



Father Baroni at HUD confirmation hearings in 1977.

Public-Morality Forum Televised on C-SPAN

What Would Geno Do?

What is public morality? Many religious and secular leaders believe that it is more than personal morality – that it is about vision, and about what

journalist Walter Lippman called “pursuit of the good society.”

How can we create a framework of public morality at a time when poverty has increased four years in a row, tax breaks are being given to the rich while domestic spending is being reduced, schools are becoming more segregated and the public sector has failed New Orleans after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina?

The late Father Geno Baroni, who would have been 75 in October, 2005, engaged such questions. “Every economic and social issue is a moral issue,” he said, as Assistant Secretary for Neighborhood Development at the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development in the 1970s. He was the highest ranking priest ever to hold office in the federal executive branch of government.

To celebrate Father Baroni’s birthday, the Eisenhower Foundation held a two-day forum on public morality in October, 2005 in Washington DC, covered by C-SPAN and other media. The Eisenhower Foundation sees the forum as a springboard for a coalition-building public morality movement, supported by polling data, that communicates at the grassroots level a new “story” for America to replace the American myths that no longer work.

Stay tuned.

[Click here](#) for the forum’s agenda, which included presentations by almost three dozen religious, secular, nonprofit and government leaders. They asked, "What would Geno do?" -- among them Washington pollster [Celinda Lake](#), discussing today's American demography, and the [Rev. Dr. Robert Michael Franklin Jr.](#) of Emory University, on popular American "myths." Please click for their excerpts from the forum. (Dial-up users click [here](#) for Lake, and [here](#) for Franklin).

[Click here](#) for a summary of the "Baroni Principles"; [here](#) for newspaper coverage of the forum; and [here](#) to return to "What's News."





Rep. Marcy Kaptur of Ohio speaks of being hired by Father Baroni, recalls his long mentorship, and his inspiration for her to run for the U.S. Congress.

Leila McDowell, Director for Capacity Building Replications, Eisenhower Foundation, discusses effective media relations and new ways to move forward with Geno Baroni's message.

Father William J. Byron, Father Bryan Hehir, and trustee Bruce Kiernan recall their friendship in the faith.



Eisenhower Foundation chairman, former Senator Fred R. Harris,



The Rev. Dr. Robert Michael Franklin Jr., Emory University,



Eisenhower Foundation president, Alan Curtis makes opening remarks.

makes a point during open discussion.



Pollster Celinda Lake presents findings on morality and religion in American family life. For an excerpt, please [click here](#); dial-up users click [here](#).

speaks of the "myths" America has taken to heart. For an excerpt, please [click here](#); dial-up users, please click [here](#).



Stuart Eizenstat, chief domestic policy adviser to President Jimmy Carter, at left, shares a panel with the Rev. Dr. Bob Edgar, general secretary, National Council of Churches.



Father Baroni's sister, Rose Baroni Hebda, shares a story about her brother at a reception celebrating his 75th birthday.



Imam Mahdi Bray, executive director of the Muslim American Society Freedom Foundation, speaks of the rigors of FWM -- "flying while Muslim."



The Reverend Romal Tune, at left, with Rev. Timothy McDonald III, chairman of African-American Ministers in Action.



Ohio State Rep. Peter Ujvagi remembers his friend Geno.



Rabbi David Saperstein, director and counsel, Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism, recalls the spirit of



Rev. Stephen J. Thurston, president, National Baptist Convention, views concepts of morality through a



E.J. Dionne, senior fellow, The Brookings Institution and *Washington Post* columnist, speaks

Father Baroni.



cross-cultural lens.



of the "politics of a common good."



Dr. George Hunsinger, Princeton Theological Seminary, condemned U.S. policy in the Iraqi torture-abuse scandal.

Eisenhower trustee Pablo Eisenberg, senior fellow at Georgetown University's Public Policy Institute, discusses American philanthropy and public morality.

Gary Younge, New York correspondent for *The Guardian* newspaper of England, discusses America's vulnerability in light of Hurricane Katrina.



Monsignor William J. Linder,

Joe McNeely, founder of the

Dennis DeLeon, president of the

founder of the New Community Corp., says rebuilding inner-city neighborhoods is the key to keeping entire cities together.



Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, president of the Interfaith Alliance, with Rev. Timothy McDonald looking on.

Development Training Institute, diagramming social-policy concepts in the Geno Baroni style.



Author Lawrence O'Rourke, who spent years researching his biography *Geno: The Life and Mission of Geno Baroni*, discussing contemporary ethics and their impact on current religious thought.

New York Latino Commission on AIDS, discusses the growing Latino political power.



Joseph Duffey, former director of the United States Information Agency, tells the story of what their conversation would have been like if Geno could return to Washington today.



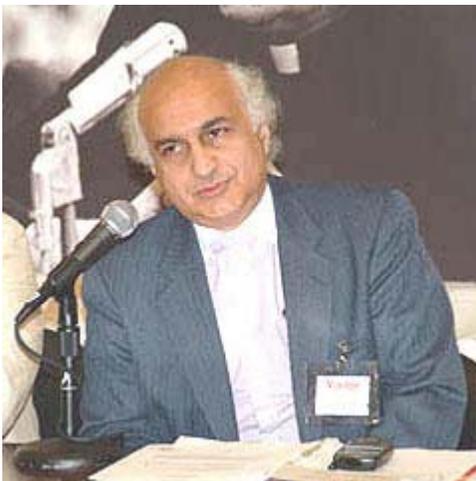
John Carr, secretary of the Department of Social Development and World Peace, U.S. Conferences of Catholic Bishops, addresses the re-creation of coalitions.



Prof. Robert Tuttle of the George Washington University School of Law, spoke of faith-based initiatives, and how they are perceived around the country.



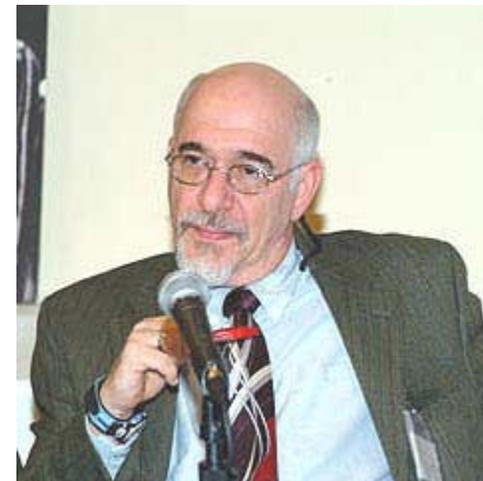
John Kromkowski, executive director of the National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs, prepares to answer a question on coalition building.



Imad-ad-Dean Ahmad, president of the Minaret of Freedom Institute, discusses ethical, moral, and

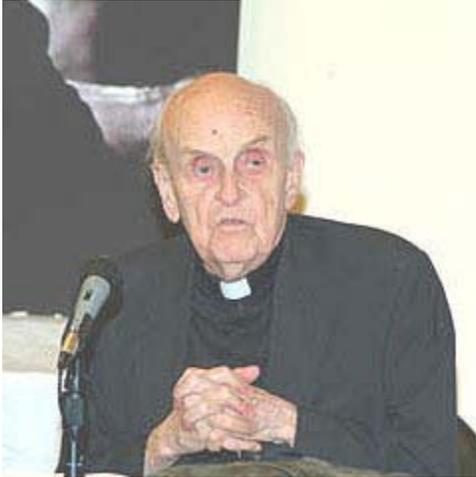


Dr. Ram Cnaan, Associate Dean for Research and Chairman of the Doctoral Program in Social Welfare



University of North Carolina professor Robert Wineburg discusses grassroots nonprofit organizations

classical religious philosophies -- and their impact on people and politics.



Former Massachusetts Congressman, Father Robert Drinan, speaks during the final panel of the forum.

at the University of Pennsylvania, discusses his findings on secular versus faith-based grassroots nonprofit organizations.



Eisenhower Foundation trustee JoAnne Page questions panelists during discussion.

and the role of religion and politics.



Eisenhower trustee Emmett Folgert poses a question to the panel.



The St. Augustine Church Gospel
Choir sings during the celebration of
Father Baroni's 75th birthday
following the first day of the forum.

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