

MISTAKES AND LIES

William A. Donohue

We often hear people say, “I’m sorry, I lied about that,” when, in fact, they never lied; they were merely mistaken. Let me be plain: it is impossible to lie without first knowing the truth. Once we know the truth, we can correct our mistakes, but knowledge of the truth matters little to liars, and this is doubly true of congenital liars. In my career as a professor and as an activist, I have met many inveterate liars, typically men and women who are so bent on winning that the means are justified by the ends, even if it means millions must die.

I am not exaggerating. Eric Hobsbawm was one of the most influential English historians of the twentieth century. He was a Marxist who positively loved communism. In 1994, he was asked a hypothetical question: If communism had achieved its aims in the Soviet Union and China, but at the cost of 15 to 20 million people—as opposed to the well over 100 million deaths it actually resulted in—would you have supported it? He answered with one word: “Yes.”

When Hobsbawm died last October at age 95, he was lionized in the pages of the *Nation*, a left-wing magazine that stood with Stalin as he tortured, starved, and murdered the innocent. Hobsbawm, the *Nation*, and countless professors on both sides of the Atlantic, lied about the mass murders while they were happening in Stalin’s Russia and Mao’s China, hoping that their lies would stop the truth from being known. At least it can be said about Hobsbawm that in his later years he was able to come clean and tell the truth: genocide is ethical if it ends in a communist revolution.

The liars we deal with at the Catholic League today are not pointing guns at us, but they are willfully distorting the

truth about Catholicism, and they do it all the time. Lying is a way of life to them, much like breathing and walking is to the rest of us. Just consider some of the articles in this issue of *Catalyst*.

On page 13, in the *New York Times* op-ed page ad I wrote, I quoted Pope Francis accurately when he said, "If someone is gay and he searches for the Lord and has good will, who am I to judge?" It is rare to see him quoted accurately. Instead, the sentence is chopped off at the end, so that it appears, "Who am I to judge?" This way the reader is left with the impression that the pope is justifying homosexuality.

Others are worse. I recently locked horns with Niall O'Dowd of the Irish Central on this issue. He actually said that the pope was referring to the "gay lifestyle." I showed the proof that he is wrong, but to no avail. He must know that no one in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church is about to justify the "gay lifestyle," a condition that more closely resembles what noted gay activist Larry Kramer has called a "deathstyle."

This edition of *Catalyst* has much to say about "Philomena," a movie based on so many lies it is hard to track. Virtually everyone associated with this film has lied about the story of this woman's life, which includes Philomena Lee herself. I wrote a lengthy analysis of this matter; the article was sent to many in Hollywood, England, and Ireland, as well as to prominent persons in the media. No one has challenged a single sentence I wrote. I have the proof—it's all documented. No nun stole Philomena's baby; her son was not sold to the highest bidder; she voluntarily signed a consent form at the age of 22; no fee was charged to the adopting couple in the mid-West; a nun portrayed as being cruel died long before the alleged incident took place; Philomena never went to the U.S. to find her son; she never had a private meeting with the pope; the pope's personal secretary did not preview the movie, etc.

Here's another example, taken from the April *Catalyst*. After

the Bostonians who run the St. Patrick's Day parade said they would allow an organization of gay veterans to march, with the proviso that they agree not to publicly depict themselves as gay, they had to disinvite them: the group was not a legitimate veterans group, and they planned to wear gay T-shirts. In other words, the gays lied. And in New York, many lies have been told about gays not being allowed to march in the parade; they can, but not under their own banner.

I can deal with fair-minded people with whom I disagree. Geraldo Rivera, Alan Colmes, and Joe Piscopo, are all gay-rights enthusiasts, but when they learned that gays are not barred from marching in the St. Patrick's Day parade—any more than pro-life Catholics are—they all took my side. They are not liars, which is more than I can say for many on their side.

The worst of them all are those who lie not to protect themselves, but to smear the Catholic Church. That's why the lead story in this issue is on BishopAccountability.org. What those affiliated with this media outlet did to the pope was not a mistake: it was deliberate, and it was malicious. It gives me great pleasure to expose them to the bishops.