

# NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST DRAWS HEAT

Catholic League president Bill Donohue looks at attempts to persuade President Obama not to attend the National Prayer Breakfast:

The National Prayer Breakfast is held the first Thursday of every February, and is attended by senior members of the incumbent administration and Congress. The Washington event, which attracts some 3,500 leaders from the U.S. and abroad, is organized by a Christian group, The Fellowship Foundation (a.k.a. "The Family"), that keeps a low profile. This year the secular left is pressuring the president, and others, not to attend.

The stated reasons for opposing the event include the organizer's alleged "shadowy" nature and the invitation extended to David Bahati, the Ugandan lawmaker who wrote a bill labeled as anti-gay. Those leading the charge include pundits and activists like Adele M. Stan, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, Huffington Post writers, *Mother Jones*, et al. A press conference scheduled tomorrow protesting the event is being attended by the likes of practicing gay Episcopal Bishop Gene Robinson, Americans United leader Barry Lynn, and spokesmen for assorted homosexual groups.

The real reason for the opposition has to do with censoring the voice of religious conservatives in Washington. Bahati, for example, is not going, so that issue is a non-starter. Moreover, Hillary Clinton is a long-time member of The Fellowship Foundation, making silly the "shadowy" accusation. Indeed, if the Secretary of State isn't bothered by the group, then that just goes to show how utterly fringe the opposition is.

Surely the secular left see in President Obama one of their own. But he knows how it would look if he broke stride with precedent, especially at a time when the public is not exactly jumping for joy over his performance. Look for Obama to go and his base to whine.