

BIDEN EXPLOITS DOBBS RULING

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on President Biden's remarks yesterday on the University of Idaho:

Ever since the Supreme Court overturned the *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion, the Biden administration has seized on the ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* to scare Americans about their access to abortion. They did so in a grand way on October 4 at the White House.

President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and Education Secretary Miguel Cardona sounded the alarm over a new policy issued by the University of Idaho. According to Biden, officials at the University of Idaho "told the university staff that they could get in trouble just for talking or telling students about where they can get birth control."

This is utter nonsense. No such policy exists.

What Biden was referring to is a September 23 memo by the General Counsel of the University of Idaho to university employees titled, "Guidance on Abortion Laws." The memo was issued to comply with a new restrictive abortion law passed by Idaho lawmakers that banned the use of state resources to promote abortion.

The memo focuses almost exclusively on abortion. It lists six "prohibited activities" under the law: "Counsel in favor of abortion; Promote abortion; Provide institutional facilities or institutional funding for providing an abortion or abortion training; Provide referrals for abortion; Contract with abortion providers; Dispense emergency contraception as classified by the FDA."

Regarding emergency contraception, the *New York Times* said in

2012 that RU-486, a popular emergency contraception medication, “is prescribed for terminating pregnancies” by “destroy[ing] implanted embryos.” It is therefore an abortifacient, not a contraceptive.

Biden’s characterization of the free speech issue is not supported by what the memo says.

“University employees may, with certain limitations: Direct students to sources of information outside university; Have classroom discussions on topics related to abortion or contraception limited to discussions and topics relevant to the class subject and instructor neutrality; Provide condoms for the purpose of helping prevent the spread of STDs and not for purposes of birth control.”

The General Counsel is correct to note that the law that his memo addresses “is not a model of clarity.” Indeed, it needs to be refined. For example, classroom discussions, on any topic, should be robust and not subject to irrational limitations.

Having said that, Biden’s comment that university employees can “get in trouble just for talking or telling students about where they can get birth control” is absurd. In fact, the memo says, “Counselling on birth control, as well as providing the means of birth control, can be done through licensed physicians and their health care workers at Student Health locations run by Moscow Family Medicine, our Student Health provider.”

Why, then, did Biden say they had a gag rule on campus? It’s because he and his administration are furious with the *Dobbs* decision and are engaged in fear-mongering before the mid-term elections.

Notice, too, that he mentions a gag rule on contraception, not abortion, even though the memo says very little about contraception. This is not a coincidence.

Under ObamaCare, there was a Health and Human Services “contraception mandate” forcing Catholic non-profits like the Little Sisters of the Poor to pay for contraception in their healthcare plans.

This was a misnomer. As the Catholic League pointed out on many occasions, the mandate covered abortifacients. Therefore, it should have been called the “abortion-inducing drug” mandate. Obama and Biden knew that contraception was much less controversial than abortion, and that is why their policy was dubbed the “contraception mandate.”

The same reasoning is behind Biden’s characterization of the University of Idaho’s policy—he cites contraception, not abortion, as the key issue, knowing it is more likely to set off the alarms.

What Biden is doing is playing on people’s fears. It’s just that simple, and just that diabolical.