Professor Robert P. George explained, “the relevant clause of the 14th Amendment is the Equal Protection Clause — which goes unmentioned — and the 14th Amendment expressly authorizes Congress, not the states, to enforce its substantive guarantees.”

The new language seems to imply that any regulation of abortion is to be left to “the States and to a vote of the People.” Does this mean the GOP only supports the use of state referendums to regulate and limit abortion? The *Dobbs* decision that overruled *Roe v. Wade* said that the


“difficult moral and policy questions will be decided by . . . the people and their elected representatives,” but did not limit these decisions to only the States.

The campaign repeatedly told delegates they wanted to create a platform that was “clear, concise, and easily digestible for every voter.” But the Life language is not clear. It seems intentionally vague and subject to various interpretations. In fact, some pro-life groups have claimed that the platform calls for federal protections when it clearly does not.

“The Republican Party was born on the principle that no human being should be considered the property of another. That is our heritage as Republicans,” Phyllis reminded us in her 2016 book, *How the Republican Party Became Pro-Life*.

The good news is that Republican

voters remain overwhelmingly pro-life and are committed to defending the rights of all — from conception to natural death. We will continue to support women who face unplanned pregnancies, encourage adoption, and work to defund the abortion industry at home and abroad. We will work to elect pro-life candidates and advocate for pro-life laws at every level of government. And we encourage President Trump to run on his strong record of defending the rights of all Americans, born and unborn.

As Phyllis said, “Abortion is the right-or-wrong issue of our time. We should parallel the words of Abraham Lincoln today and say, ‘The Republican Party looks upon abortion as a wrong, and the Democratic Party does not look upon it as a wrong.’ That’s the crucial difference between the two parties.” 

CELEBRATING THE PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY CENTENNIAL

by Anne Schlafly, Chairman, Eagle Forum

Let’s start with communism. The reason my mother, Phyllis Schlafly, was motivated to be active in politics was because of the threat of communism. Long before the culture wars or the second wave of feminism, communism posed an existential threat to the freedoms of the United States. The leader of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, told Americans, “We will bury you.” Even though the West ultimately defeated the threat of the Soviet Union, communism still threatens our liberties. Communists crave power.

“The United States is a giant island of freedom, achievement, wealth and prosperity in a world hostile to our values,” said Phyllis. She spent her life advocating for the success of America as a bulwark against the forces that wanted to destroy or take over our country.

She encouraged the formation of thousands of small groups in the 1950s to study communism. Her opposition to communism forms the basis of her entire ideology. Despite the abject failures of communism in the 20th century and the millions of lives killed due to communism, this pernicious ideology lives on. We must continue the fight against communism as it masquerades as other ideologies.

What’s wrong with communism?

1. Atheism. The state replaces God to form one nation under government.
2. Government ownership of everything and everyone. The state controls the industry and sets the prices. The state sets wages and compensation. The state controls people’s bodies. “Under the nanny state of the left, nothing remains ‘private’ for long,” said Phyllis.
3. Predetermined outcomes that pretend to enforce equality. The

result is that everyone is equally miserable.

Globalism is communism by another name.

Any “world” organization seeks to undermine American sovereignty. “It should be clear that teaching Americans we are now part of a global economy and teaching schoolchildren they are citizens of the world is a deceitful message to con us into a plan to add the poor countries around the Earth to our list of welfare hand-out recipients,” said Phyllis.

Climate change is communism by another name. The effort to control carbon or control our choice and use of energy is about government control of humans. This desire to control people’s behavior is not about



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changing the climate. The smart ones can't even decide if the climate is getting warmer or cooler! "Of course, climate changes. Many changes are due to factors over which humans have no control, such as winds, ocean currents and sun activity. But the liberals want us to believe that climate change is also caused by gases expelled when humans burn so-called fossil fuels," said Phyllis.

Feminism is communism by another name. Feminists prefer Big Brother over a husband. "Feminism is doomed to failure because it is based on an attempt to repeal and restructure human nature. Women have babies and men provide the support. If you don't like the way we're made, you have to take it up with God," said Phyllis.

Equity is communism by another name. If you want the best to win, then you are an anti-communist. America is built on equality of opportunity, not equitable outcomes determined by the State. "The purpose of our military is to field the finest troops possible to defend our nation and win wars. The goal of feminists, however, is to impose a mindless equality, regardless of how many people it hurts," said Phyllis.

Government schools are communism by another name. "Our public school system is our country's biggest and most inefficient monopoly, yet it keeps demanding more and more money," said Phyllis. "Behind frequent protestations by public officials about local control of the schools, a federal curriculum has been quietly imposed by law. Elementary and secondary school education used to be organized around subjects such as reading, math, history, geography, language, and science. While smatterings of those subjects are still taught, the focus has been shifted from academic subject matter to teaching attitudes, beliefs, values,

themes, behaviors, and job skills. This is indoctrination, not education. Left-wing professors write the textbooks and the teachers' unions control the public schools, so the ideology is what those groups deem politically correct," said Phyllis.

Multiculturalism is communism by another name. Communism divides people into superficial features and pits groups against each other. Government leaders want to direct hatred and envy between groups so that government can be the solution. "The United States is the world's most stunning example of a nation that has peaceably and successfully assimilated people from many disparate cultures. So why are some people trying to separate us into factions, emphasizing what divides us instead of what unites us?" said Phyllis.

Communism suppresses the individual. Individual choice and individual rights are threats to state control. "Putting women in military combat is the cutting edge of the feminist goal to force us into an androgynous society," said Phyllis.

Other bad ideas should be stopped, such as open borders, which undermines the American rule of law. "The most dangerous area where our laws are not being faithfully executed are the laws designed to protect Americans against the millions of aliens who enter our country illegally every year. How can we protect homeland security unless the government stops the invasion of illegal aliens?" said Phyllis.

Transgenderism is another bad idea. "Anyone with a child knows that children learn about the world through binary options: up or down, hot or cold, big or little, inside or outside, wet or dry, good or bad, boy or girl, man or woman. But the radical feminists, who staff women's studies departments at most colleges, have propagated the idea that we have to


get rid of the 'gender binary' along with the expectation of distinct roles for men and women," said Phyllis.

When "communism" gets bad press, the communists repackage the ideas to be more palatable, such as "progressive". Change the label, but the content remains the same; individual liberties are lost when government has more power. Communists treat people as disposable commodities, not as free-thinking individuals with inherent rights from God.

Phyllis Schlafly used the tactics she learned in fighting against communism in many other political battles throughout her long career. On this centennial, it is fun to read her quotes and see how little has changed. For example, "Feminism has changed the way women think, and it has changed the way men think, but the trouble is, it hasn't changed the attitudes of babies at all," said Phyllis. She was a realistic and pragmatic leader.

Phyllis Schlafly organized women to work for important issues: the sanctity of life, defense of the family, real education, a sound economy, and a strong military to keep America safe. She gave a voice to the silent majority.

"What you learn from my life is, first of all, that anybody can be a leader. You can be a leader. I wasn't born that way — I developed it, I worked at it. And also that the grassroots can organize and take on all the powers that be and defeat them," said Phyllis.

Happy 100th Birthday, Phyllis!
We are proud to be your Eagles. 

EAGLE FORUM

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