

OBAMA'S WAR ON RELIGION

Bill Donohue

In September, Bill Donohue wrote a four-part series that was featured on Newsmax.com. The series focused on the war on religion that has been waged by the administration of President Barack Obama. The series caught the attention of many in the media and is sure to be a topic of discussion in many quarters.

Obama's Secular Mindset

The American people have been exceedingly fair in drawing a distinction between the personal religious beliefs and practices of presidential candidates and the public policies they adopt. This does not mean that personal predilections are without policy implications. To be sure, there are occasions when key personal anecdotes reveal something important about the mindset of candidates. Take, for example, what Michelle and Barack Obama told *People* magazine in 2008 about the "Obama House Rules."

Of the seven "House Rules" they enumerated, most were conventional, but one stood out: Michelle and Barack do not believe in giving Christmas gifts to their children. Barack explained that he wants "to teach some limits." The goal is noble. But of all the other choices available to them—setting spending limits, putting a limit on TV time—for some reason they chose the Christmas holiday as their teaching moment. This is more than unusual: non-Christians, as well as agnostics and atheists, are known to exchange Christmas gifts.

Against this backdrop, we can make sense of the controversy that erupted during the Obamas' first Christmas at the White House. At issue was whether they should break tradition and nix the display of a manger scene.

The flap started when the *New York Times* reported that the Obamas were planning a “non-religious Christmas.” The leak came from a former White House social secretary who attended a luncheon for the new appointee, Desirée Rogers: allegedly, the Obamas were not going to permit the display of a nativity scene. When *Times* reporter Sheryl Gay Stolberg contacted the White House to see if this was true, the story was confirmed. Stolberg was told “there [have] been internal discussions about making Christmas more inclusive and whether to display the crèche.” In the end, the Obamas decided to allow a manger scene. However, Christmas did not escape without controversy. For reasons never explained, the White House Christmas tree was adorned with ornaments depicting drag queens and mass murderers (Mao Zedong was featured; he killed 77 million of his own people).

In 2008, when Obama was a presidential candidate, he made a comment about white working-class Christians that would come back to haunt him. “It’s not surprising,” he said, “[that] they get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren’t like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations.” What proved to be so revealing about this admission was the venue: in a closed-door session, he addressed a forum of wealthy, left-leaning secularists in San Francisco.

Given his mindset, it is not surprising that Obama is opposed to the posting of the Ten Commandments on public property. More surprising are his reservations regarding the display of religious symbols on private property. He was only in office a few months when his advance team told officials at Georgetown University that they had better put a drape over any religious symbols that might appear as a backdrop to where the president was going to speak. To drive the point home, they made sure that the IHS symbol, a monogram of the name Jesus Christ, was not in sight.

On September 15, 2009, Obama addressed the Congressional

Hispanic Caucus Institute's 33rd Annual Awards. It was to be a perfunctory speech, although it didn't turn out that way. To wit: Obama did not reference God, or the "Creator," when citing the Declaration of Independence. Here is what he said: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, endowed with certain inalienable rights...." This is not what Jefferson wrote. He was explicit about the origin of our rights, noting that all men were "endowed by their Creator" with certain unalienable rights. What Obama said was no accident; the remarks were prepared. Moreover, even after being roundly criticized for this startling omission, Obama did the exact same thing only a month later at a fundraiser in Rockville, Maryland.

The fact is Obama is uncomfortable with America's Christian heritage. In 2010 he could not bring himself to utter the words "In God We Trust" when speaking in Indonesia about our national motto; instead, he substituted "E Pluribus Unum." But he is quite comfortable with atheists. In 2010, Obama became the first president in U.S. history to welcome a gathering of atheists: administration officials met with activists from the Secular Coalition for America, an umbrella group that includes American Atheists and other virulently anti-Christian organizations.

Obama is not equally jittery about all religions. When it comes to Islam, he can be very accommodating. For example, in 2010 he said he supported the right of Muslims to build a mosque at Ground Zero. The real issue, of course, was not a legal one—it was a moral one. He refused to discuss this matter.

It is not simply Obama who is uncomfortable with religion; it is true of the most active members of his party. Consider what just happened at the Democratic National Convention. On the first day, there was a panel discussion led by a notorious foe of the religious rights of Catholics, namely, Catholics for Choice (CFC). This group, which is nothing more than a well-

funded letterhead sponsored by the likes of the Ford Foundation—it has no members—has twice been condemned by the bishops’ conference as a fraud. Perversely, CFC addressed the subject of religious liberty! This would be like having the Klan speak about race relations at the RNC.

Until 2012, every Democratic Party Platform made some reference to God. But things changed this year, demonstrating once again that the administration has a “God problem.” In 2008, the Platform mentioned that government “gives everyone willing to work hard the chance to make the most of their *God-given* potential.” The italics, which I added, were deleted from the 2012 Platform. Worse, when CNN’s Piers Morgan asked DNC chair Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz why someone “deliberately” excised the word “God,” she replied, “I can assure you that no one has deliberately taken God out of the Platform.” After listening to this remarkable response, Morgan pressed her again, asking, “So it was an accident?” She refused to comment.

Once the pushback began, the Obama team folded and reinstated God. But even this process turned out to be a disaster. After ignoring the expressed will of the delegates—a voice vote to put God back in the Platform was split (it didn’t come close to the two-thirds majority that was needed)—it was ruled, by fiat, to have passed. Terri Holland, a New Mexico delegate, made a very revealing remark when she said that the revisions were made to “kow-tow to the religious right.” In other words, thoughtful Democrats would never want to pay homage to God in their Platform.

Obama’s Secular Allies

To learn more about Obama’s approach to religion, consider his base of religious friends. He sat for 20 years listening to Rev. Jeremiah “God-Damn-America” Wright. A black liberation theologian, Wright is known for his racially inflammatory sermons; for example, he has accused Zionism of containing an

element of "white racism." He is so extreme that he even blamed the 9/11 attacks on American foreign policy.

Another clergyman Obama greatly admires is Rev. J. Alfred Smith Sr., an Oakland, California pastor who was honored in 1975 by the violent Black Panther Party; in 1990, he was given an award by the anti-Semitic Nation of Islam. In Catholic circles, Obama's favorite priest is Father Michael Pfleger, a race-baiting preacher from Chicago who has welcomed Nation of Islam minister Louis Farrakhan to speak in his church.

It was in Obama's first job where he cultivated his ties to the Catholic community. To be exact, he laid anchor with Catholic activists, not with Catholics in the pew. In 1985, he took a job with a Saul Alinsky-trained community organizer; from then on his network with Catholic left-wing operatives would only expand. What he took from these contacts was not Catholicism; rather, it was how to work with the Catholic left to promote a radical agenda.

Those same associations paid a hefty dividend when it came time for Obama to launch his Catholic National Advisory Council in 2008. Quite frankly, Obama's Catholic friends are almost all Catholic dissidents, at least on the major social issues. In the last presidential election, there wasn't one of his 26 Catholic advisors who accepted the Catholic Church's teachings on abortion, embryonic stem cell research, and school vouchers. That almost all of them agreed 100 percent of the time with NARAL, the radical abortion organization, was hardly surprising.

True to form, the 2012 group, "Catholics for Obama," is populated with dissidents like Rep. Rosa DeLauro, a staunch abortion-rights advocate who has a history of openly defying the Catholic Church. While this is hardly unusual anymore, it is still mind-boggling to learn that Catholic Democrats PAC is so queasy about orthodox Catholicism that it features a "Catholic League Watch" database online. What scares them

about the Catholic League remains a mystery.

Obama's network of Catholic dissidents came into play when he selected Kathleen Sebelius as his Secretary of Health and Human Services. Her long-time involvement in the pro-abortion movement calls into serious question her status as a Catholic: Catholics can excommunicate themselves when they persistently and deliberately foster policies that are considered "intrinsically evil" by the Catholic Church; abortion is certainly one of those evils.

Sebelius was not simply a friend of George Tiller, the physician who specialized in killing babies who were 80 percent born—she raised money for him. So off-the-charts is Sebelius in her passion for abortion rights that she admits to never backing a single abortion-restricting law. For these reasons, Archbishop Joseph Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas once advised her not to present herself for Holy Communion.

There are several other persons chosen by Obama who have had their problems with Catholicism. Harry Knox, a gay activist with the Human Rights Campaign, was appointed to serve on the Advisory Council for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. While Knox was denied ordination in the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ because he is a sexually active homosexual, it was his vile comments about the pope that garnered the most publicity at the time of his appointment.

For Knox, the pope is a liar who needs to "start telling the truth about condom use." He even held the Holy Father accountable for "endangering people's lives," never explaining how someone who preaches abstinence could be held responsible for sexual recklessness. No matter, Knox also accused those who belong to the Knights of Columbus of being "foot soldiers of a discredited army of oppression."

Another gay activist who hates Catholicism is Kevin Jennings.

A former drug user and irresponsible teen counselor, Jennings was chosen to be the Safe Schools Czar. He is also a Christian basher who belongs to an urban anti-Catholic group, ACT UP. In 1989, activists from ACT UP stormed St. Patrick's Cathedral during Mass; they chained themselves to the pews and spat the Eucharist on the floor. Predictably, Jennings is fond of lecturing Catholics about the Church's teachings on sexuality, and for railing against the "hard core bigots" who comprise the "religious right."

It was also the appointment of Chai Feldblum to join the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that made Christians wince. The Georgetown law professor was on record saying that in conflicts between religious liberty and sexual rights, the latter should triumph. Never mind that religious liberty is a First Amendment right and that sexual rights are nowhere mentioned in the Constitution—Feldblum was adamant in her conviction that religious freedom should bow to sexual rights.

Feldblum is actually more extreme than this: she signed a statement in 2006, "Beyond Same-Sex Marriage," that is the most astounding assault on marriage ever written. Every conceivable "partnership" and "relationship" was deemed worthy of governmental *and* private recognition. This means that both the public and the private sector must grant rights to "queer couples who decide to jointly create and raise a child with another queer person or couple, in two households." Churches, obviously, would be expected to comply as they are part of the private sector.

It was not good enough for Obama to hire persons who reject Christian tenets or who speak coarsely about Christianity: he sought to hire activists who want to punish the Catholic Church. His choice of Dawn Johnsen to be assistant attorney general in charge of the Office of Legal Counsel proves this charge. Though she eventually withdrew her name from consideration—a contentious fight lasting more than a year precipitated her withdrawal—the former ACLU and NARAL lawyer

should never have been nominated in the first place. In the late 1980s, she cut her legal teeth by working on an ACLU lawsuit that sought to strip the Catholic Church of its tax-exempt status. We can only guess what she might have been up to had she gotten the job.

Obama's allies in the gay rights community led him to oppose the "Don't ask, Don't tell" policy on homosexuals in the military even before it was repealed. Even more revealing, his steadfast refusal to enforce the Defense of Marriage Act shows how his commitment to the gay rights agenda trumps his duties as the nation's chief executive. It also explains his support for gay marriage. In the 1990s, while running for the Illinois state senate, he said, "I favor legalizing same-sex marriage, and would fight efforts to prohibit such marriages." However, when he ran for the U.S. senate in 2004, he backed away from this position, and did so again when running for president in 2008. This was pure posturing: in 2008, he opposed Proposition 8 in California affirming marriage between a man and a woman showing his true colors. In 2012, he reverted back to his original support for the right of two men to marry.

Obama's Secular Policies

President George W. Bush was the first president to initiate faith-based social service programs; he wanted to put an end to the exclusionary policy of funding only public social service entities. There is a mountain of social science evidence showing the yeoman results of faith-based programs: homes for juvenile delinquents; drug rehabilitation centers; counseling services; foster care arrangements; prison ministries. The list is endless. On the one hand, Obama knew these faith-based programs were popular, so he felt obliged to keep them; on the other hand, his secular leanings pulled him the other way.

Early on Obama announced that these programs were not any better than their public counterparts (the data said

otherwise), raising serious questions why they should be funded. "I'm not saying that faith-based groups are an alternative to government or secular nonprofits," he said, "and I'm not saying that they're somehow better at lifting people up." Worse, he toyed with the idea of gutting the faith component from the faith-based initiative.

To be specific, an open debate ensued questioning whether people who run faith-based programs should be allowed to hire those of their own religion. Similarly, should those who run foster care programs be permitted to place children with parents of their own religion? The idea that Orthodox Jewish foster care homes should insist that they care for children of their own religion is hardly unreasonable. But to many in the Obama administration, the proposition was at least rebuttable, if not simply wrong.

If the Obama administration were serious about faith-based programs, it wouldn't ask their opponents for advice on how to run them. This is exactly what it did. It sought the input of Barry Lynn, president of Americans United for Separation of Church and State: he was invited to address the first faith-based council. Ever since, this initiative has floundered, as even those who have served on the council have acknowledged. What happened is not in dispute: endless conversations on the proper role of religion in such initiatives yielded no consensus. More important, Obama's heart was never in it.

The most decisive evidence that the Obama administration sees no fundamental difference between religious institutions, and those that are purely secular, came during oral arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court in the *Hosanna-Tabor* case. At issue was the right of a Lutheran school to fire a teacher found unsuitable by its standards.

Traditionally, the government has respected what is called a "ministerial exception," the idea that religious institutions enjoy constitutional insulation from government oversight when

making employment decisions. But for the attorney representing the Obama administration, Leondra R. Kruger, no such insulation was ever warranted: she actually maintained there was no real difference between religious associations and voluntary associations of a secular nature.

Justice Antonin Scalia was astonished by Kruger's reasoning. "That's extraordinary. That's extraordinary. We are talking here about the Free Exercise Clause and about the Establishment Clause, and you say they have no special application?" Justice Elena Kagan, an Obama appointee, was similarly struck by Kruger's argument. "I too find that amazing, that you think that the Free—neither the Free Exercise Clause nor the Establishment Clause—has anything to say about a church's relationship with its own employees."

Kruger's extremist position in the fall of 2011 resulted in a 9-0 victory for the First Amendment in the spring of 2012; the "ministerial exception" rule was sustained. While this was impressive, it yielded even more fruit: it revealed the way the Obama administration thinks about religious liberty. Had the administration won, the federal government would have been able to steer the employment decisions of every religious entity, effectively neutering their right to craft internal strictures that reflect their doctrinal prerogatives. In short, had the president's views prevailed, religious liberty as we know it would no longer exist.

If there is one issue that has been at the heart of the culture war over the past several decades, it is abortion. The nation is split on this issue, though the vector of change is certainly moving in a pro-life direction: more Americans consider themselves pro-life than ever before, and there is scant support for abortion-on-demand through term. Without doubt, President Obama is the most radical president we've ever had on this subject. His enthusiasm for abortion rights—he has never found an abortion he could not justify—is so unyielding that he even supports selective infanticide.

When Obama was in the Illinois state senate he fought the “Born-Alive Infants Protection Act” on three occasions. The bill would have required doctors to attend to infants born alive after a botched abortion. Obama saw this as a threat to abortion rights, and so he found an exception to his embrace of universal healthcare: this was one human being who was not entitled to care—he could legally be left to die.

