

# SUBSIDIZING ABORTION

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on the House health care bill that has generated so much controversy:

A debate is raging over whether an amendment by Rep. Lois Capps provides for a public subsidy of abortion. Catholics United claims that the Family Research Council (FRC) is guilty of “distorting” the Capps amendment when it claims that her legislation would do just that. The record clearly shows that Catholics United is wrong: Section B of paragraph 4 of Capps’ bill does exactly what FRC says.

“In every part of the country,” says the *New York Times* about the Capps amendment, “the government must ensure that there is at least one plan that covers abortion and at least one that does not.” Did the *New York Times* “distort” Capps’ effort? And is the Associated Press wrong today to title its article on the Capps amendment, “Government Insurance Would Allow Coverage for Abortion”? Moreover, if the Capps amendment banned all subsidies, why did she find it necessary to snap at Catholic bishops? “With all due respect, not everyone adheres to what the Catholic bishops believe.”

When the Capps amendment was debated on July 30, Rep. Joe Pitts charged that her initiative “creates an accounting scheme by which taxpayer subsidies, called affordability credits, if you will, will go to plans to pay for elective abortion, both the public plan and private plans....” What settles this issue is the question Pitts put to Counsel at the committee hearing: “If the Capps amendment is adopted, would the secretary of health and human services be allowed to cover elective abortions in the public plan?” Counsel: “Yes, sir.” Pitts: “So this is a sham?” Counsel: “Yes, sir, but...” But nothing—it is a sham and everyone knows it, save Catholics United.

From 1995 to the present, Rep. Capps has *always* had a perfect score of supporting Planned Parenthood and NARAL—she gets 100%. Her National Right to Life lifetime voting record is predictably 0%. And this is the congresswoman whom Catholics are supposed to trust on abortion?

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## MASS MAILING OF PENN & TELLER SHOW

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the latest developments regarding the Catholic League response to Penn & Teller's incredible episode on Showtime last Thursday:

I was happy to finger CBS this morning on "Fox and Friends" as the ultimate culprit: Penn & Teller's Nazi-like assault on Catholicism that took place on August 27 will go down in history as one of the most vile, obscene programs ever aired in any nation. That CBS, which owns Showtime, allows this to go on is positively unbelievable.

We are now getting copies made for a mass mailing later this week. We will send a copy of this episode to 414 bishops, and to hundreds of influential Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Orthodox Christian, Muslim and Mormon religious leaders across the United States. We will also send a copy to hundreds of activists and members of the media. Then we will feature what Penn & Teller have done in the next edition of *Catalyst*, our monthly journal; that will reach a huge audience. Moreover, I am already scheduled to do several radio shows on what happened.

We want everyone to know about what CBS considers fair game. There is no way to undo the damage already done, but

CBS/Showtime can still drop Penn & Teller. The ball is in their court.

Contact CBS rep Nancy Tellem at [nancy.tellem@tvc.cbs.com](mailto:nancy.tellem@tvc.cbs.com)

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## **CBS/SHOWTIME AIRS NAZI-LIKE ASSAULT**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on last night's edition of Penn & Teller's show. The program aired on Showtime which is owned by CBS:

The Nazis couldn't have done better. Having been in this job for over 16 years, I have never seen a more defamatory, obscene and vicious show on TV. And I mean about any religious or demographic group—not just Catholics. The lies about the Catholic Church, to say nothing of the vile language used by Penn Jillette, were positively astounding. Moreover, it never attempted to be comedic—from the very beginning it advertised the show as payback for 2,000 years of alleged crimes. This was Julius Streicher back from the grave.

In this half-hour show, the Catholic Church was blamed for every evil in history. Jillette said the “intolerance, greed, paranoia, hypocrisy and callous disregard for human suffering” was the hallmark of the Catholic Church. Others on the show branded the Church an “amoral” and “power hungry” institution that is just worried about its “cash flow.”

Jillette lied about the Vatican's reaction to Sabina Guzzanti, an Italian foul-mouthed comedian who staged an assault on the pope in 2008: the pope never sought to throw “her sexy ass in jail” and never once sought any punitive measure against

her—it's all a bald face lie! Jillette lied about a 1962 Vatican document—it was a statement about penalties for priests who used the confessional to solicit sex: it was not a cover-up for sexual misconduct! He lied about Pope Benedict XVI—he had absolutely nothing to do with overseeing cases of priestly sexual misconduct in the United States! And so on.

