

OBAMA-PFLEGER TIE RUNS DEEP

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Rev. Michael Pfleger's remarks at Sen. Barack Obama's church that led the Catholic priest to apologize and the Democratic hopeful to renounce them:

"Most commentators are already focusing on the inappropriateness of the race-baiting comments by Father Pfleger. More serious is the venue in which he delivered his diatribe and his long-standing ties to Sen. Obama.

"Father Pfleger's tirade would be inexcusable anywhere, but it is even more offensive when it happens in a church. It does not matter that it was not his own, nor does it matter that it happened in a church that has a record of allowing demagogues to exploit it. When churches become forums for political rallies, both religion and the First Amendment are corrupted.

"Obama and Pfleger are no strangers. Indeed, when Obama was in the state senate in Illinois, he conveniently arranged for Father Pfleger's St. Sabina's Church to receive state monies for its social programs. Of course, the guardians of church and state separation said nothing then and they are saying nothing now. That's because they're all in the tank for Obama. Just as important, why is it that of all the wonderful Catholic priests in the Chicago Archdiocese, Obama long ago chose Pfleger to hang with? Truth be known, Pfleger has a very troubling history: he has welcomed the anti-Semite Louis Farrakhan to preach in his church; he has hired prostitutes to worship there; he has been arrested for defacing billboards; and he once urged the crowd at an anti-gun rally to hunt down a gun store owner 'like a rat' and 'snuff' him.

"Senator Obama says he wants to bring people together. Then why does he choose as his clerical friends people like Rev. Jeremiah Wright and Father Pfleger? They are two peas in a

pod, both equally divisive, separated only by the color of their skin.”

CENSORS TARGET KANSAS CITY ARCHBISHOP

On May 9, Kansas City Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann publicly asked Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius to refrain from going to Communion. Sebelius not only supports abortion-on-demand, and works closely with Planned Parenthood, she has received funding from Dr. George Tiller of Wichita; he is nationally known for performing late-term abortions.

Over the past few weeks, Archbishop Naumann has been roundly criticized for his decision. Defending him is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

“A small group called Catholic Democrats has blasted Archbishop Naumann for using ‘Holy Communion as a political weapon to take her [Sebelius] down.’ The *National Catholic Reporter*, which runs ads by anti-Catholic and pro-abortion groups, labeled Naumann ‘rigid’ for using ‘political tactics.’ Tim Rutten of the *Los Angeles Times* condemned him for setting in motion ‘about as nasty and as utterly avoidable a church-state confrontation as you’re likely to see.’ *Kansas City Community News* opinion page editor Bob Sigman agreed, saying Naumann’s decision ‘has serious consequences for those who believe in the firm line between church and state.’ And Barbara Shelly, who sits on the editorial board of the *Kansas City Star*, takes the same line, branding his request ‘harsh.’

“All of them are hypocrites. Democratic candidates for public office have been receiving endorsements, and in some cases

contributions, in African American churches for decades, yet none of them see a violation of church and state. The reason they are upset with Archbishop Naumann is because Sebelius is on Sen. Barack Obama's shortlist as a vice presidential running mate. They would make an excellent pair: she supports partial-birth abortions and he supports selective infanticide.

"Archbishop Naumann said it best when he met with Sebelius: 'I challenged the governor to produce a single instance in her legislative or executive career [which spans 30 years] where she has supported any effort to limit abortions.' She could not. Which explains why her fans love her."

HAGEE PULLS McCAIN ENDORSEMENT

Pastor John Hagee has pulled his endorsement of Republican presidential candidate John McCain; McCain subsequently renounced Hagee's endorsement. Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented on this development today:

"One week ago today, I met with Pastor Hagee in my office. I found him to be sincere, apologetic and friendly. I also found him to be the strongest Christian defender of Israel I have ever met, and that is why attempts to portray him as anything but a genuine friend to Jews—one for whom the Holocaust is the horror of horrors—is despicable.

"Hagee's decision to sever all ties to McCain is noble: He knows he has become a liability to McCain, even after he has made amends to Catholics. What this proves is that Hagee, unlike Rev. Jeremiah Wright, is not an egocentric man. He is also not like the partisans at the Interfaith Alliance which

today called on McCain to reject Hagee: when it was founded, the Interfaith Alliance received \$25,000 in seed money from none other than the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

“Pastor Hagee can now move in the religious circles he has become accustomed to, and continue his ministry without distraction.”

WOMEN, GAYS AND “BOSTON LEGAL”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments today on last night’s episode of the ABC program, “Boston Legal”:

“There is no one in Hollywood more fascinated—and angry—about the Catholic Church than ‘Boston Legal’ creator David E. Kelley. Last night he shared with us once again his wish list. The episode focused on the plight of yet another terribly oppressed woman. The source of her oppression, of course, is the Catholic Church. She wants to become a priest, but she refuses to walk down the block to join the Episcopal church. So she realizes Kelley’s dream by evincing a hatred for diversity and tolerance: she sues the Church for discrimination.