Now it is possible to take an abortion-rights position that at least respects the right of religious institutions not to cooperate in what the Catholic Church calls an “intrinsic evil.” But Obama has shown no such respect. Indeed, his war on religion extends to the days when candidate Obama made a pledge to Planned Parenthood in 2007. He told his fans that “the first thing I’d do as president is sign the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA).”

FOCA is the most radical piece of abortion-rights legislation ever written: it would overturn virtually every law restricting abortion in the nation. Worse, it might very well force Catholic hospitals to perform abortions. If they refused, federal funds would be cut off, effectively putting them out of business. This is Obama’s vision of healthcare and religious liberty. Fortunately, the bill never made it to his desk; Catholics and Evangelicals fought hard to block it.

As an interesting side note, when he was in the U.S. senate, Obama supported government intervention in the case of Terri Schiavo; he voted to provide the physically disabled woman with nutrition. But his pro-life epiphany didn’t last long: in 2008, when asked which senatorial vote he regretted the most, he cited this one.

In the same year, Obama was asked when life begins (Senator John McCain answered “at conception”). Obama’s answer was classic. “Whether you’re looking at it from a theological perspective or a scientific perspective,” he allowed, “answering that question with specificity is above my pay

grade." It was a dishonest dodge.

Once in power, Obama moved quickly to enshrine the abortion agenda. Three days after becoming president, Obama reversed President George W. Bush's ban on federal funding for international groups that promote or perform abortions; only 35 percent of Americans agreed with him on this issue. The ban, called the Mexico City Policy, was just the first of many abortion-restrictive laws that would be targeted for repeal. For instance, Obama officials attempted to repeal the Hyde Amendment that bans federally funded abortions in public health insurance options. They had more success in effectively gutting the Dornan Amendment, i.e., the ban on tax-funded abortions in the District of Columbia.

When coupled with Obama's opposition to school vouchers, including a successful scholarship voucher program for the residents of D.C., this effectively meant that if a poor inner-city pregnant woman, typically an African American, wanted to end her pregnancy, the government would pay for it. But if she insisted on taking her baby to term, hoping to later place her child in a private school, the same government wouldn't give her a dime. The prospects for the women are stark, but for the child they are worse: either the baby's life will be cut short, or his life chances will be.

Sterilization is another option that is attractive to the Obama administration. In 2009, Obama appointed John Holdren his "science czar." He is a proponent of forced abortions and compulsory sterilization. In 1977, Holdren co-authored an article with radical environmentalists Paul and Anne Ehrlich whereby they entertained the notion of "adding a sterilant to drinking water or staple foods." Keeping an open mind about draconian methods, they also argued that while compulsory control of family size is "an unpalatable idea," the alternatives "may be much more horrifying." They were most excited about implementing their population-reduction ideas in poor, non-white nations.

The idea that abortion and sterilization are a positive good is so appealing to the Obama administration that it has sought to punish those who don't subscribe to its agenda. For example, Catholic programs to combat the human trafficking of women and children have long received federal funds. But because these initiatives do not provide for abortion, they were denied a grant by Obama officials. It didn't matter a whit that the Catholic proposal garnered high marks from an independent review board, or that it actually scored higher than some that were awarded a grant. What mattered is that Catholics don't view abortion as a way of helping women and children living in a state of near slavery.

Obama's Assault on Catholicism

Americans who oppose abortion have learned to live with *Roe v. Wade*, but they (as well as some abortion-rights advocates) have never come to terms with proposals forcing them to fund abortion. This was on President Obama's mind when he addressed the graduation class of 2009 at the University of Notre Dame. "Let's honor the conscience of those who disagree with abortion and draft a sensible conscience clause," he said. For this he was hailed by the president of Notre Dame, Father John Jenkins. Three years later the priest sued Obama for breaking his vow.

The Notre Dame speech notwithstanding, the Obama administration's willingness to violate conscience rights in pursuit of ObamaCare was evident from the beginning. In 2009, Senator Orrin Hatch and Senator Mike Enzi sought to include language in the healthcare bill that would prohibit public funding of abortion. It was voted down, much to the applause of the Obama administration. A similar bill by Rep. Eric Cantor went down to defeat. Senator Tom Coburn sponsored an amendment that would provide conscience-rights protections for healthcare workers, and it too was defeated. Rep. Bart Stupak, Rep. Joe Pitts, and Rep. Sam Johnson also tried to bar federal funds for abortion; their efforts met the same fate.

What was most exasperating about this entire matter was the insistence on the part of Obama officials that nothing in the healthcare bill would allow for the public funding of abortion. Then why fight with such ferocity bills designed to make sure this never happens?

By the end of 2009, the real agenda of the Obama administration had become so transparent that even its friends at the *New York Times* felt obliged to come clean. That November the *Times* ran a news story showing how Obama had betrayed his promise. Reporter Robert Pear wrote that the president “was not comfortable with abortion restrictions inserted into the House version of major health care legislation, and he prodded Congress to revise them.” The pro-life community, largely faith-based, felt disabused by these shenanigans. But they had no idea how bad matters would soon become.

On January 20, 2012 Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius rolled out what would come to be known as the HHS mandate: Catholic institutions would be required to pay for contraception, sterilization and abortion-inducing drugs in their healthcare plans for employees. The inclusion of abortion-inducing drugs was striking. The administration could have settled for contraception, but instead it sought to stick the camel’s nose in the tent. Its real long-term interest was plain: eventually, as broached by FOCA, Catholic hospitals would be required to perform abortions.

On January 31, Press Secretary Jay Carney stunned even Obama supporters when he said, “I don’t believe there are any constitutional rights issues here.” No one was buying it, especially not the bishops.

After Catholics pushed back, a new version was introduced three weeks later. But it was a distinction without a difference: it mandated that the insurance carrier of Catholic non-profits must pay for these services.

This was just a shell game. In reality, many Catholic non-profits are self-insured (for example, the Archdiocese of Washington is self-insured). Then there is the issue of Catholic entities that are not self-insured: why should they have to pay their insurance company for services they deem immoral? Another issue that won't go away is the right of Catholic business owners not to pay for services that violate their conscience.

It is important to acknowledge that Catholics are not asking for special rights—they are simply asking the Obama administration to respect the status quo. The administration won't budge, saying the best it will do is exempt Catholic churches. So what about Catholic non-profits?

Without doubt, the most contentious, and frankly diabolical, demand of the Obama administration is the proviso that only Catholic institutions that hire and serve mostly people of their own religion are entitled to an exemption. In practice, this means that Mother Teresa's worldwide health and social service programs that serve people of all religions, as well as non-believers, would not qualify for a religious exemption.

Obama officials arrived at this conclusion by following the thinking of the ACLU (as I have recounted in two books on the organization, the ACLU has never been a religion-friendly institution). In 2000, ACLU lawyers helped devise legislation in California that took a novel view of what constitutes a religious institution. It argued that a truly religious entity had to employ and serve mostly people of its own faith. By adopting the ACLU rule, the Obama administration essentially sought to punish Catholic universities, hospitals and social service agencies because they *do not discriminate* against non-Catholics. In other words, if these institutions were to display signs saying, "No Jews Allowed," they would be just fine.

Catholic bishops, led by Cardinal Timothy Dolan, the president

of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, have made their objections known loud and clear. So have non-Catholics. Evangelical Protestants, in particular, have joined with their Catholic brothers in registering their outrage. It is apparent to everyone that Obama's war on religion has reached a new level of opposition.

The determination of Obama officials to push forward led them to attack another First Amendment right: the right to free speech. The archbishop of the military services, Thomas Broglio, joined with his fellow bishops in issuing a pastoral letter criticizing the Obama administration for violating the conscience rights of Catholics. He got into trouble with the Army's Office of the Chief of Chaplains when he asked military chaplains to read the letter from the pulpit. The Obama team initially ordered the letter censored, but eventually modified its position after a compromise was met.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled ObamaCare constitutional in June, although it did not rule on the constitutionality of the HHS mandate (it was not promulgated until after the high court agreed to decide the fate of ObamaCare). The November election may make all of this moot if Obama loses, but if he wins, Catholic rights will be tested in the Supreme Court. Meanwhile, new legislative efforts are being made to secure conscience rights.

It is still hard to get the president and his administration to speak truthfully about this issue. In August, President Obama told a crowd at the University of Denver that "We worked with the Catholic hospitals and universities to find a solution that protects both religious liberty and a woman's health." Yet as recently as February, Bishop William Lori, who chairs the bishops' Committee for Religious Liberty, said point blank that "no one from this administration has approached the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for discussions on this matter of a possible 'compromise.'" He also made it clear that only after the original HHS mandate

was revised did the White House contact Archbishop Dolan.

When pieced together, all of these issues—Obama’s secular mindset, his secular allies, his secular policies, and his assault on Catholicism—show an animus to religious liberty. It is no exaggeration to say that this nation has never witnessed anything like it. The frontal assault on religion, especially on its public role, is unprecedented. Explicit references to our religious heritage have been scrubbed clean from speeches and official pronouncements; the professed enemies of Christianity have been given a free hand shaping public policy; faith-based programs have been allowed to wither; the radical pro-abortion and pro-gay agendas have been set loose to undermine our First Amendment freedoms; and attempts to force people of faith to violate their conscience have reached a dangerous level.

The war on religion carried out by the Obama administration is not the product of someone’s imagination—it is real. Whether it succeeds depends less on them than on us.

CURRENT THREATS TO RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Jeff Field, director of communications for the Catholic League, recently interviewed Bill Donohue on the subject of religious liberty. Below is a transcript of the interview.

Bill, you’ve been doing this job at the Catholic League for about two decades. How have things changed in the last couple of decades in terms of the threats to religious liberty?

Well, I would say that if you look at the Catholic League’s

annual reports we generally have seen the greatest degree of hostility against Catholicism coming from the media. We've certainly seen it from the artistic community, from activist organizations, from some segments of business and the workplace. Education has clearly been a venue of hostility toward the Catholic Church from kindergarten right through graduate school. But what is most striking to me is that government is now the seat of hostility to Catholicism more than any other sector of our society; this is particularly troubling. After all, government in this country was created to ensure rights, not to erode them.

In the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson wrote that our rights do not come from government. Our rights are unalienable. That is to say, our rights come from "the Creator," from God. We have God-given rights. We don't look to government to give us our rights. We look to government to ensure our rights. Now, regrettably, over the last decade, we have seen many examples at the local, state and federal level where government has become the problem.

This is very troubling because, unlike problems coming from the media, which tend to be more in the way of dissing Catholics, these are real threats to our religious liberty.

Bill, could you give us some examples of the threats to religious liberty coming from the local level?

Well, right here in New York City, we have a mayor, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who is not exactly religion-friendly. Let me give you a particular example.

When we had the 9/11 commemoration in September of 2011—the ten-year anniversary—the clergy wanted to speak. Obviously, the clergy always speak at some commemorative exercise in this country. They are expected to speak. Mayor Bloomberg censored them. He did something unprecedented. He said that everybody can speak who is a person of notoriety, but we don't want the

clergy. So, he literally banned the priests, the ministers and the rabbis, the imams and others from speaking.

This is censorship. Only the government can censor. Private institutions such as newspapers, for example, they don't have to publish people's letters or op-eds. It may show a bias but you can't call it censorship in the strict sense of that word. Here we have the government—the chief executive of New York City, Mayor Michael Bloomberg—making a decision on his own, without consulting the public, saying, “Listen, I don't want the clergy to speak.” That's a hostility I don't think that we can put up with, that kind of censorship.

The same mayor has denied non-white Protestants who belong to the Bronx Household of Faith use of school property and buildings on Sunday mornings—when nobody else is using them—for their religious services. They've been doing this for a very long time, up until Mayor Bloomberg decided that, while you can have LGBT meetings and anything else in the public buildings on a Sunday morning, you cannot have a religious service. This was a mean-spirited attempt to erode the religious liberty of these Protestants.

On the west coast, in San Francisco back in 2006, the Board of Supervisors, who essentially run the city, went after the Vatican. They accused it of meddling in the internal affairs of San Francisco, and engaging in hateful speech. Now, what in the world did the Vatican do to meddle in the internal affairs of San Francisco? I'll tell you what they did: the Catholic Church simply has a position—which is held by many, many other religions—that they are not in favor of gay adoption. Now, people can agree or disagree with this decision, but what they can't do is to assert that somehow you're meddling in somebody's internal affairs. One could just as easily argue that the City of San Francisco is meddling in the internal affairs of the Vatican because they believe in gay adoption. Of course, that would be absurd, and so was what they said absurd.

More recently in California, there was an attempt to ban the crèche in Santa Monica, this time coming from the Freedom From Religion Foundation based out of Madison, Wisconsin. It's an atheist group. It's not just indifferent to religion, they hate religion. But they don't hate all religions equally. They have a particular animus against the Catholic Church. After they tried to get the crèche banned from public property, the local government said it would develop a lottery, allowing Christians, Jews and atheists an equal chance of obtaining the right to display their symbols.

Well, last year Christians got the short end of the stick, and after they complained, the spineless leaders in Santa Monica decided that in 2012, there will be no displays at all. Who was delighted? The Freedom From Religion Foundation. This proves that their real agenda was to deny us the nativity scene. Instead of the government defending religious liberty, it took the cowardly way out by censoring everyone equally.

Bill, are there any examples at the state level that you'd like to discuss where you see a threat to religious liberty these days?

Actually, let's pick up on this whole question of gay adoption. Two states, Massachusetts and Illinois, as well as cities like San Francisco and D.C., have essentially stopped the Catholic Church from practicing its adoptive services. The Catholic Church, like a lot of other religions, does not believe in gay adoption. It believes children belong with a mother and a father, ideally. And what's happened is that, in Massachusetts and Illinois, they've said there will be no state funding for the adoptive and foster care services of the Catholic Church, unless you change your teachings and accept the wisdom of the secular state that homosexuals should be adoptive parents. Because the Catholic Church obviously is not going to prostitute its principles, we're therefore punished. This is another example of the hostility I am talking about.

Outside this realm dealing with sexuality is another element. In Connecticut a few years ago, two gay lawmakers decided that they actually wanted to have a takeover of the Catholic Church in Connecticut. This sounds mind-boggling, but it's actually true. These gay lawmakers went into the legislature with a bill to take over the administrative apparatus of the Catholic Church. Oh, yes, they said that the priest could still say Mass and the like. But, they felt that, no, they, the state lawmakers, were in a better position to make decisions about the administrative affairs of the Catholic Church than the priests and the bishops. Just imagine, for one moment, if the bishops in Connecticut and the priests said, "We want a takeover of the state government in Connecticut in Hartford." Wouldn't people be screaming, "Whatever happened to separation of church and state?" Well that's exactly what we had here, except that the state was going to take over the Church.

Now, thank God for Bishop Lori of Bridgeport, now the Archbishop of Baltimore. He led people into the streets. The Catholic League was very vocal in supporting him at this point because we had to pare back their draconian legislation. But it gives you an example of what we're up against.

