

# CARTER'S BAGGAGE WITH WOMEN'S RIGHTS



Bill Donohue issued the following statement today:

Former President Jimmy Carter made the rounds on CNN over the weekend, championing women's rights and criticizing the Catholic Church. Perhaps some gutsy reporter will ask him about his own record (click [here](#) for the sources we used).

Carter has been a volunteer and supporter for Habitat for Humanity since 1984. Habitat was founded by Millard Fuller in 1976. In April 1991, Fuller was forced to resign as president. Why? He was accused of sexually harassing five female employees. He was accused of hugging, kissing them on the mouth, touching their buttocks, and making inappropriate comments. He ultimately apologized to them.

When Carter learned of the accusations in 1990, he wrote a letter to the Habitat board arguing that a "national scandal" would ensue if Fuller was fired. "Without minimizing in any way the significance of what has happened at Habitat, let me say quite frankly that I have had some similar kinds of relationships with some of my own female employees and associates. If one ever complained officially, there could be an avalanche of similar charges."

After Fuller was forced out, Carter issued a statement expressing his "disappointment" with his resignation; he wasn't happy with the board's decision. Indeed, he branded the ruling "disturbing." Carter admitted that Fuller had "made some mistakes," but he encouraged the board to find a role for

him. In June 1991, only two months after the board canned Fuller, it voted to reinstate him as president.

In January 2005, Fuller was fired by the board for touching a female employee while in a car, and for making suggestive comments to her. Carter twice tried to broker an agreement that would keep the accusation quiet and allow Fuller to retire honorably.

In short, Carter has his own baggage when it comes to women's rights. He is therefore not in a position to lecture the Catholic Church about its Scripture-based teaching on ordination. If he needs to mend his reputation as a failed president, he ought to choose another subject, and another target, for discussion.