“Orthodox Judaism, Mormonism, Islam and Orthodox Christianity merit honorable mention in the show (they have the same clergy strictures), but they don’t really count: it is the big bad Catholic Church that Kelley wants to knife. For example, in the courtroom lies are told about the Catholic Church’s alleged support for slavery, the execution of witches and the Inquisition. [Note: It was the Catholic Church—not any other

religion—which first opposed slavery, and it was St. Patrick who was the first public person in history to fight against it; and for the most part, it was the civil authorities, not the Church, who punished witches and were responsible for the Inquisition.] In the end, Kelley's biggest fantasy is realized—the Catholic Church's tax-exempt status is revoked. Oh, yes, Kelley also speaks vicariously about sodomy: it should not be a sin.

“In the real world, now that imperial judges in California have overturned the express will of the people by allowing Sam to marry Steve (they have not ruled on whether Sidney can make it a trifecta), Kelley must be gushing. But it won't last: he'll get another reality check in November.”

Contact ABC's Kim Rozenfeld at kim.rozenfeld@abc.com and ask her if any of Kelley's friends dying of AIDS has ever been serviced in one of those tax-exempt Catholic hospitals.

HAGEE REGRETS OFFENDING CATHOLICS; CONTROVERSY ENDS

Pastor John Hagee sent a letter today [[click here](#)] to Catholic League president Bill Donohue that effectively ends the dispute the two men have had. Donohue comments as follows:

“After weeks of meeting with various Catholic leaders, and accessing scholarly literature on Catholic-Jewish relations, Pastor John Hagee has demonstrated an improved understanding of the Catholic Church and its history. In his letter to me, Hagee says, ‘I want to express my deep regret for any comments that Catholics have found hurtful.’ He specifically cites his emphasis of ‘the darkest chapters in the history of Catholic

and Protestant relations with the Jews,' and has pledged to provide a more complete and balanced portrayal going forward that will not reinforce mischaracterizations of the Catholic Church. And while he stresses that his invocation of terms like 'apostate church' and the 'great whore' were never meant by him to describe the Catholic Church, he acknowledges that anti-Catholics have long employed such language.

"The tone of Hagee's letter is sincere. He wants reconciliation and he has achieved it. Indeed, the Catholic League welcomes his apology. What Hagee has done takes courage and quite frankly I never expected him to demonstrate such sensitivity to our concerns. But he has done just that. Now Catholics, along with Jews, can work with Pastor Hagee in making interfaith relations stronger than ever. Whatever problems we had before are now history. This case is closed."

OBAMA'S CATHOLIC ADVISORS RESPOND

On May 2, Catholic League president Bill Donohue issued a news release urging Sen. Barack Obama to dissolve his Catholic National Advisory Council. Donohue did so because not one of the 26 former and current public policy holders who constitute the group stand with the Catholic Church on all three major issues: abortion, embryonic stem cell research and school vouchers. He provided evidence that the overwhelming majority of these advisors agreed with NARAL, the most pro-abortion group in the nation, 100 percent of the time. Now the group has written to Donohue protesting his remarks ([click here](#) to read it).

Donohue answered them today:

“The reason I mentioned only public officials who are part of Sen. Obama’s Catholic National Advisory Council is the same reason I chose just three public policy issues: voting tallies are available on these advisors (but not on the others) and on these three issues. If I knew more about the others, no doubt some would have made the cut.

“It is more than embarrassing—it is shocking—to read how these Catholics view abortion. The Catholic Church regards abortion, as well as embryonic stem cell research, as ‘intrinsically evil.’ But not these folks. For them, abortion is merely ‘a profound moral issue.’

“Sadly, it has been apparent for years that many who fancy themselves ‘progressive’ Catholics do not treat abortion the way they do racial discrimination. No one in his right mind says that the best way to combat racial discrimination is by changing people’s hearts and minds, not the law. Which is why we do both. But when it comes to abortion—including partial-birth abortion—the progressives settle for dialogue.

“It is so nice to know that Obama thinks abortion ‘presents a profound moral challenge.’ Is infanticide another ‘profound moral challenge’? To wit: When he was in the Illinois state senate he led the fight to deny health care to babies *born alive* who survived an abortion. That, my friends, is not a moral challenge—it’s a Hitlerian decision.”

OBAMA MUST START THE PURGE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on the religious divide which is splitting Sen. Obama’s supporters:

"The secularization of the Democratic party, which first became evident in the 1972 presidential race, was openly challenged by Barack Obama when he spoke at the 2004 Democratic presidential convention. To his credit, he has since galvanized people of faith to rally to his side, but ever since his problems with Rev. Wright he has come under fire by radical secularists. In short, there is a tug of war going on among Democratic activists pitting the secularists against the faithful.