We have also had problems in Alabama, Jeff. Here I'm talking about the fact that some Republicans—in their quest to secure the borders, which is a legitimate thing to do—have actually gone so far as to say that priests shouldn't tend to the ministerial needs, the pastoral needs, of undocumented aliens. Well, quite frankly, it's up to the government to decide how best to deal with the immigration problem. But, you can't tell the clergy, you can't tell priests, for example, that you're not allowed to service people who may be in this country and are in need. We're not going to turn people away. We do believe in the Good Samaritan approach.

It is important for Republicans to understand the Catholic Church is neither Republican nor Democrat. We will fight the Republicans as much as we fight the Democrats on the issue of

immigration and these other issues. You can take care of the problem of immigration on your own terms without interfering with the rights of Catholics. Religious liberty matters to Catholics whether we are dealing with gay adoption or the question of immigration.

Bill, are there any examples at the federal level that you could speak to in terms of the current threats to religious liberty?

There are a lot of them, Jeff. Let's begin with what happened in 1996. President Clinton signed a law, a federal law, the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which said that states which don't recognize same-sex marriage don't have to; they can recognize traditional marriage as being between a man and a woman. Only 14 senators refused to sign on with this. It was basically uncontroversial.

Now we have a situation today where President Obama, who was sworn to uphold congressional legislation, has ordered his Justice Department not to enforce congressional legislation on this issue, on DOMA.

Here is what we have now, to show you how perverse it is. In New York State, a lesbian couple who work at St. Joseph's Medical Center in Westchester are now suing because they want the Medical Center to recognize their quote "wedding," their marriage. It is true that in New York State gay people can marry. I should point out that, unlike the other 32 states which have discussed this issue and allowed the people to vote on it (and in every single case people vote against gay marriage, even in California), they did not allow people to vote on this issue in New York State. Even worse, they had no public hearings. So here we have people intentionally working at a Catholic institution trying to force Catholic institutions now to prostitute their teachings so that they can exercise their so-called rights.

Bill, there's been a lot of talk about the HHS mandate, the Health and Human Services mandate, the "Fortnight for Freedom" that the bishops have been promoting in June and July. This idea that we are threatened by the federal government. Speak to us: what's at stake here?

Well, after the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case dealing with the individual mandate—which we now know is constitutional—HHS, the Department of Health and Human Services, issued a mandate saying that Catholic nonprofits have to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception and sterilization.

This led to an outcry. They issued this on Friday, January 20. Cardinal Dolan felt betrayed by the president who told him that he wouldn't have to worry about these kinds of things when they met in November of 2011. Well, with the outcry, three weeks later on Friday, February 10, there was an accommodation. The accommodation, according to the Obama administration, was that Catholic individuals won't have to pay for services deemed immoral by the Catholic Church, but they'll have to pay for their insurance plans.

Of course, this is a shell game. Where does the insurance company get the money except from the employees? And then you have the situation of self-insured entities such as the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. How do you resolve that question? For that matter, what if a Catholic owns an Italian restaurant? Does he have to pay for something he deems immoral, as well? So, in other words, we felt we were right back to where we started from.

Bill, what's driving this? It seems to me that there is a real strong interest in promoting abortion rights in this administration?

Jeff, that's exactly the case. Let's recall that when Barack Obama was in the Illinois State Senate, he promoted a bill

which said this: A baby born alive as a result of a botched abortion is not entitled to healthcare. To be specific, they can let the baby die on the doctor's table. That's entirely okay with Barack Obama. Now that goes to show you what we're talking about. This is selective infanticide. The baby is fully outside the woman's body, and, because the baby survives a botched abortion, therefore it is not entitled to the right to life.

Remember what happened in 2007, when Barack Obama, then a candidate or about to become a candidate, said to Planned Parenthood that when he becomes president United States he's going to sign FOCA, the Freedom of Choice Act. Now, he never did get a chance to sign this legislation because the Catholic community, including the Catholic League, rose up against him. What it would have done, according to the attorneys for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), it would have forced Catholic hospitals to provide for and pay for abortions. Now, obviously, we'll close down the Catholic hospitals before we'll ever perform abortions, but this goes to show you the appetite, the lust for abortion that is coming from this administration. The bill never succeeded, but we know where they wanted to go.

Then we have the case dealing with the Catholic Relief Services. Catholic Relief Services has for a long time received a grant from the federal government to fight human trafficking of women and children, modern-day slaves. And, the Catholic Church has a very good program to combat human trafficking. So they issued their proposal again last year. This time, it was knocked down. Was it insufficiently prepared? No, as a matter of fact, the proposal actually scored higher than did those proposals which won out in the end. So, why did the Catholic Relief Services lose? Because the Church is against abortion.

Then there's the question of conscience rights. President Obama spoke at the University of Notre Dame at the

commencement address in 2009. The Catholic League said he had every right to speak at a Catholic university. He is, in fact, the President of the United States. We objected to his receiving an award. Why would any Catholic institution want to give an award to a man who has such an unbridled passion for abortion rights? Doesn't make any sense. We don't give awards to anti-Semites and we don't give awards to racists, nor should we.

Well, what happened during that speech is that he said, basically, "Listen I know I'm in somewhat hot water with the Catholic community. I want to let you know I believe in conscience rights. I believe that people should not be forced—as a matter of a religious objection—to do something that they find inherently immoral." That was greeted with some degree of relief, including by the Catholic League. Isn't it interesting, now, Jeff, that a few years later the same president, Father Jenkins, who welcomed President Obama there, has now turned around and is suing? Notre Dame is suing the federal government because of the disrespect and contempt that it shows for the religious liberty rights of Catholics. It's a rather amazing turnaround.

Now, Bill, let's ask a different question here. Besides abortion, there's been a lot of questions about the Obama administration redefining what qualifies as a religious institution. Can you speak to that at all?

Why, yes. Quite frankly, the most pernicious thing the Obama administration has done is to redefine what qualifies as a religious institution for the purpose of an exemption.

The Obama administration says that a Catholic institution is not Catholic unless it hires and serves people mostly of its own faith. Now that is to turn on its head the virtue of Catholic institutions. We are proud of the fact that we do not discriminate in our social service agencies, soup kitchens, hospitals, schools, Catholic universities, and colleges. We

don't discriminate against people because they're Protestant or Jewish, or atheist, agnostic, or Muslim or Mormon. We welcome everybody. And this is what I find so perverse. We're saying now that unless you discriminate—what do they want us to do, put up signs saying, "No Jews Need Apply"? Should they say, "No Protestants are welcome in our hospitals"? That we do not serve Muslims? Is that what they really want? They want to punish us for being Catholic with a small c, meaning universal? No, we can't put up with this.

Bill, where'd they get this idea in the first place?

Amazingly, Jeff—this will come as a surprise, or maybe not a major surprise to some people—it came from the ACLU, the American Civil Liberties Union; it has been hostile to freedom of religion for a very long time, going back to 1920. The ACLU, in 2000, helped draft a law in California on contraception which came up with this bizarre, invidious notion that you're a Catholic institution only if you hire and serve people of your own faith.

Now the ACLU—let me digress here for a moment—I've written a Ph.D. dissertation and two books on the ACLU. I interviewed the founder of the ACLU, Roger Baldwin, in June of 1978 in his home on Hudson Street in lower Manhattan. He founded the organization in January of 1920, and I asked him, "Mr. Baldwin, your organization in its first 10 objectives lists freedom of assembly, freedom of the press, freedom to petition and the like, but you never mentioned that other component of the First Amendment called freedom of religion. Why not?" He was very blunt. He said, "That's because I'm an atheist. We don't value freedom of religion." Indeed, he certainly does not value freedom of religion. I remember asking Mr. Baldwin—who was certainly very nice to me, he was an elderly man at the time—I said to him, "Listen, what's wrong with a voluntary prayer, when people have a moment of silence?" I said, "Whose rights are being infringed upon if somebody prays silently to himself?"

His answer was rather chilling. He said, "Well, they've tried to get around it even more than you, they call it meditation." So I said to the founder of the ACLU, "Mr. Baldwin, what's wrong with meditation? A child sits there at his desk and he meditates. What if he meditates about popcorn? What difference would it make to you, the great guardians of the Constitution?"

Well, that kind of stopped him in his tracks, but it does give you an idea of where they're coming from. Just to show you how absurd the ACLU is on this, they're actually against "In God We Trust" on the coins; they want "under God" taken out of the Pledge of Allegiance. Somebody actually found a huge statue of Jesus off the coast of Key Largo, on the ocean floor, and the ACLU said we have to remove it. I mean, who are they protecting now? You see, what you're dealing with here is a maniacal hatred of religion. Unfortunately, there are some people in the Obama administration who accept this kind of thinking.

Bill, let's pick up on that idea of the thinking. Could you explain the mindset of these people? Whether in or out of the Obama administration, who has this kind of ACLU mindset?

I'll give you a perfect example, Jeff, of what happened in 2011. You had a woman for the Obama administration go before the Supreme Court in oral argument, and she maintained that a Lutheran school should not be allowed to make up its own rules and regulations regarding employment decisions; she said the government should do so. Now for a very long time in this country, we've had what's understood as the ministerial exception. Meaning that, when it comes to ministers, or the clergy in general, that they can be excepted from this idea that the government should police hiring decisions. That's because you have to have freedom of religion, you have to have some insularity between church and state. This woman actually said that there isn't any difference between a religious association and any other association.

Now that startled Justice Antonin Scalia, but what was even more dramatic was that Elena Kagan, a liberal appointee of the Obama administration, said she wanted clarification. She said to the woman: I want to get this right, are you saying that there's no difference between a religious organization, which has rights grounded in the First Amendment and that of a secular, voluntary association? That there's really no difference? And she said, that's right, there is no difference. Well, in one sense this zealot did us a favor because the Supreme Court did rule 9 to 0 against the idea that the government has the right to police the hiring and firing decisions of a religious entity.

I'll give you some other examples of where there is this mindset that is very troubling. Remember a couple of years ago when President Barack Obama was to speak at Georgetown University? His advance team went out there just to check out the place, and they told the officials at Georgetown that they have to put a drape or a cover over IHS, over the crucifix, over all religious symbols. When the president speaks from Georgetown, they said we don't want the public to see on TV religious symbols of any sort out.

Only an administration which is fundamentally hateful in its ideas toward religion would go into a religious institution and tell them to cover up, and to neuter and to censor their own religious symbols. It'd be like going into a Jewish facility and saying get rid of that Star of David. This kind of hostility has no place in a society which prizes the First Amendment. That's an example of the mindset.

Unfortunately, on many occasions when President Obama cites the Declaration of Independence, he leaves out the word "Creator." So, when we talk about how the "Creator" has given us our unalienable rights, to understand that our rights come from God and not from the government—the president many times leaves out the word, "Creator." That's not a mistake. That's not some editorial mistake on the part of his people. That's

deliberate. Our national motto is "In God We Trust." How many times has he said it's "E Pluribus Unum"? No, it's not "E Pluribus Unum." It's a great statement, but that's not our national motto.

So, there is an hostility. Indeed, the Obama administration is the first in the history of the United States to welcome an openly public atheist organization, one that is publicly aggressive in its hatefulness against religion. I'm talking about the Secular Coalition of America. That they were granted a White House reception tells us something very troubling about this administration.

Then there's the question of freedom of worship versus freedom of religion. Freedom of worship means that you should practice your religion indoors. It's a very insular idea. It's the idea of privatizing religion. That's what President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have spoken about: they're all in favor of freedom of worship. That means that the priest can tend to the little old ladies in the pews. You can have your sororities and the like and sodalities. You can have your church Christmas parties and the like, but just don't take it outside. It would be on the order as if somebody said, "You can have music played in concert halls, but no longer in public parks. You can have artistic exhibitions in museums, but not on sidewalks or in public parks." That would express an hostility to art and music.

Well, that's what they're doing here. They're saying that freedom of religion—which of course is the public expression of religion, the core foundation of religion, which Pope Benedict XVI has spoken about so eloquently—they're saying that that should not be exercised. So, if you want religion, take it indoors.

No, we will not, Mr. President. We will take it outdoors and we will indeed evangelize. It's not only part of our freedom of religion in the First Amendment, it's part of our freedom

of speech, which is also in the First Amendment.

Bill, can you talk to us about some of the nominees and appointees of this administration, which could give some trouble to people who believe in religious liberty?

Jeff, I am very proud of the fact that the Catholic League fought Dawn Johnsen, an Indiana University professor of law, from getting a position in the Office of Legal Counsel. Why did we not want her? We exercised our freedom of speech by simply publicizing and giving air to her background. Back in the 1980s, she actually as a young woman worked on an amicus brief with the ACLU to deny the tax-exempt status of the Catholic Church. Imagine this: somebody who wants to strip the Catholic Church, and by extension all religions, of their tax-exempt status. This person is to be granted a high position in the administration?

Well, thank God she's not there to do that kind of damage, but we do have Kathleen Sebelius, don't we, running Health and Human Services? The last three consecutive archbishops of Kansas City, Kansas have called her on the carpet and asked her point blank: can you name a single abortion law that restricts abortion that you've ever supported? She said no. Not only that, but she has actually raised money for the infamous partial-birth abortionist who was taken out, George Tiller—George "The Killer" Tiller. Now, this is why one of the archbishops told her you need not present yourself at the communion rail because you are that far gone.

There's also people there like Chai Feldblum in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Chai Feldblum, she taught at Georgetown University Law School, is now working for the Obama administration. She said a few years back that whenever sexual rights conflict with religious rights, religious rights need to bow to sexual rights. Now, just think about it. There's nothing in the Constitution about sexual rights. There is something in the Constitution, namely the First Amendment

to the Bill of Rights, about freedom of religion. And, yet, our First Amendment right is to take a backseat to sexual rights so that gays and lesbians can win out on some of these fights? This is absolutely mind-boggling.

There've also been people like Kevin Jennings, and people like Harry Knox and others, who have expressed hateful thoughts against the pope and the Church, and who wind up in this administration.

I must say also, regrettably, that we also have in the Obama administration a situation where, in 2009, the big debate at Christmastime was: Should there be a religious presence at Christmas? In other words, should we have a manger scene at Christmastime? Well, what else would we be celebrating? It'd be like not recognizing Martin Luther King on Martin Luther King Day. What else would you be doing?

They did put up an ornament of a drag queen. They did put up an ornament of Mao Zedong. Maybe this had something to do with why the president and his wife do not believe in exchanging Christmas gifts at Christmastime. I know lots of people who are Jewish and who are atheist and agnostic and they all exchange gifts. Now what the Obamas do in the privacy of their own home is their business, but it's my business when this kind of attitude spills over into public policy.

Bill, let's talk more widely, cast it wider. The culture itself, I mean obviously you've been talking here about the threats coming from government—from the cities, from the states, from the federal government—what about from the element of culture?

Well after 9/11, Jeff, that's when things really got worse. Militant atheism was one of the byproducts of the attack on the World Trade Center and in Pennsylvania and in Washington, D.C. One might think that there would be a kind of hatred against Islam. I don't want people to hate Islam any more than

I want people to hate Judaism or Catholicism or Protestantism or any other religion. But interestingly enough, a new wave of intellectuals who never did like religion started to speak up, and who did they really go after? Christianity. And when you talk about Christianity, you can't help but talk about the bull's-eye, that is to say the Catholic Church. So, we've been the ones who've been the victim of this militant atheism since 9/11.

