

ATTEMPT TO SILENCE CATHOLICS IN CONNECTICUT

In March, two lawmakers from Connecticut sought a state takeover of the governing structure of the Church. This gambit, which we properly labeled a “fascist stunt,” lost. The reason it lost was because of the courageous reaction of Catholics, led by their bishops and organizations like the Catholic League. Among the steps taken to thwart this unconstitutional breach of religious liberty was a rally at the state Capitol.

In retaliation, some state officials sought to penalize the Diocese of Bridgeport, led by Bishop William Lori. They accused the diocese of breaking the state’s lobbying laws. Lori filed suit seeking an injunction to stop punitive measures from being implemented.

What was at stake is practically every liberty enshrined in the First Amendment: freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, religious liberty and the provision guaranteeing separation of church and state. First the tyrants sought to take control of the Church, and then their lackeys attempted to muzzle the free speech of Catholics. Had this been reversed—had the bishops sought to take command of the legislative functions of the state and then proceeded to get a gag order placed on lawmakers—those who were silent would have been enraged.

It was only in May that there was a rally in Hartford demanding universal health care. According to the *Hartford Courant*, approximately 140 “clergy and religious folks marched to the state Capitol to ask to talk. They wore clerical collars, suit coats and hijabs, and all chanted and carried signs that said, ‘Muslims for Health Care,’ and ‘Health Care for All.’” But of course this rally occasioned no threats by state officials.

We urged our members to contact the person behind this anti-Catholic effort, Carol Carson, the executive director of the Office of State Ethics, and ask that she call off the investigation. On June 30, we were joined by Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, who also called on the ethics officials to end the investigation. The following day, the office withdrew its probe.