"In today's *Chicago Tribune*, Katha Pollitt not only criticizes Rev. Wright, she takes the opportunity to smear almost the entire nation. She says that 'thanks to Rev. Jeremiah Wright Jr., the Democrats have got religion and everything that goes with it—weirdness, wrath, insult, blowhardiness, vanity, paranoia, divisiveness and trouble.' Her hatred of religion wouldn't matter so much if she were simply a writer for the *Nation*. However, she is also a prominent supporter of Sen. Obama: She joined hands with Frances Kissling, a notorious anti-Catholic, to endorse him in a publicly signed statement.

"We know where Pollitt is coming from. After all, any person who likes Catholic bashing is well known to the Catholic League. For example, when the Brooklyn Museum of Art displayed a portrait of Our Blessed Mother adorned with elephant dung and pictures of vaginas and anuses, she opined that 'The Holy Virgin Mary is a funny, jazzy, rather sweet painting.'

"Obama is not responsible for Pollitt's bigotry and he does not need to renounce her. But what he must do is start the purge—he must rid his ranks of those who want to silence religion. First out of the box to aid him must be Catholics. They can cite what Pope Benedict XVI recently said in Washington: 'Any tendency to treat religion as a private matter must be resisted.' Purging the Pollitts from his base would reassure the faithful that they have a place in his campaign."

CATHOLIC DISSIDENTS ADVISE OBAMA

When Sen. Barack Obama recently announced the formation of his Catholic National Advisory Council, he said he was “deeply honored to have the support and counsel of these committed Catholic leaders, scholars and advocates.” Commenting on this group is Catholic League president Bill Donohue:

“The best advice I can give Sen. Obama about his Catholic National Advisory Council is to dissolve it immediately. Of the 26 Catholic former or current public office holders he has listed as either National Co-Chairs (5), or as members of the National Leadership Committee (21), there is not one who agrees with the Catholic Church on all three major public policy issues: abortion, embryonic stem cell research and school vouchers.

“Indeed, on the issue of abortion, their record is disgraceful. Consider the scorecard as issued by the most radical pro-abortion organization in the nation—NARAL. Of the two National Co-Chairs who have a NARAL tally, one agrees with the extremist group 65 percent of the time and the other agrees 100 percent of the time. Of the 20 National Leadership Committee members with a NARAL score, 17 have earned a 100 percent rating. Of those who have less than a perfect score, not one is in favor of school vouchers. [Click [here](#) for the evidence.]

“Practicing Catholics have every right to be insulted by Obama’s advisory group. What is the purpose of having an advisory group about matters Catholic when most of its members reject the Catholic position? If Obama wanted input from gay

leaders, would he choose those who don't reflect the sentiments of the gay community? In short, to choose Catholic dissidents to advise him about Catholic concerns is mind-boggling.

"If these are the best 'committed Catholic leaders, scholars and advocates' Obama can find, then it is evident that he has a 'Wright' problem when it comes to picking Catholic advisors."

MEDIA WATCHDOG, FAIR, SMEARS POPE

(See [update](#) of 5-14-08)

Earlier this week, a media watchdog group, Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) ran a story titled, "Pope Gets Pass on Church Abuse History." The self-styled "progressive" group said that in 2001, before Joseph Ratzinger was named pope, the cardinal "sent a letter to church bishops invoking a 1962 doctrine threatening automatic excommunication for any Catholic official who discussed abuse cases outside the church's legal system."

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented as follows:

"When we pressed FAIR to provide us with the evidence that would substantiate its claims, it cited an English newspaper, the *Observer*; it also asked us if the paper ever ran a correction. So this is the level of scrutiny that FAIR employs: it does no independent fact checking, relying instead on foreign sources to verify its accusations.

"We knew FAIR had been sucked in as soon as we read it. That's because I took CBS Evening News apart in 2003 when they flagged this allegedly incriminating 1962 Vatican document. As I noted at the time, no other mainstream media outlet picked up this bogus story. With good reason.

"The document did not apply to sexual misconduct—it applied only to sexual solicitation that might take place in the confessional. By sexual solicitation it meant 'whether by words or signs or nods of the head,' the priest may have crossed the line. Because the policy was specifically aimed at protecting the secrecy of the confessional, it called for an ecclesiastical response: civil authorities were not to be notified because it involved a sacrament of the Catholic Church, not a crime of the state. Guilty priests could be thrown out of the priesthood and a penitent who told someone what happened had 30 days to report the incident to the bishop or face excommunication. In other words, the document detailed punitive measures for miscreants—just the opposite of a cover-up.

"FAIR, of course, has no time to read Vatican documents. Which is why it repairs to British tabloids to do its dirty work."