Can you give me some examples, Bill, of where the Catholic League has been involved in this?

Yes. Two years ago, in 2010, I petitioned the people at the Empire State Building to light up on the night of the 100th anniversary of Mother Teresa's birth, her centenary. I wanted them to light up blue and white, the colors of her order, the Missionaries of Charity. The Empire State Building has a practice of lighting up the colors for various events. When the Yankees win, they'll light up blue and white as well. They light up green for St. Patrick's Day and the like. We were rejected.

Now, it's one thing to be rejected, it's another thing to be lied to. We were lied to because we were told that the Empire State Building does not recognize religious figures. Now admittedly it is a private entity, but they lied to us because that was not part of their stricture, part of the regulations. They made that up after we were denied. And I had the actual proof, which we put online.

The reason we were denied was because Anthony Malkin doesn't like Catholicism, I would suppose. Some people said he doesn't like me—that would make him an even smaller man than what I think he is. But no question about it, we weren't going to put up with it. We had a rally in the streets and we worked all summer of 2010 to bring people together. Republicans and Democrats, this wasn't a political issue. We wanted people who were Catholic and Protestant and Jewish and Hindu and Muslim

and Buddhists and people from all walks of life. Politicians and celebrities and people like Jackie Mason, the comedian. We wanted to make a universal statement that Mother Teresa was loved.

Why in the world would the Empire State Building, which had recognized the Ninja Turtles, which had recognized the Communist Chinese and their revolution after Mao Zedong—he killed 77 million people—but they would not honor Mother Teresa?

Any other examples you'd like to mention, Bill?

Yes, a few years ago, the Smithsonian—it is a government-supported institution which gets most of its money from the public—it gave monies and hosted a venue where they showed a video of large ants running across the body of Jesus Christ on the Cross. Now they wouldn't do that to Mohammed, and they wouldn't do it to Martin Luther King. Our objection was principled: if it is wrong to take public monies to support religion, it should be wrong to take public monies to bash religion.

Bill, what's probably the worst thing about the culture war in terms of the Catholic Church and what can we do?

The worst thing about the culture war from the perspective of the Catholic League is that it has weakened the moral authority of the Catholic Church. Of course, that's the goal, isn't it? An attrition of the prestige of Catholicism. We have to stand up for the voice of the Catholic Church, which is one of reason, one of sanity, one of common sense. We're the ones who actually had the ideas that basically make for the good society. The Catholic League is here not to speak for the Catholic Church but for the right of the Catholic Church to speak out in these days of moral anarchy.

What can we do about it? Get the word out, fight, educate, sign petitions, support those activist organizations that you

strongly believe in. Do what you can to be a participant. We need gladiators in this culture war. What we don't need are spectators.

WHY CATHOLICISM MATTERS

Religious and ethnic loyalties are important to me. I am proud to be Catholic and proud to be Irish. I am also very proud to be an American. But pride absent an intelligent appreciation of one's roots quickly descends to tribalism, and that is not good for the individual or the society. For example, we need to know why it is rational to be proud of our religion. This is one reason why I wrote *Why Catholicism Matters*. And by "we," I don't mean just Catholics. I mean everyone.

There is much to be proud of. Down through the ages, the great philosophers have written widely on the quest for the good society. While it has never been achieved (and given the reality of original sin it can never be fully realized), it is nonetheless true that trying to craft the good society remains a noble enterprise. But we need to the right recipe. Fortunately, it has been available to us for two millennia: the teachings of the Catholic Church provide all the ingredients we need.

Well, if the Catholic Church is so great, what about the sexual abuse scandal? I get this all the time. The short answer is this: every priest who failed us did so because he followed his id, not his vows. Had he followed the teachings of the Catholic Church, he could not have sinned. But we all do. That's why popes go to confession—they're human. In other words, beginning with the apostles, some of our teachers have failed us. However, the teachings manifestly have not. The

distinction is crucial.

Name something that makes for the good society and invariably it will be shown to have Catholic roots; at the very least, Catholic embellishments can be ascertained. Take the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution. It speaks to a vision of society where justice, domestic tranquility, the common defense of the people, their general welfare, and the blessings of liberty reign supreme.

Justice is one of the cardinal virtues, and no institution has a better record in tending to the needs of the dispossessed than the Catholic Church. Domestic tranquility is not dependent on the police, but on the ability of people to police themselves; here the cardinal virtue of temperance is key. The common defense must allow for just wars, and the proper exercise of another cardinal virtue, namely fortitude, is a must. The general welfare of the people is best served by adopting the teleology, or ultimate purpose, of Catholicism—a “focus on the other.” And without the most senior of all the cardinal virtues, prudence, the blessings of liberty, properly understood, can never be achieved.

From the founding of the first universities, to the triumph of the Scientific Revolution, the role of the Catholic Church has been seminal. Indeed, when it comes to understanding why Europe and North America have been home to almost every technological breakthrough in history, there is no better road map than the one Christianity affords. Moreover, the Church’s contributions to art, architecture and music have proven to be legendary.

The section on prudence begins by discussing the Catholic Church’s role in the makings of a free society. Freedom was not born in Greece—it was a byproduct of the Church’s opposition to temporal powers. By contrast, so unknown was freedom to the Chinese and Japanese that they did not have a word for it until the nineteenth century. To be sure, slavery

was a universal institution that was not condemned initially by any civilization or religion, though no entity did more to prudentially undermine it over time—through the promotion of natural law and natural rights—than the Catholic Church. Contemporary challenges to freedom, such as the false idea of abortion as a “right,” have similarly been resisted by the Church.

Justice for the strongest has never commanded the resources of the Catholic Church, but justice for the weakest most certainly has. In this regard, the role of nuns has been pivotal. Whether by founding schools, foster care homes, asylums, hospitals, hospices, and the like, or by personally tending to the psychological and emotional needs of men, women, and children, nuns, along with priests and the laity, have a track record that has no equal anywhere in the world. Reaching out to the diseased, and to the stranger, especially immigrants, has always been a staple of Catholic social teachings. That many Catholics have made good on those teachings is a story that should make all Catholics cheer.

It took tremendous fortitude for Pope Pius XII to fight the Nazis, and no leader in the world won the plaudits of Jews, during and after the war, than he did. It is important to set the record straight—there have been so many lies told—by recounting all the brave words and deeds that this great pope delivered. Similarly, we need to give Pope John Paul II all the praise he deserves in helping to destroy communism in the Soviet Union and throughout Eastern Europe. The historical evidence is clear: Pius XII and John Paul II have secured their place in the annals of freedom. Few world leaders, and no religious ones, did more to combat totalitarianism than they did.

Temperance is a virtue that self-governing people need to inculcate if moral anarchy is to be checked. Here again, the teachings of Catholicism have proved indispensable. By offering a realistic interpretation of liberty, one that is

grounded in our responsibilities to others, the Church offers a practical guide to the creation of a free society. The importance of marriage and the family, and a healthy appreciation of sexuality, beckons us all to give Catholic sexual ethics serious consideration.

These are just some of the subjects that bear examination. By moving from papal encyclicals to their faithful implementation, the reader learns how critically important the Church has been in world history. Priests, the religious, and the laity have bequeathed a stunning legacy, one that contrasts sharply with the failed record of secularism.

By comparing the Church's efforts to that of secular theorists and practitioners, we see ever more clearly why the Catholic voice must be heard in the third millennium. For example, had the secular idea of positivistic law, or law posited by government, prevailed after World War II, Nazis who obeyed orders by killing innocent Jews, Catholics, and others could not have been prosecuted. To do that, the Nuremberg courts had to turn to natural law, a concept that has been embraced by Catholicism for centuries. Similarly, government programs to help the poor have often created more poverty; when compared to Catholic programs, they look even more enfeebled.

The democracies, especially the U.S., fought fascism and communism, but without the efforts of the Catholic Church their ultimate demise would have taken longer to achieve. The secular approach to liberty, one that prizes individual autonomy, has delivered a lot less freedom to its adherents than those who have followed the Catholic approach. Indeed, it has spawned a condition closer to moral anarchy.

Hopefully this book may inspire us to turn to the great heritage of Catholicism as a platform for societal renewal. As indicated, the right recipe for the makings of the good society are right in front of us. There is no better time to show why Catholicism matters than right now.

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT WHY CATHOLICISM MATTERS

Bill Donohue's *Why Catholicism Matters* offers a fresh and compelling look at how the teachings of the Catholic Church continue to provide the best guide for a healthy, happy society. Using the four cardinal virtues – prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance – as a springboard, this insightful book delves into the issues facing the Church and the broader community, and shows how the Church is at the cutting edge of providing solutions to those issues. *Why Catholicism Matters* should eliminate the tired stereotype of the Church as being little more than a nagging nay-sayer. On the contrary, it reveals that the Church, and Dr. Donohue himself, give an emphatic YES! to all that is good, noble and uplifting in the human person.

His Eminence Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan

One can rarely finish a commentary by Dr. William Donohue and remain unfazed. In these days of sharp attacks against the Catholic Church and her teachings and values, Bill can be counted on to weigh in, full-blast, and get the attention which our position too often finds ignored in the secular media. In *Why Catholicism Matters*, readers of every persuasion will find much to inform, deliberate, and, invariably, take issue with. For that, and for his unapologetic commitment to our Faith, I am personally grateful to Dr. Bill Donohue.

His Eminence Edwin Cardinal O'Brien

Why Catholicism Matters is an important contribution at a critical time. As a preeminent voice defending the Church, Dr. Donohue eloquently explains the beauty and importance of Catholic faith. On the canvas of the cardinal virtues, he presents a true and beautiful portrait of the Church that will benefit all people of faith."

His Eminence Donald Cardinal Wuerl

TV audiences know Bill Donohue as a scrapper; a vigorous defender of the Catholic faith in his public role as leader of the Catholic League. But he's also a gifted scholar and, as *Why Catholicism Matters* demonstrates, a thoughtful, vivid and compelling writer. This is a must-read book for anyone who wants to understand the role Catholics need to play in recovering key Christian virtues and renewing American society."

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput

With religious freedom under assault from many directions, what better moment to be reminded of Catholicism's wisdom, glories, and multi-faceted contributions to the common good? And who better to remind us than that tireless defender of the Catholic faith, Bill Donohue? Donohue is a treasure and his book is a gem.

Mary Ann Glendon, Harvard Law Professor

Bill Donohue has spent much of his life defending the Catholic Church – in his latest work he joyously celebrates it. This tour of the Church's forgotten virtues and the many gifts She has given society reminds us all why the Faith remains the prime mover in our time. It also demonstrates why Donohue matters!

Raymond Arroyo, Host of EWTN's "The World Over"

**STATEMENT TO THE DULUTH
COMMUNITY: UNIV. OF MINNESOTA**

DULUTH HOLOCAUST EVENT

Bill Donohue

It has come to my attention that the University of Minnesota Duluth is hosting a series of events on the Holocaust; they are scheduled to run between April 12 and April 19. Because many of the events address the religious response to the Holocaust, it is of great interest to the Catholic League. For example, we have a wealth of information on our website about the Catholic response to Hitler. Moreover, we have raised funds for books and articles on the subject, and we even have a reader on Pope Pius XII that covers the Jewish reaction to his noble efforts.

It is our hope that these events will foster an intellectual dialogue that is both educational and productive of good interreligious relations. But I am less than confident that this will happen. Unfortunately, some of what I have learned is very disturbing. There appears to be an effort to cast the Catholic Church in the role of an enabler, if not worse, of Nazi efforts. This is not only historically inaccurate, it is scurrilous.

The first sign that the Catholic Church will be treated in a villainous role is the postcard that was mailed to the public flagging the events: on the front there is an invidious drawing featuring a Nazi soldier and a Catholic prelate standing on a Jewish man. The drawing is nothing new: it was created to demonstrate the Catholic Church's alleged support for Hitler that the 1933 Concordat supposedly represented.

The second disturbing sign is the April 15 performance of "The Deputy," a play based on the work of Rolf Hochhuth. It is described in the promotional material as a play "which indicts Pope Pius XII for his failure to take action or speak out against the Holocaust."

The third disturbing sign is the April 19 event, "Religious Institutions Responses to the Holocaust." One of the panelists will address what is called "the role of the Confessing Church and the Holocaust."

My response to these issues is taken from my own book, *Why Catholicism Matters*, which will be published on May 29 by Image, an imprint of Random House; one part of my new book deals with the role of the Catholic Church and the Holocaust, citing the primary research on this subject that has been done by other scholars.

First Complaint

Pope Pius XI signed the concordat to protect German Catholics from prosecution. Rabbi David Dalin, who has written a groundbreaking book, *The Myth of Hitler's Pope*, demonstrates that this agreement was a protective measure; it was not an endorsement of Nazism. Essentially, the agreement allowed the Church to continue to exist in Germany as long as it did not interfere with Hitler's regime. Not only was it violated by Hitler almost immediately, according to Zsolt Aradi, a Jewish writer who covered Pius XI, "the little freedom that the Concordat left for the clergy and hierarchy was widely used to save as many persecuted Jews as could be saved." In any event, the pope didn't have a whole lot of options to choose from at the time. It is important to note that the pope never gave even tacit support to Hitler's agenda.

This same pope issued an encyclical in 1937, *Mit Brennender Sorge*, that condemned the Nazi's violation of the concordat, and took aim at the Nazis' racial ideology (it was written by the man who would become his successor, Eugenio Pacelli—Pope Pius XII). An internal German memorandum dated March 23, 1937, called the encyclical "almost a call to do battle against the Reich government." Indeed, the encyclical was roundly attacked in the German newspapers, which wrote that it was the product of the "Jew God and His deputy in Rome." In fact, some media

outlets said the encyclical “calls on Catholics to rebel against the authority of the Reich,” a conclusion that was entirely warranted.

In short, to mail postcards smearing the Catholic Church, as if the concordat was a vote of support for Hitler, is inexcusable. It is also inexcusable to learn that the *Duluth News Tribune* featured the agit-prop drawing as an advertisement for the event.

Second Complaint

“The Deputy” previewed in Berlin and London in 1963 before coming to New York City in 1964. Prior to that time, the overwhelming consensus in the Jewish community was that Pope Pius XII was a hero. To wit: the pope is credited by former Israeli diplomat Pinchas Lapide of saving approximately 860,000 Jewish lives, far more than any other leader in the world, secular or religious. Indeed, it was proposed in the 1940s that 800,000 trees be planted as a testimony of the pope’s contribution; they were planted in Negev, in southeast Jerusalem. And when Pope Pius XII died in 1958, Leonard Bernstein of the New York Philharmonic stopped his orchestra for a moment of silence. Among the Jewish organizations that praised the pope were the following: the Anti-Defamation League, the Synagogue Council of America, the Rabbinical Council of America, the New York Board of Rabbis, the America Jewish Committee, the World Jewish Congress, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the National Council of Jewish Women.

