

“RELIGIOUS LIBERTY” AND ABORTION



Catholic League president Bill Donohue spoke to this issue today:

Last week, when Laurie Goodstein of the *New York Times* wrote about New York Archbishop Timothy Dolan's recent comments on religious liberty, she put the term in quotation marks. James Carroll of the *Boston Globe* read her article (the *Times* owns his newspaper) and today the angry ex-priest demonstrated his independence by writing a thoroughly predictable column about the Catholic Church and “religious liberty.”

What's bothering them, as well as the Pro-Choice Congressional Caucus, NARAL, Planned Parenthood and the ACLU, is the resistance being provided by Catholic bishops to the Obama administration's war on Catholic institutions: the administration is seeking to force Catholic hospitals, universities and other entities to abide by its health care directives that require sterilization and contraceptive services (including abortifacients) in all private plans. The exemption it allows is a sham: to qualify, the Church must stop hiring and servicing non-Catholics (which means it must stop being Catholic).

In a separate, but related, move, the Obama administration is seeking to punish the Church by denying Catholic agencies that fight human trafficking a grant it routinely receives (the Church opposes abortion referrals and the Obama administration demands them).

What's also driving this assault on Catholics and the First Amendment is fear—the fear that Americans are increasingly becoming pro-life. The Gallup survey from July shows that this fear is empirically based: the public wants new restrictions on abortion.

Couple this fear with the long-standing animus against Catholicism and it's easy to see why the pro-abortion community is up in arms these days.