

# ABORTION HAUNTS PEACE PRIZE WINNER

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments today on why the abortion issue continues to haunt President Obama:

A few weeks ago, President Obama said that no federal dollars will be spent on abortion in the health care bill he intends to sign. This immediately won the plaudits of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). But things have changed.

On September 30, in a letter to the U.S. Senate, sent by three bishops representing the USCCB, they stressed that "Health care reform especially needs to protect those at the beginning of life and at its end, the most vulnerable and the voiceless." Yesterday, the bishops issued another letter, stating, "we remain apprehensive when amendments protecting freedom of conscience and ensuring no taxpayer money for abortion are defeated in committee votes."

After listening to White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs two days ago, it is a fair bet that Catholic skepticism has turned to cynicism. When asked about the bishops' concerns, Gibbs said, "there's a law that precludes the use of federal funds for abortion that isn't going to be changed in these health care bills." Gibbs was referring to the Hyde Amendment.

The president, however, supports the Freedom of Choice Act, a bill that would revoke the Hyde Amendment. Moreover, when Obama's campaign staff was asked in December 2007 about this issue, the answer was clear: "Obama does not support the Hyde Amendment."

President Obama cannot have it both ways. Unlike another Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Mother Teresa, who said abortion was "the greatest destroyer of peace," Obama has never indicated that

abortion undermines the cause of peace. Indeed, he champions abortion as if it were a sacred right. If he wants to pivot at this juncture, Catholics will welcome it. If he doesn't, he will have to live with the consequences.