So what new evidence turned up between 1958 and 1963 to indict the pope as an enabler of Hitler? None. Hochhuth, well known in radical circles at the time, made this charge in his play absent any historical evidence. Recent scholarship, particularly the work of Professor Ronald Rychlak, shows that while Hochhuth operated alone, he was an “unknowing dupe” of the KGB. How do we know? Because of the 2007 testimony of Ion

Mihai Pacepa. He maintains that Nikita Khrushchev approved a plan to discredit Pope Pius XII. Pacepa was in a position to know; he was a former Romanian intelligence chief and the highest-ranking official ever to defect from the Soviet Bloc.

No serious historian today views "The Deputy" as being anything other than propaganda. In fact, not a single historian has ever remarked on the factual accuracy of this play. But we do know that it nonetheless sparked a rash of anti-Pius books, most of which were written by ex-priests and ex-seminarians whose antipathy of the Church—on matters wholly unrelated to the Holocaust—is palpable. I would be remiss if I did not note that the Catholic League offered to pay for Professor Rychlak to go to Germany a few years ago to interview Hochhuth. Hochhuth declined.

Third Complaint

It is difficult to understand how the "Confessing Church" position can be maintained. What exactly is it that the Church is allegedly confessing? *(The term "Confessing Church" in German history refers to a Protestant breakaway movement that opposed the Nazis.) We know this much: throughout the Holocaust, the *New York Times* ran a grand total of nine editorials critical of Hitler. Two of them were written to praise Pope Pius XII! To be specific, on Christmas Day 1941, the *Times* said, "The voice of Pius XII is a lonely voice in the silence and darkness enveloping Europe this Christmas." On Christmas Day 1942, the *Times* said of the pope, "This Christmas more than ever he is a lonely voice crying out of the silence of a continent." So much for the canard that the pope was "silent."

It must be said, too, that many of those who elected to remain silent did so with the best of motives. For example, when plans were made for an anti-Hitler parade in New York City on May 10, 1933, the American Jewish Committee and B'nai B'rith put out a joint statement condemning "public agitation in the

form of mass demonstrations.” They feared such actions would only “inflame” matters. In 1935, after the Nuremberg race laws were enacted, American Jews, led by Rabbi Stephen Wise of the American Jewish Congress, worked against legislation that would have made it easier for Jews to emigrate to the United States. Following Kristallnacht, the “Night of the Broken Glass” (Hitler’s storm troopers went on a rampage killing Jews), several Jewish organizations came together saying “there should be no parades, no demonstrations, or protests by Jews.” Again, they feared an even more vengeful Nazi response.

The author who made the accusation that Pius XII was “Hitler’s pope,” John Cornwell, has since retracted his charge. Do the panelists at these events know about this? Will it be mentioned? Will it also be mentioned that Hitler planned to kidnap the pope? Will the students learn that more Jews were saved in Italy—where the pope was actually in a position to affect outcomes—than in other any European nation? (Throughout Europe 65 percent of Jews were exterminated, but in Italy 85 percent of Jews were saved.) Will they learn that far more Jews were saved in Catholic countries than in Protestant ones?

“Only the Church stood squarely across the path of Hitler’s campaign for suppressing the truth.” Those were the words of Albert Einstein. Golda Meir offered similar praise. At the end of the war, the World Jewish Congress was so appreciative of the pope’s efforts to save Jews that it gave 20 million lire to the Vatican. And after the war, the Chief Rabbi of Rome, Israele Anton Zolli, formally expressed the gratitude of Roman Jews “for all the moral and material aid the Vatican gave them during the Nazi occupation.” In 1945, Zolli was received into the Catholic Church and asked Pius XII to be his godfather; he chose the pope’s first name, Eugenio, to be his baptismal name.

It is for these reasons, and many more like them, that I am disturbed to read how patently unfair the campus events on the Holocaust appear to be. In the interest of intellectual

honesty, and goodwill between Catholics and Jews, I implore those in the Duluth community to weigh what I have said and give it a fair hearing. No matter what side anyone comes down on, the truth should never become hostage to political propaganda.

PSYCHOLOGISTS ADDRESS SEXUAL ABUSE

William O'Donohue, Ph.D., Olga Cirlugea, B.A., Lorraine Benuto, Ph.D.

We are clinical psychologists (the second author is a graduate student in a doctoral training program) at the University of Nevada, Reno who have been treating sexual abuse victims (the first author for over 30 years). We have treated adults who were abused by priests when they were children; we have also been involved in cases where adults alleged that they were abused by priests, but where the priests deny any wrongdoing. Collectively, we have treated over 2,000 children who have been sexually abused, and also have worked on cases where children have falsely accused others of sexual abuse. As authors, we have published books and peer reviewed journal articles on this subject.

The facts are sometimes difficult to discern: these can be partially shrouded in the mists of history; people offer differing accounts; there are certainly motivations to lie or distort; there are also motivations to falsely accuse—individuals can gain significant sums of money in settlements; individuals may also can have a political agenda against the church; or individuals may even deny that they

have abused when they actually have been, to avoid their feelings of shame or embarrassment—or even to protect their abuser. The reporting of abuse and deciding what actually has occurred is no simple matter.

When it comes to priests, we know from an analysis of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice study that a little less than half of the priests were found to be subject to unsubstantiated allegations. An unsubstantiated allegation was defined as “an allegation that was proven to be untruthful and fabricated” as a result of a criminal investigation. This rate of false accusations is much higher than found in the general population. Additionally, 23% of the priests who were accused of abuse were identified as suffering from behavioral or psychological problems ranging from alcohol and substance abuse to depression and a past history of coercive sex, although most never received treatment for these problems.

More than half of the priests had only one allegation brought against them. Also, it is important to note that a few priests accounted for a disproportionate number of victims: 3.5% of priests accounted for 26% of victims. Even though an investigation was conducted almost every time a report was filed, only 217 or 5.4% of priests were charged with a crime by a district attorney. Of the 217 priests that had criminal charges brought against them, a substantial majority (64%) were convicted; but still a significant number were not found guilty. Most received probation (88%) and/or a prison sentence (73%), while 44% went to jail and 18% were fined.

The problem of the sexual abuse of minors is a national problem, involving the clergy of all religions, as well as public school teachers, coaches, et al. For example, 10% of Protestant clergy were involved in sexual misconduct, 2-3% of which committed sexual abuse. In 2007 Jehovah's Witnesses settled 9 lawsuits with victims alleging that the church's policies protected child sexual abusers. The Church Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints reported 3-4 yearly lawsuits over

the course of the last 10 years, which translates to allegations in .4-.5% Mormon wards. The Jewish community has founded two sexual abuse survivors' organizations, Survivors for Justice and Awareness Center, the latter of which provides "the names of 107 rabbis accused of sexual misconduct and 279 other trusted officials (for example, parents and counselors), as well as 85 unnamed abusers."

Did abuse occur simply because somebody said it happened? The clear and simple answer to this question, is "No." Although we do not know the exact percentage of false reports, it is our clinical experience and the consensus in the field that the majority of children reporting that they have been abused are telling the truth. It is clear that many children have been abused by adults, and this is morally reprehensible, a serious crime and effective measures need to be put into place to prevent this in the future. However, the matter is complex. Our field, for example, does not have clear statistics regarding the percentage of adults who allege that they have been abused as children and who are in fact telling the truth. It needs to be said that adults have unique pathways to false reporting (for example, they can be motivated by money or may be suffering from delusions).

What causes false reporting? Lies. Children and adolescents do not always tell the truth. In fact while we don't know exactly how often they lie about being sexually abused, research shows that those numbers are above zero. Furthermore, because children at times recant (meaning that they first state that they were abused and then later state they were not), we know that children sometimes claim that they have previously lied or at least were mistaken. A variety of factors can influence the likelihood of children making false allegations. For example, children may have been coached by a parent involved in a bitter custody battle to make false statements against the other parent, or may have had a personal vendetta against the alleged perpetrator. It's important to note that children

can also lie by claiming that the abuse did not occur when in reality it did. This is more likely to happen if the child was threatened or coerced by the perpetrator.

Beyond lying, false memories can also be formed. In fact, well over 100 scientific research studies have shown that both children and adults can and do form false memories. This research was spurred by the infamous McMartin Day Care case in the 1980s Manhattan Beach, California in which over 360 children alleged that they were abused, often in bizarre ways (for example, placed in planes and forced to watch babies being fed to sharks). In what was then the longest and most expensive criminal trial in California history, all parties were found not guilty. Dr. Michael Maloney examined the interviewing of the children and found that the interviewer used improper methods to question the children and that these were extremely suggestive, biased, and which lead to false memories on the part of the children. This spurred a number of academic research studies which attempted to understand what causes and how easy it is to form a false memory.

For example, in one study, young children were told that a visitor, Sam Stone, was clumsy and always broke thing that were not his. When "Sam" came to visit the children he did not touch or break anything. The next day the children saw a soiled stuffed bear and a torn book. Even though no child had seen Sam do anything, when asked a quarter of the children (25%) hinted that he might have had a part in the problem. Even though the children had not seen Sam do anything, their prior experience of being told that he was clumsy mixed in with their actual experience of observing him and they concluded that he might have had a part in the torn book and soiled bear.

In addition, over the next ten weeks the children were asked misleading questions/statements by the first interviewer such as, "I wonder if Same Stone got the teddy bear dirty on purpose or by accident?" On the tenth week, a second

(seemingly independent) interviewer asked what had happened to the toys. The majority of children (72%) accused Sam of having ruined the toys, and nearly half of the children (45%) reported that they remembered seeing Sam do it. Thus the children's new experiences (being interviewed and having it suggested to them that Sam Stone dirtied the teddy bear) are mixed into the memory of the past event (when Sam Stone came to visit).

Adults may also form false memories. In fact, research has demonstrated time and time again that eyewitnesses often confuse misleading post-event information with what they have witnessed, thus developing false memories. Elizabeth Loftus of the University of California, Irvine has consistently found that about 25% of adults are so suggestible that fairly simple suggestions result in significant false memories of events that in fact did not occur when they were children (e.g., that they were lost in a mall).

False memories are not identical to repressed memories. A repressed memory is a memory of some major event that while initially stored in memory is allegedly completely erased, often for decades; it then suddenly emerges often after some triggering event. Historically there has been much debate regarding the existence of repressed memories. However, there is a large amount of scientific evidence that clearly shows that repressed memories simply do not exist. Furthermore research studies involving traumatic events that have been verified indicate that people do not forget their trauma. Indeed, traumatic events are actually quite memorable.

Despite the scientific evidence, the legal system has used repressed memories to convict people, including priests, on charges of child sexual abuse. For example, the Massachusetts Supreme Court affirmed the conviction of Paul Shanley (a defrocked priest convicted of sexually abusing a child who claimed that for many years he repressed his memory of being molested) despite an amicus brief signed by almost 100

distinguished psychologists and psychiatrists essentially categorizing the repressed memory phenomenon as junk science.

It should be clear that children who have been abused by priests represent a terrible betrayal of trust, a serious injury to these children, and a criminal as well as a moral failing. However, an examination of the best studies suggest that the rate of priestly sexual abuse is about the same rate found in the general population. Furthermore, it is not clear that Catholic priests abuse children at a higher rate than other clergy. Certainly, beliefs that “most priests abuse” or that priests are more risk to children than other individuals, are not justified. Second, the pattern of abuse is rather unique: individuals who are victimized by priests are more likely to be adolescents and males. Third, there is evidence that priests have a higher rate of false and unfounded allegations than adults in the general population: less than half of the allegations were found to be substantiated and even with those that were criminally prosecuted a large number—nearly a third—were found not guilty. All of this raises important questions about the phenomenon of false allegations.

We conclude by warning against a rush to judgment. Concern for past victims and intelligent prevention efforts to reduce the rate of abuse to zero, certainly must be a priority. But it should also be a priority to make sure that prejudices against priests do not come into play to demonize innocent individuals.

A longer version of this article, complete with citations and a bibliography, is available on our website under “Papers, Essays and Research.”

Shoddy Scholarship in the Study of Pope Pius XII

Ronald J. Rychlak

In the December 2011 issue of *Commentary* magazine, Kevin Madigan, the Winn Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Harvard Divinity School, put forth the false charge that the Vatican under Pope Pius XII intentionally helped Nazi war criminals escape justice and make their way to South America after World War II. He based his article on Gerald Steinacher's *Nazis on the Run: How Hitler's Henchmen Fled Justice* and David Cymet's *History vs. Apologetics: The Holocaust, the Third Reich, and the Catholic Church*. The combination of sloppy work and over-the-top charges provides a textbook example of how a verifiably false account can be reported as fact in the mainstream media.

At the heart of the matter are two letters, now available on the Catholic League's webpage. Bishop Alois Hudal wrote the first letter on May 5, 1949, to Monsignor Giovanni Battista Montini (the future Pope Paul VI) who was then working in the Vatican Secretary of State's office. In that letter, Hudal suggests a pardon for political prisoners who have committed no crimes. Montini's reply, dated May 12, says that the Vatican's Secretary of State was already working with several governments toward such an end.

Steinacher incorrectly dated Hudal's letter to April 5, 1949. More seriously, in quoting the letter, he said that Hudal wanted amnesty for *German soldiers*, and elsewhere on the same page he said that Hudal sought pardon for *war criminals*. Actually, Hudal expressed sympathy for *political prisoners* who had already spent four years in prison, but he never mentioned nationalities, war criminals, or soldiers.

Steinacher also badly distorted Montini's reply. He wrote: "Montini replied that the Holy See would welcome an 'extensive amnesty,' but that the German clergy had a different attitude." In fact, nowhere in Montini's letter was there any mention of the pope, the German clergy, or a difference in their attitudes.

Madigan, who did no original research and did not read Steinacher very carefully, made things even worse. He confounded Steinacher's points and wrote: Steinacher "reports that the pope favored an 'extensive amnesty' for war criminals." That is not what Steinacher wrote, and nothing could be further from the truth.

In August 1944, Pius XII received Winston Churchill in an audience at which the pontiff expressed his understanding of the justice in punishing war criminals. In that year's Christmas message, in a section entitled "War Criminals," Pius wrote that no one "will wish to disarm justice" when it comes to punishing "those who have taken advantage of the war to commit real and proved crimes against the law common to all peoples." He also told a Swiss reporter: "Not only do we approve of the [Nuremburg] trial, but we desire that the guilty be punished as quickly as possible, and without exception." Pius even provided evidence to use against Nazi defendants and assigned a Jesuit to assist the prosecution team.

It has long been known that Hudal and a Croatian priest named Krunoslav Draganović helped some former Nazis escape from Europe. Madigan, however, says that they were part of "a sort of papal mercy program for National Socialists and Fascists." That is far from the truth.

In his memoir, Hudal explained that the assistance he gave to those fleeing justice was done without the pope's knowledge. He had never agreed with the Vatican's hostility toward the Nazis. His book, *The Foundations of National Socialism*, was

critical of the hard line that Vatican diplomats took with the Germans. (He once sarcastically asked whether the Church was being directed by the Allies.) In 1949, when Hudal was criticized in the press, he asked the Vatican to defend him. The reply from Montini was: "there is no defense for a Nazi bishop." That same year, Hudal scheduled a papal audience for a group of Austrian pilgrims. Pius, however, refused to meet with the group as long as Hudal accompanied them. In 1952, Pius demanded that Hudal be removed from his position at Santa Maria dell'Anima, the German national church and college in Rome.

Madigan's alleged "papal mercy program" was the Pontifical Aid Commission (PAC). This organization coordinated efforts to assist victims of war and helped return displaced persons to their homes. As the PAC helped hundreds of thousands of legitimate refugees start life anew, some Nazi war criminals (Madigan says hundreds) took advantage of it to flee justice. Madigan would have us believe that the Church knowingly sent Nazi officials to safety. It is, however, inconceivable that the Nazis revealed their background to reputable Church officials. It is even less likely that any such information would have reached the Vatican. The logistics of the massive relocation programs simply made it impossible to investigate most individuals who sought help.

Monsignor Karl Bayer, who was liaison chaplain responsible for prisoners of war in the north of Italy, explained:

"Well, of course we asked questions.... But at the same time, we hadn't an earthly chance of checking on the answers. In Rome, at that time, every kind of paper and information could be bought. If a man wanted to tell us he was born in Viareggio – no matter if he was really born in Berlin and couldn't speak a word of Italian – he only had to go down into the street and he'd find dozens of Italians willing to swear on a stack of Bibles that they knew he was born in Viareggio – for a hundred lire."

The Church was interested in ending suffering. Some Nazis took advantage of these efforts to help dislocated people. So did some Soviet spies. Would Madigan argue that the Vatican wanted to help them? There is no indication that the Holy See intentionally tried to help Nazis escape justice.

Madigan spreads another false charge from Cymet's book. Often when Jewish parents were deported, they left their children behind with Christian families. The children were still at risk of being uncovered and deported. The surest way to protect them was by indoctrinating them in Christianity. Sometimes over-zealous rescuers would have the children baptized. According to Madigan, Pius refused to let any such child be returned to their Jewish parents. That is nonsense.

In 2004, there was a bit of a dust-up when a document was found that purportedly contained Pope Pius XII's directives that: "Children who have been baptized must not be entrusted to institutions that cannot ensure their Christian education." It also said that children whose families survived the Holocaust should be returned, "as long as they had not been baptized."

It was soon discovered that this controversial document was an incorrect summary of a 1946 letter from the Vatican to the papal nuncio in France. The letter actually said that if institutions (*not families*) wanted to take those children who had been entrusted to the Church, each case had to be examined individually. The Church would breach its obligation to the parents if it turned the children over to the wrong institution. There were very few facilities fit for children in Palestine or war-torn Europe, and the pope was concerned for their welfare.

These instructions related solely to *institutions* wanting to relocate orphaned children after the war. It did not relate to children being sought by families. The letter said: "things would be different if the children were requested by their

relatives." Madigan should have done his homework before spreading these malicious charges.

Commentary magazine printed a letter in which I pointed out several of Madigan's errors, but as is traditional, Madigan was given the last word. In addition to back-tracks and denials, he made a few statements that call for a response. First of all, this is but the most recent in a string of articles that Madigan has written over the past decade highly critical of Pope Pius XII, the Catholic Church, and those who disagree with him. He can't keep falling back on the argument that he is only repeating charges made by others.

Madigan complained that I referred to Montini as "one of the pope's top assistants," not as Secretary of State. I did so because Montini worked in the Secretary of State's office, but he never held that office or title.

Madigan references a 1947 declassified report that suggested that a Croatian war criminal (Ante Pavelic) was being protected due to his contacts with the Vatican. The report says: "Pavelic's contacts are so high and his present position so compromising to the Vatican, that any extradition...would deal a staggering blow to the Roman Catholic Church." Madigan snidely adds that the authors of that report "knew better than Mr. Rychlak." I have to disagree.

I have written several articles and a book chapter about the post-war situation in Croatia. In fact, the chapter was translated and published in Croatia in 2008. I have studied the topic thoroughly, and I know that Pavelic was offended by how *badly* he was treated by Pope Pius XII and Croatian Cardinal Aloysius Stepinac.

In 1947, when the intelligence report was written, the Communist government in Croatia (Yugoslavia) was conducting show trials of Catholic officials (including Stepinac) for collaborating with the Nazis. I had the advantage of writing

after Communism fell and the new Croatian parliament apologized for those false charges and the bad information that was spread. Agents writing in 1947 Italy had little reason to know that this information was the creation of Soviet disinformation agents. Madigan, however, wrote after the fall of Communism. He could have looked up this history and educated his readers. Instead, he spread false information.

On the last page of Madigan's article he likened those who defend Pope Pius XII (which would include Pope John Paul II and a slew of reputable historians) to Holocaust deniers. In his reply to my letter, he said that it was not he but Cymet who made this charge. While Cymet did make it, Madigan not only quoted and discussed it at length, he said that Cymet had grounds for making it. This is but one of several issues on which Madigan tried to have it both ways, but careful readers will not let him get away with that.

Finally, Madigan dismisses the post-war Jewish praise for Pius and says it was given to garner good will for the state of Israel. In other words, Jews lied for political reasons. This is an insult not only to Catholics, but to the Jewish leaders who worked so hard to rebuild out of devastation. They were wounded; they had lost most everything, but they did not lose their integrity. They were not lying when they thanked the Church and praised Pope Pius XII. They knew the truth. Madigan's claims to the contrary are shameful.

Ronald J. Rychlak is a professor of law at the University of Mississippi. He also serves on the Advisory Board of the Catholic League. His latest book is Hitler, the War, and the Pope (revised and expanded, 2010).

SNAP UNRAVELS

At the end of 2011, a Missouri judge ordered David Clohessy, the president of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP), to be deposed regarding his role in cases of priestly sexual abuse. Clohessy fought the order vigorously, but lost. On January 2, 2012, he was deposed; the deposition [it is available on our website] was made public only recently. [NOTE: all pages cited are taken from the deposition.]

Clohessy proved to be uncooperative, refusing to comply with a request for internal documents; he only released a small portion of them. On the stand, he was similarly recalcitrant, refusing to answer many questions. He took refuge in a Missouri law which protects the confidentiality of rape crisis centers. But there are serious reasons to doubt whether SNAP meets the test of a rape crisis center.

Clohessy was asked point blank, "Did you identify yourself as a rape crisis center?" His reply, "I don't know." [p. 87.] At another point, he admitted, "I don't know under the Missouri statutes exactly what constitutes a rape crisis center." [p. 112.] The lawyers for an accused priest were not impressed. From their questions, and from subsequent statements they've made, it is clear that they do not believe that SNAP qualifies as a rape crisis center. They have plenty of reasons for reaching this conclusion.

When asked what training he has as a rape crisis counselor, Clohessy said, "You know, I've done—I've provided support to victims of sexual assault for 20—roughly 23 or 24 years. I do not have a—no." He was then asked, "Do you have any formal education or training with regard to rape crisis counseling?" He answered, "I do not." [p. 19.]

Clohessy has a bachelor's degree in philosophy and political

science. He is not a licensed counselor, yet counseling alleged victims of sexual abuse is what he does for a living. When asked, "Did you have any classes at all in counseling sexual abuse victims?" He answered, "Any formal classes?" The attorney affirmed his question, answering, "Yes." To which Clohessy replied, "No, sir." [p. 191.]

The defense attorneys wanted to know if anyone at SNAP is licensed to counsel abuse victims. Clohessy was asked, "Does SNAP have any licensed counselors in the State of Missouri?" He said, "We are a—as I said at the beginning, we're a self-help group. We are not—we don't hold ourselves out to be formal licensed counselors." [pp. 19-20.]

Clohessy then maintained that SNAP has support groups that "meet on a regular basis and offer support and comfort and consolation and guidance" to alleged victims. The lawyers picked up on this by asking, "Are there any licensed social workers or counselors on the staff at any of those meetings in the state of Missouri?" Clohessy was able to mention the founder of SNAP, Barbara Blaine, who is "a licensed—as I said, she has a Master's degree in social work." The attorneys were curious. "Is Barbara Blaine licensed as a counselor or social worker in the State of Missouri or the State of Illinois?" Clohessy answered, "I don't know." [p. 20.]

(There is a difference between someone who holds a Master's in Social Work and someone with a Master's in Counseling. It is expected that if someone wants to practice independently, he obtains licensure. Typically, this means at least two years of clinical work in a supervised setting. *No one at SNAP is a licensed counselor.*)

The attorneys for the defense sought to find out where the counseling takes place. Clohessy said, "We meet people wherever they want to meet, in Starbucks, at, you know—wherever people feel comfortable, that's where we meet." [p. 22.] When they meet at Starbucks for their "counseling"

sessions, they mostly just talk. "You know, the overwhelming bulk of our work is talking to, listening to, supporting sex abuse victims," he admitted. [p. 23.]

Of interest to the defense attorneys was the amount of money SNAP spends on "counseling." "How much annually does SNAP spend for individuals in individual therapy sessions?" Clohessy offered a straight-forward answer: "I have no idea." [p. 26.] He then dug himself in deeper. He was asked how much money has been paid "to an individual counselor for an individual victim." Explicitly, "out of that \$3 million that's in the tax return," how much was spent on individual counselors? Clohessy confessed, "Don't know." [p. 30.] Regarding the \$3 million in SNAP's bank account, he was asked, "Where is that money kept?" He wasn't sure. "I'm assuming it's in Chicago." [p. 29.]

Clohessy explained what he does for a living. He says SNAP has a business address in Chicago, but that he doesn't know the zip code. Having no office—he works out of his home in the St. Louis area—he fields phone calls. [p. 9.] "Individuals call me and they share their pain with me." So what does he do about it? "I console them and I may be on the phone with them for an hour." He said he doesn't charge them a fee for his consolation over the phone. [p. 26].

Declaring one's home to be a place of business raises legal questions. Clohessy was asked whether "at your house do you have an occupational license or a business license to do business out of your house." He simply said, "No." [p. 98.]

Clohessy refused to disclose his source of funding. When asked, "You won't tell us the sources of your funding; isn't that correct?", he said, "That's correct." [p. 85.] Now it is well known that Church-suing lawyers have generously given to SNAP over the years [see my 2011 report, [*SNAP EXPOSED: Unmasking the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests*](#); it is available on our website].

When asked specifically about monies SNAP receives from lawyers, once again Clohessy refused to answer. What really set him off was the question, "Does SNAP have any agreements with attorneys regarding referral of victims to those attorneys?" Clohessy snapped, "Can I say I'm offended at the question?" [p. 32.]

Given the type of work SNAP does, it is mandated by law to give a portion of its funds to charity. "As a director of SNAP," Clohessy was asked, "do you understand that SNAP is required by federal law to contribute so much of their assets every year for charitable purposes." His reply, "I'm not aware of that." [p. 82.]

So what does SNAP do with its money? In 2007, it spent a total of \$593 for "survivor support." [pp. 102-03.] The following year it spent \$92,000 on travel. [p. 107.]

SNAP says it pursues priests who are "credibly accused." It may interest bishops and priests what Clohessy means by this. "How would you define the word 'credibly accused?'" (This is important because many accused priests have been railroaded by those who have made false claims.) Clohessy replied, "You know, there's all kinds of criteria." All kinds of criteria? He continued by saying sometimes there are multiple accusers, but at no time did he say what the criteria were. [p. 110.]

Anyone who has followed SNAP is aware how often it holds a press conference condemning a diocese *before a lawsuit is filed*. By working with its attorneys, and some reporters, SNAP is able to get on the evening news making the diocese look bad (lawyers for the diocese are usually the last ones to receive the lawsuits). So it was not surprising that the defense lawyers would ask Clohessy about this tactic.

For example, in one case, where a lawsuit had a file stamp of October 20, 2011, the time was recorded as 2:44 p.m. When asked how SNAP could have had this information before it was

filed in court, Clohessy refused to answer. [pp. 52-53.] In another case, a lawsuit had a file stamp of November 8, 2011 at 1:28 p.m., yet Clohessy was able to post information about this before it was filed with the court. When asked to explain himself, he refused. [pp. 62-63.]

Apparently, Clohessy knows next to nothing about his staff. When asked about his staff, he mentioned the founder, Barbara Blaine. He also said, "We have an administrative person who is new," but he could only remember the person's first name. He admitted that they also had a fundraising person but "I apologize, I don't know the spelling of her last name." [pp. 13-14.] Later, he was asked, "Who is in charge of SNAP's website? Is there a specific company or is it done in-house?" Clohessy was blunt: "I don't know." [pp.165-66.]

Finally, Clohessy admitted that he has lied about some of his statements to the press. "Has SNAP to your knowledge ever issued a press release that contained false information?" He didn't blink: "Sure." [p. 39.] Did he lie about priests he knew to be innocent, or at least thought may have been innocent? We don't know.

So is David Clohessy a sincere man driven by the pursuit of justice? Or is he a con artist driven by revenge? It may very well be that the former description aptly explains how he started, while the latter describes what he has become.

"OBAMACARE" AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: COLLISION COURSE

LOOMS

Kenneth D. Whitehead

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, popularly known as “Obamacare,” requires individuals to purchase medical insurance and requires most employers to provide such insurance for their employees. Among other things required by the Act, when it is fully implemented, this insurance must henceforth include preventive care for women on a mandatory basis, and without the deductibles, co-payments, or co-insurance hitherto common in preventive care.

In order to determine what preventive services for women should now be mandatorily included in new insurance policies being issued, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) asked the Institute of Medicine (IOM) at the National Academy of Sciences for its recommendations. The IOM provided a list of recommended preventive services which, on August 1, 2011, HHS issued as a new federal “Rule.” This Rule is supposed to come into effect on August 1, 2012, and henceforth governing what preventive services for women will have to be covered in all “private” insurance policies.

What the Institute of Medicine recommended, and what the Department of Health and Human Services is now mandating, was no big surprise. It was probably a foregone conclusion that such measures as breast-feeding support and testing for various conditions would be included. What might cause mild surprise is that annual screening for “domestic violence” is included as “preventive medical care.” By itself this signals that a new and novel understanding of what “preventive medical care” consists of is involved here.

This proves to be the case concerning the major preventive medical services for women henceforth to be mandatorily provided under Obamacare. These services include surgical

sterilizations and all methods of contraception approved by the FDA, along with “education and counseling” promoting all these same methods and procedures among “all women of reproductive capacity.” In other words, what these mandatory preventive medical services obviously aim to “prevent” is not some disease or pathology. Rather, they aim to prevent–pregnancy and birth!

In a statement opposing the new HHS Rule immediately issued by Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, Chairman of the Committee on Pro-life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the Texas prelate pointed out that “pregnancy is not a disease and fertility is not a pathological condition to be suppressed by any means technically possible.” Cardinal DiNardo noted further how the original IOM report itself claimed that surgical abortions too should be mandatory if this weren’t forbidden by current law.

A wide sector of American society today, sadly including most of the medical profession, has in fact already acquiesced in considering abortion to be a legitimate part of healthcare; this has been the case ever since this lethal procedure was legalized by the U.S. Supreme Court in its notorious *Roe v. Wade* decision back in 1973. That HHS today feels able to issue its latest Rule—without regard to the morality of what is being mandated—is just one more of the bitter fruits of America’s long acquiescence in the killing of the innocent unborn by abortion. If this is “healthcare,” *anything* can be considered healthcare.

Among the FDA-approved methods of birth control now being mandated by HHS are “morning after”-type, abortion-inducing agents such as Plan B and Ella. These prescription drugs do not always just prevent conception; at least some of the time, they terminate a pregnancy already begun by preventing an embryo from implanting in the mother’s uterine wall. In other words, they are (or can be) methods of early abortion.

These methods with abortifacient properties nevertheless continue to be called “contraception,” or “emergency contraception.” This is one of the—dishonest and disgraceful—ways in which the medical profession, the academy, scientists generally, and the media all collude in pretending that only the prevention of conception, and not termination of an existing pregnancy, is all that is involved. It is well-known how these methods operate; it is freely admitted by their manufacturers; but it is thought that fraudulently continuing to call them “contraception” lessens the possible opposition to them.

What it means here, however, is that President Obama’s promise that abortion would not be part of Obamacare the Act is inoperative on these grounds alone, not to speak of the other ways in which abortion is only too likely to come in under the Act. In promulgating the new HHS Rule, HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius—a pro-abortion Catholic ex-governor whose bishop has requested that she not present herself for Holy Communion—simply noted matter-of-factly that “since birth control is the most common drug prescribed for women ages 18 to 44 , insurance plans should cover it. Not doing it would be like not covering flu shots.”

Sebelius cannot be ignorant of the fact that many of the methods and practices that as the authorized agent of the Obama Administration she is now mandating for all Americans are condemned as immoral by the teaching authority of the Catholic Church. Catholics with properly formed consciences *cannot* use or approve of surgical sterilization or the FDA-approved methods of birth control (and not just the abortifacient or abortion-inducing methods). Nor can they approve of the “education and counseling” of all women of reproductive age in these same methods.

In what perhaps amounts to at least a dim and partial recognition of this fact, the new HHS Rule allows an exception for some “religious employers” (though not for all Catholic

Americans who will be obliged under Obamacare to purchase insurance policies covering these methods condemned by the Church). Moreover, the exception for religious employees is very narrowly defined. It includes only those employers that 1) have the inculcation of religious values as their purpose; that 2) primarily employ and 3) primarily serve only those who share their religious tenets; and also 4) are legally non-profit organizations.

While an individual Catholic parish might possibly qualify for this exception, excluded almost automatically would be Catholic hospitals, Catholic schools and colleges, and even Catholic soup kitchens or homeless shelters, none of which exclusively employ or serve only those who profess the Catholic faith. Enforcing this Rule would exclude the Church from vast areas where she currently serves society and the common good. As it currently reads, the Rule thus amounts to an unprecedented attack on and curtailment of the religious freedom of Catholics.

More than that, it requires all Catholics (because it requires all Americans), if they haven't done so already, to purchase insurance policies which will now *mandate* methods and procedures contrary to the tenets of the Catholic faith. Catholics will be obliged under penalty of law to pay for what their Church plainly teaches is immoral. This is nothing else but tyranny, a gross violation of religious liberty.

One strains to try to understand how the Obama Administration could possibly imagine that it can successfully mandate for all Americans compliance with a Rule that, consciously and deliberately, goes against and contradicts well-known and firm moral teachings of America's largest religious body. Perhaps Sebelius calculates that many Catholics, like herself, no longer follow the Church's moral teaching, and hence can safely be depended upon to comply.

It is true that some states already mandate coverage of

contraception and other anti-natalist methods in insurance policies, but none of these state laws seem to be as comprehensive as what is now being mandated under Obamacare. Moreover, the exceptions generally allowed under these state laws appear to be much broader than what is included in the new HHS Rule. Up to now, there have been some skirmishes over these laws, but there has not yet been a head-on social collision between the increasingly successful anti-natalists and those citizens, many of them Catholics, who cannot in conscience comply with these new practices and requirements.

However, the Obama Administration now seems headed toward just such a collision. Under the new HHS Rule, virtually everybody is now going to be involved, either through the insurance policies they will now be forced to buy, and/or through their taxes, in paying for sterilizations and contraceptives (including the abortion-inducing methods still dishonestly called contraceptives).

Will Catholics go along with this? Some perhaps will, since the real issues do not always get clearly presented and brought out; consciences get blunted; and many people really don't want to "fight."

Nevertheless, many knowledgeable Catholics and others will *not* be able to go along with what is now being contemplated and mandated under Obamacare. Among other things being done here is the fact that the Obama Administration is setting up a new source of *permanent social conflict* in American life. There still are people who *cannot* in conscience go along with what is being put in place here; they will *have* to resist and to oppose the new mandate in whatever ways prove feasible. Nor should it be imagined that their numbers will necessarily be miniscule, given the moral outrage that the Obama Administration is perpetrating with its new Rule.

Moreover, there is still the Church herself. Does the Obama Administration really think the Catholic Church doesn't count?

It would seem so. At any rate, Sebelius and her HHS colleagues are proceeding as if there were no Catholic Church out there. They will not be the first to fail to understand the Church and take her into account.

The Catholic Church, of course, is *not* a social action organization; the Catholic bishops are *not* politicians but pastors. Nevertheless, the Church *cannot* just let pass a rule such as this new HHS Rule mandating for all Americans methods and practices which the Church teaches are gravely immoral. Church leaders have already begun to react with vigor to this Rule and other Obama Administration measures such as those aiming to promote so-called same-sex "marriage." In October, 2011, the bishops' Conference established a new Religious Liberty Committee headed by Bishop William Lori of Bridgeport, Connecticut.

In the current era of increasing pro-life legislative victories around the country, of the defunding of Planned Parenthood in some places, of lawsuits challenging Obamacare, etc., the new HHS Rule may even prove to be short-lived, as a result of either Congressional or court action. If it does go into effect, however, one thing is certain: the Catholic Church will not remain passive. The Church *does count*!

Kenneth D. Whitehead is a member of the Board of Directors of the Catholic League.

TAKING AIM AT BISHOP FINN

Bill Donohue

This ad, written by Bill Donohue, was rejected by the Kansas City Star, without explanation. The close relationship between

the newspaper and SNAP is disturbing, but to turn down \$25,000 is still surprising. The Star can impose a gag rule on us, but it cannot control us. Indeed, this ad was printed in the Northeast News, a weekly suburban newspaper. We intend to let everyone in Kansas City, Missouri know about this matter.

There is nothing wrong with asking legitimate questions about the way Bishop Robert Finn handled the Fr. Shawn Ratigan matter. But there is something wrong about not asking legitimate questions about the politics of those out to sink him. First, let's recap what actually happened.

Last December, crotch-shot pictures of young girls, fully clothed, were found on Fr. Ratigan's computer; there was one photo of a naked girl. The very next day, the Diocese contacted a police officer and described the naked picture; a Diocesan attorney was shown it. Because the photo was not sexual in nature, it was determined that it did not constitute child pornography. This explains why the Independent Review Board was not contacted—there was no specific allegation of child abuse.

When Fr. Ratigan discovered that the Diocese had learned of his fetish, he attempted suicide. When he recovered, he was immediately sent for psychiatric evaluation. It is important to note that Bishop Finn, who never saw any of the photos, did this precisely because he was considering the possibility of removing Fr. Ratigan from ministry. After evaluation (the priest was diagnosed as suffering from depression, but was not judged to be a pedophile), Fr. Ratigan was placed in a spot away from children and subjected to various restrictions. After he violated them, the Diocese called the cops. That's when more disturbing photos were found. At the same time, Bishop Finn contacted an attorney to do an independent investigation into this matter.

Fair-minded persons may question whether the Diocese was too lenient, but unless there is reason to believe that a crime

has been committed, there is no cause for contacting the authorities. Yet the Diocese—unlike the officials of other organizations faced with the same situation—contacted a police officer and a lawyer immediately. [Note: in 2007, a huge investigation by the Associated Press of teacher sexual misconduct revealed that Missouri school districts were guilty of “backroom deals” that allowed molesting teachers to “quietly move on.” So where is the dust-up about this? Where are the calls for grand jury probes?] Why, then, the attempt to get Bishop Finn?

What’s driving the anti-Finn campaign is politics. The major players are the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) and attorneys Rebecca Randles and Jeffrey Anderson. Their goal is not justice. Nor is it child welfare. Their goal is to sabotage the Catholic Church.

Here’s how it works. Anderson, who is worth hundreds of millions, helps to fund SNAP. SNAP works with Randles, a protégé of Anderson, and together they find new “victims”—adults who just now seem to remember being groped decades ago. Indeed, upwards of 20 new lawsuits have been filed since Ratigan was nailed in May. SNAP, ever coy, then holds a press conference, making wild accusations. Importantly, no one in Finn’s office is prepared to comment *because Randles has yet to file suit*. In other words, SNAP and Randles ambush the Diocese, garnering a high media profile, and then press the authorities to indict Bishop Finn.

What is SNAP? It sells itself as a victims’ advocacy organization that represents those who have been abused by any authority. This is a lie. It concentrates almost exclusively on the Catholic Church. How do I know? For one, just check its website. More revealing, last July I asked trusted sources to register at a SNAP conference outside of Washington, D.C. The entire event was dedicated to discussing ways to undermine what they called the “evil institution,” namely the Catholic Church. No one from SNAP has contested a single comment

attributed to the speakers as described in my report, "SNAP Exposed."

Here's how SNAP manipulates the media. At the meeting, attendees were instructed how to hold a press conference: "Display holy childhood photos"; Use "feeling words"; Say, "I was scared" or "I was suicidal"; "Be sad, not mad"; "If you don't have compelling holy childhood photos, we can provide you with photos of other kids that can be held up for the cameras." The unmistakable goal is to feign sorrow and stage the event.

SNAP's director, David Clohessy, began his activist career by working for ACORN, the now discredited far-left wing organization. In 1988, while watching the movie, "Nuts," he had a revelation: his memory exploded with tales of being molested by a priest 20 years earlier. Three years later, his attorney, Jeffrey Anderson, sued the local diocese; working with Anderson for the first time was Rebecca Randles. The time gap in both instances is striking.

Clohessy wants Bishop Finn behind bars for not moving fast enough on this matter. But when Clohessy was working for SNAP in the 1990s, he refused to contact the authorities when he learned of a man who was sexually abusing young men. That man was his brother, Kevin, a Catholic priest. Feeling conflicted, David wondered, "he's my brother; he's an abuser. Do I treat him like my brother? Do I treat him like an abuser?" He chose the former. "He [Kevin] told me he was getting help, getting treatment." This is understandable. What is not understandable is his outrage at bishops when they voice the same sentiment about their brother priests. The duplicity is sickening.

Is SNAP really upset about child porn, or just when a priest is involved? Dr. Steve Taylor is a psychiatrist who is in prison for downloading child porn on his computer. He is not just an ordinary shrink with a sick appetite—he worked for SNAP for years. Before his conviction, Barbara Blaine, the

founder of SNAP, intervened on his behalf and wrote to the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners asking them to give consideration to Taylor's alleged humanitarian work—she didn't want him to lose his license. Had Taylor been a priest, her reaction would have been vengeful.

At the July SNAP conference, Blaine spoke about priests who believe they have been mistreated by the authorities and want to countersue. She said they may have “a legal right,” but they “don't have a moral right to do so.” This is what SNAP means by justice. When lawsuits were flying in 2002, after revelations about the Boston scandal, many priests who claimed innocence decided to countersue. SNAP actually declared such lawsuits “brutal” and “un-Christian.”

This one-way street favored by SNAP also manifests itself in other ways. While it always protects the names of its accusers, it demands that we know the names of accused priests, including those who are dead. Moreover, it will not release the names of its donors. Yet they condemn the Catholic Church for lacking transparency.

In August, SNAP accused New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan of covering up an alleged incident involving a teenage girl who said she was “inappropriately touched” by an 87-year-old priest. Dolan knew nothing about it until the cops were called. SNAP has yet to apologize. It also accused Dolan of “acting secretly” about a previous case where a priest was suspended. But Dolan was not in New York at the time—he was the Archbishop of Milwaukee. Moreover, at the SNAP conference, Dolan was accused of shielding 55 molesting priests. This is libelous. But it is what we have come to expect from these people—a SNAP official once spat in the Archbishop's face.

SNAP is so anti-priest that its Kentucky chapter leader once lobbied state authorities to warn residents when Catholic priests who have been accused, *but not convicted*, of sexual abuse move into their neighborhood. Just priests. A few years

ago, in California, a boy's father alleged that his son had been abused by a priest in the 1990s. The case was dismissed. The alleged victim, now a grown man, said it never happened. When SNAP then learned that this innocent priest was appointed to a sex abuse panel, it went ballistic. In SNAP's mind, once a priest is charged, he's guilty, no matter what the verdict says.

The reason why SNAP wants to bring down Bishop Finn is because it always shoots for the top. In September, Clohessy admitted that his goal is to bring down the pope. "We're not naïve," he said. "We don't think the pope will be hauled off in handcuffs next week or month. But by the same token, our long-term chances are excellent." This kind of thinking explains why SNAP recently blasted the Vatican's new guidelines on sex abuse *the day before they were released*.

SNAP is so hateful that it even endorses Gestapo-like tactics used against the Catholic Church. Last year, the world was stunned to learn of a Belgium police raid on Church facilities, looking for evidence of wrongdoing. The bishop was detained for over nine hours; the police even went so far as to drill into the tombs of two deceased cardinals looking for documents. And what did Barbara Blaine say? "If children are to be protected, the actions of Belgian law enforcement must become the norm, not the aberration."

While fascistic means are acceptable to SNAP, it knows it can't get away with that in the U.S. So it elects to work with those who are flooding the Diocese with lawsuits. This way it can drain its resources, tie up the courts and seek to turn the public against the Catholic Church.

Randles was one of the lawyers who was behind the bundled lawsuits that led to a 2008 settlement with the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. Those lawsuits included claims dating back to just after World War II. Now she's back, representing clients who just now seem to recall being abused many moons

ago. The timing couldn't be more convenient. The SNAP-led crowd is now claiming that the settlement, which held that the Diocese had to take steps to curb abuse, was violated. Their proposed remedy represents the fulfillment of their dreams: they want the Diocese to cede control of its operations.

Between 2009-2010 (the latest years for which data are available), there was a 42 percent increase in false allegations against priests. So-called repressed memory figures prominently in these bogus charges. A few years ago, researchers at Harvard Medical School studied this phenomenon and concluded that it has no scientific basis—it is purely a cultural invention. Harvard psychology professor Richard J. McNally also studied this subject. “The notion that the mind protects itself by banishing the most disturbing, terrifying events is psychiatric folklore.” He added, “The more traumatic and stressful something is, the less likely someone is to forget it.”

Randles is now charging that not only did the Diocese know what was happening, and did nothing about it, those in charge actually *encouraged it*. Here are some examples, all filed recently. In the case of Fr. Stephen Wise, the suit charges that “The Diocese ratified Wise’s sexual abuse of the plaintiff by encouraging him to commit the abuse and encouraging him to continue committing the abuse.” In the Fr. Michael Tierney case, the suit claims, “the sexual abuse of minors became a collective objective of the Diocese.” And in the Fr. Mark Honhart case, the suit also claims, “the sexual abuse of minors became a collective objective of the Diocese.”

In one sense, this kind of language is useful: it is positive proof of the anti-Catholic mindset. In their vision, the Catholic Church is the font of all evil, with the pope at command central. All of this might have been believable if it had been said by nativists 150 years ago, or by those in the asylum today, but to think that such malicious fiction is being trumpeted in 2011—by lawyers no less—is mind-boggling.

Clohessy recently wrote to the prosecutors of Clay County and Jackson County. "Jailing Finn, once his guilt has been determined or admitted, would be an unprecedented and effective step toward preventing future clergy sex crimes and cover ups, in Kansas City and elsewhere." So Bishop Finn either admits his guilt or is found guilty. There is no other option. That's exactly the way they think.

It is incorrect to assume that Randles and company are motivated mostly by money. No, their real goal is control—the control of the Catholic Church. Randles wants the Diocese to accept third-party supervision of these matters. She is asking for "continuing supervision," explaining that she is "looking for a mechanism to enforce the provisions of the settlement agreement from this day forward, so that there is some form of continuing watch-dogging." It doesn't get much plainer than this.

The Catholic League stands by Bishop Finn without reservation. What's at stake goes well beyond Kansas City. It should be clear by now that the ultimate goal is to have the Catholic Church cede its autonomy to the state. It's what the Catholic haters have long wanted, and are now using Bishop Finn to dig a hole in the First Amendment.

ROLLING STONE GETS UGLY: VILE HIT ON PHILLY ARCHDIOCESE

The following article was written by Bill Donohue in response to a recent attack on the Catholic Church published in Rolling Stone magazine:

The sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church provides grist

for the mill to those who harbor an animus against it, so a certain amount of cheap shots are to be expected. But what was printed in the September 15 edition of *Rolling Stone* was not the typical below-the-belt attack: it represents a new low in yellow journalism.

The author of "The Catholic Church's Secret Sex-Crime Files," Sabrina Rubin Erdely, is not a religion reporter; she writes mostly about health issues. But she knows how to smear, and knows how to exploit stereotypes. As we will see, she is also dishonest

Erdely's article focuses on the problems in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Three grand juries have yielded a great deal of material on alleged instances of clergy sexual abuse, and much of the attention has centered on Msgr. William Lynn. It is alleged that he played a key role in covering up crimes for his superiors, and it is Erdely's contention that the past three archbishops of Philadelphia, Justin Cardinal Rigali, Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua and John Cardinal Krol, allowed priestly sexual abuse to continue with impunity. Lynn, along with two priests, one ex-priest, and one former lay schoolteacher, are scheduled to stand trial next year on these matters.

Before addressing Erdely's article, it is important to discuss several facts she does not mention. Beginning in 2003, 61 cases of priestly misconduct were examined by the archdiocese. Twenty four were dismissed because the accusations could not be substantiated. Of the 37 remaining cases, three priests were suspended immediately following the grand jury report that was released earlier this year; 21 additional priests were subsequently suspended, leaving 13 unaccounted for. Of the 13, eight were found not to have a credible accusation against them; one has been on leave for some time; two are incapacitated and no longer in ministry; two more belong to religious orders outside the archdiocese.

This means that no credible accusation was made against the majority of the priests (the initial 24 plus the eight newly absolved, or 32 of 61). Moreover, *none* of the 24 who are currently suspended has been found guilty of anything. To top things off, the charges against them include such matters as “boundary issues” and “inappropriate behavior,” terms so elastic as to indict anyone. Erdely, of course, never mentions any of this, because to do so would get in the way of her “priests-are-rapists” theme.

As with any form of prejudice, there are staples that are commonly employed by bigoted writers. Anti-Catholics, for instance, like to play on the stereotype that the Church operates in secret, as a top-down organization, run by Rome. True to form, not including the title of Erdely’s piece, the term “secret” appears 16 times in her article. The Church is also branded a “rigid hierarchy” (as opposed to one that is “nimble”?); it also sports a “vertical framework” (never mind that it is structurally impossible for any organization to have a “horizontal” one). This is the kind of melodramatic language that is important to Erdely’s agenda; it invites the reader to think the worst about the Church.

Msgr. Lynn’s alleged “conspiracy,” we are told, was “encouraged by his superiors—an unbroken chain of command stretching all the way to Rome.” Nowhere in her article does Erdely even attempt to demonstrate the veracity of this outlandish claim. She simply drops it at the beginning of her piece, planting the seed she wants to sow: the pope is the ultimate bad guy. One paragraph later, without a trace of evidence, she says the problems in Ireland happened “with tacit approval from the Vatican.” Later, she quotes an ex-priest to the effect that the entire abuse issue will eventually be shown to “unravel all the way to Rome.”

This is vintage Catholic bashing. Every problem in the Catholic Church is traceable to the pope. According to this vision of reality, the Holy Father knows what the priests are

doing from Boston to Bombay. More than that, they are merely carrying out his secretive and palpably devious commands.

Now if someone said that the president of the United States, as the Commander-in-Chief, knows what American troops are doing from Alaska to Afghanistan, and should be held responsible for their misconduct, we'd think he was mad. But it is considered acceptable, in certain circles, to play the pope-is-omnipresent card, and get away with it. When placed alongside his alleged omnipotence, what we have is a caricature of the pope that is suitable for science fiction. Or *Rolling Stone*.

One of Erdely's goals is to get the reader to hate Msgr. Lynn. She does this sometimes by playing with words. Lynn didn't just go to the seminary and become a priest. No, the seminary he attended is a "stately" campus (as opposed to the more pedestrian type), with "soaring" chapels (in contrast to ones with a flat roof?). It was there that this "friendly, overweight boy" with an "acne-scarred face" experienced "military-style indoctrination," a form of "brainwashing." Later, of course, the happy-fat-ugly kid who had been brainwashed would take his "solemn oath of obedience" and become a priest.

Erdely's description of the priesthood is not a reflection of her Jewishness—Jews have written excellent works on the Catholic Church—it is a reflection of her stupidity. "The goal of the priesthood is a lofty one: a man placed on a pedestal for his community to revere, an *alter Christus*—'another Christ'—who can literally channel the power of Jesus and help create the perfect society intended by God." There are so many flaws in this sentence that Erdely would find no relief in repairing to *Catholicism for Dummies*; it assumes an elementary understanding of the subject.

The article makes much of matters that are unexceptional. Erdely says Msgr. Lynn followed the "unspoken rule" when

dealing with accusations of abuse, and this meant never calling the police.

Now anyone who knows anything about this issue knows that *no organization*, secular or religious, ever did anything different. From the teaching establishment to the mainline Protestant denominations, these matters were routinely dealt with through therapy and referral; internal sanctions existed, but calling the cops was not considered proper (many in the Orthodox Jewish community *still* insist on treating these issues internally).

Similarly, Erdely finds reason to hammer Msgr. Lynn for allowing an accused priest to resign for "health reasons," when, as Erdely correctly says, Msgr. John Gillespie left because of more serious matters. She is right to criticize Lynn, but she leaves the impression that what he did was unconventional. Just recently, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg lied to the public about the reason why his Deputy Mayor Stephen Goldsmith resigned. The mayor not only drew little flak, he refused to apologize (Goldsmith did not resign because he did a lousy job policing the effects of a winter snow storm—he quit because he was arrested for beating his wife). While it is fair to say that this doesn't justify Lynn's behavior, it is not fair to act as if Lynn were some kind of freak.

Quoting studies that back up an author's position is commonplace, played by partisans on all sides, but Erdely doesn't do just that: she manages to distort the truth by elevating the status of authors she approves of, and concealing the identity of authors whose work she dislikes. For example, she refers to a dated study from 1990 by Richard Sipe, an embittered ex-monk, on the subject of celibacy. She refers to Sipe as a psychologist who found that only half of all priests practice celibacy. While no one can say for certain what the real figure is, the truth of the matter is that Sipe does not hold a Ph.D. in psychology; he is a mental

health counselor.

On the other hand, she refers to a study published this year on the subject of clergy sex abuse, saying it was funded by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. She never mentions who conducted the study, namely, professors from the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Nor does she disclose that the professors have unequivocally said that the bishops had absolutely nothing to do with either its methodology or its findings.

Worse, Erdely implies that the bishops were up to something sinister. "To lower the number of clergy classified as 'pedophiles,' the report redefines 'puberty' as beginning at age 10—and then partially blames the rise in child molesting on the counterculture of the 1960s." She gets it all wrong.

Actually, the authors set the age of puberty at eleven, not ten, though they would not have been wrong had they done so: the American Academy of Pediatrics uses the age of ten, and many reputable health sources say the onset of puberty begins at the age of nine. Erdely wants us to believe that puberty begins much later, and that is because her goal—like that of so many of the Church's critics—is to deflect blame away from those who are, in fact, responsible for most of the molestation, namely homosexuals.

As for the role of the counterculture, the John Jay social scientists correctly cited the libertine culture in which the sexual revolution took place. Moreover, the timeline of the abuse scandal, 1965-1985, is indeed a reflection—not a justification—of the collapse of standards. In this regard, New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan got it right when he said that the scandal is over. Indeed, it's been over for roughly a quarter century. In short, it is Erdely, not Dolan, who is wrong on this issue.

All through the article, Erdely uses unnamed sources to make

her points, thus making it impossible to validate her work. Two alleged victims, "James" and "Billy," are worth a second look.

Fr. Edward Avery is implicated in both cases. Regarding "James," Avery admits to fondling him when he was 18; "James" says the fondling began when he was 15. Either way, Avery is a disgrace, but this case raises an issue that must be addressed: why did so many of the males who claim victim status allow themselves to be abused when they were teenagers, or even older? This is said not to exculpate guilty priests, but it is said to question the accounts of many "victims." Surely an 18-year-old is capable of rebuffing unwanted advances.

No matter, Cardinal Bevilacqua ordered an investigation of Avery in June 2003, and his successor, Cardinal Rigali, removed the priest from ministry that December. In 2005, Rigali asked the Vatican to remove him altogether, and in 2006 Pope Benedict XVI had him defrocked. None of this timeline is mentioned by Erdely; to do so would get in the way of her goal of smearing the cardinals.

Those who want to stick it to the Church like to offer a graphic depiction of the alleged sex acts that priests reportedly engaged in with their victims. Catholics like Maureen Dowd and Chris Matthews have played this card with precision, but they are no match for Erdely. She treats the *Rolling Stone* readers to some of the most salacious renderings imaginable, drawing from the grand jury testimony of "Billy," a man who claims he was worked over by two priests and one lay teacher, beginning when he was 10.

The grand jury testimony of "Billy" tells us about some key items not mentioned by Erdely. "Billy" called the Philadelphia Archdiocese on January 30, 2009, to say he was abused by the three men when he was 10 and 11. He spoke to a victims assistance coordinator, Louise Hagner, offering a basic

description of what allegedly happened. He said he did not want to get into any of the details, saying pointedly that he planned to sue the archdiocese.

What happened next is what any good investigator would have done: Hagner followed up on "Billy's" terse complaint, seeking more information. When Hagner and another staff member went to "Billy's" house for more information, he initially balked, but then agreed to meet them outside by their car. At that point he got graphic. But was his account true? This question must be raised because "Billy" admitted that when he made these comments he was flying high on heroin.

A defense lawyer who learns that his client made a highly explicit accusation while higher than a kite will obviously ask him to repeat his story when sober. But should he be believed? A separate, but positively critical issue, is why Erdely never told her readers that "Billy" admitted to being on heroin when he made his sensational claims.

Erdely is similarly irresponsible in her discussion of Daniel Neill. She writes that he was abused by Fr. Joseph Gallagher, and that his account was found wanting by the archdiocesan review board that investigated his case. He killed himself in 2009. Sounds awful, until we get all the facts, that is.

In 1980, Neill complained that Fr. Gallagher fondled him when he was an altar boy at St. Mark's in Bristol, Pennsylvania. His accusation was deemed not credible by the principal of the school, and so the case was dismissed. Moreover, the boy's parents did not sue the school.

Fast forward to 2007. Neill, knowing that a grand jury had been impaneled to look into old cases, decided to report his alleged abuse to the Philadelphia Archdiocese. Not surprisingly, the investigators could not substantiate an uncorroborated accusation of an alleged act of abuse that occurred 27 years earlier, and so they dismissed the case. In

July 2008, Neill was notified of the decision, and a year later, in June 2009, he killed himself. In April 2011, after hooking up with the most notorious Church-suing lawyer in the nation, Jeffrey Anderson, his family sued the archdiocese, blaming it for the suicide. None of this is mentioned by Erdely.

Here are some other unpleasant facts that she decided to omit. The grand jury report says that Neill's account was based on "the corroboration of other witnesses." Wrong. There was no corroboration by anyone. While the report says there were a few altar boys who said that they, like Neill, had discussed masturbation in the confessional, "none of them said they were molested by Fr. Gallagher."

More important, the report never said that even one of these friends was witness to—or even heard about—the alleged abuse. And indeed the only person Neill said he discussed his travails with at the time was the priest's sister. Why he chose only her is not known, but what is known is that the grand jury reported that she was mentally retarded. But don't expect to learn any of this by reading *Rolling Stone*.

Finally, there is the matter of the District Attorney who started the grand jury investigations in the first place, Lynne Abraham. Erdely mentions her role, but only in the most positive terms. Here is what the reader was not told.

Abraham launched her investigations into wrongdoing in the Philadelphia Archdiocese ten years ago. From the very beginning, she knew full well that she would come up empty: the matters she probed fell outside the statute of limitations. So why press the issue? Her goal was to indict in the court of public opinion, allowing uncontested grand jury testimonies to affect the reputation of the Church. Everything she did was fodder for a new round of hearings and condemnations.

What is not generally known is that it was absolutely unethical for Abraham to focus her exclusive attention on the Church, acting as if no other secular or religious organization had any track record of concealing the sexual abuse of minors. Why was it unethical? Because that was not her charge. On March 31, 2011, I sent a letter in the overnight mail to Abraham, the text of which appears below:

“In the Grand Jury report of September 26, 2001 (First Judicial District, Criminal Trial Division), it says that the Grand Jury was charged ‘to investigate the sexual abuse of minors by individuals associated with religious organizations and denominations.’ You were the District Attorney at that time.

“Could you identify which ‘religious organizations and denominations’ you pursued, other than the Roman Catholic Church? It is important to the process that we ascertain accurate information.”

Abraham never replied. Is there any wonder why?

There has been wrongdoing—too much wrongdoing—by members of the Catholic clergy. Reporting on it is not a problem; selectively reporting on it is. Worse still are malicious distortions of the kind found in Erdely’s diatribe.