Spokesmen for Catholics for Choice, SNAP and Dignity—three anti-Catholic groups that lie about their Catholic status—twisted, distorted and ridiculed Church teachings on sexuality.

I have asked to meet with Les Moonves of CBS. On Monday, we will have a mass mailing of DVD copies of this episode to bishops and religious leaders across the nation. This cannot go unanswered.

Contact CBS rep Nancy Tellem at [nancy.tellem@tvc.cbs.com](mailto:nancy.tellem@tvc.cbs.com)

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## **IS OBAMA LYING? OR JUST MISINFORMED?**

President Obama went on *BlogTalkRadio* yesterday to address health care reform. At one point he told the left-wing religious audience, “You’ve heard that this is all going to mean government funding of abortion. Not true.”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue replied as follows:

On July 17, the House Committee on Ways and Means approved the America’s Health Choices Act (H.R. 3200). In the course of the debate, it considered the following amendment, sponsored by Rep. Eric Cantor:

*No funds authorized under this Act (or an amendment made by this Act) may be used to pay for an abortion or to cover any part of the costs of any health plan that includes coverage of abortion, except in the case where a woman suffers from a physical disorder, physical injury, or physical illness that would, as certified by a physician, place the woman in danger of death unless an abortion is performed, including a life-endangering physical condition caused by or arising from the pregnancy itself, or unless the pregnancy is the result of an act of forcible rape or incest.*

In other words, the amendment barred “government funding of abortion.” It failed: 19 voted for it and 22 voted against it.

Obama said yesterday that there is “a lot of misinformation” about this issue. So which is it? Was he lying when he said there would be no government funding of abortion? Or was he just misinformed? If it’s the latter, then someone needs to get him up to speed real fast. If it’s the former, then we have the makings of an ethical crisis in the White House.

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## **PLANNED PARENTHOOD RIPS BISHOPS**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments today on remarks made yesterday by Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood:

Planned Parenthood is getting restless knowing that its abortion-happy health care reforms are on the skids. Cecile Richards is now accusing the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops of seeking to make “American women second-class citizens.” And that’s just the danger they are doing at

home. Abroad, “their hard-line opposition to women’s rights also endangers millions of women around the globe.” Why they haven’t been locked up, she does not say.

Richards was recently summoned to the White House to discuss health care reform. Is this the kind of advice she was given—to lash out at Catholic bishops? If not, then someone needs to rein her in before the whole health care package blows up in their face.

Richards is either ignorant or lying when she says “comprehensive reproductive health care [is] supported by the majority of Americans.” In fact, nearly two in three Americans (63 percent) favor laws preventing the use of taxpayer funds for abortions. But no matter, data never convince ideologues.

This is great. The American people are called fascists by U.S. Congressmen because they oppose the health care bills now on the table, and Catholic bishops are told by one of the leading proponents of health care reform that they are a threat to human rights. This is the politics of self-destruction on steroids.

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## **PENN & TELLER MUST GO**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on an ad he wrote for today’s edition of *Variety*:

Today’s ad in *Variety* (click [here](#)) is a direct response to the latest hate speech by Penn & Teller against Catholics. Both Penn Jillette, and Showtime (owned by CBS), are flagging the attack on the Vatican that is featured in its season finale, August 27. Given the history of Penn & Teller’s vicious record of Catholic bashing, we have no reason to doubt that this

episode will be particularly vile. In the ad, we cited previous examples of their malicious assaults, especially on Mother Teresa.

CBS management has spoken to the Catholic-bashing duo before, but to no effect. Though we are not calling for CBS/Showtime to cancel the upcoming episode, we are saying that the time has come to pull the plug on their show; their contract should not be renewed. Those who agree should contact Matthew Blank, the Chairman and CEO of Showtime.

Contact: [Matthew.Blank@Showtime.net](mailto:Matthew.Blank@Showtime.net)

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## **BREAK POINT FOR OBAMA AND CATHOLICS**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue says relations between President Barack Obama and Catholics are at a critical juncture:

Exactly two weeks ago today, President Obama met with some Catholic journalists, telling them, "I don't know any circumstances in which abortion is a happy circumstance or decision." This begs the question: Why are his surrogates in the Democratic party pushing to make the public pay for a procedure that always makes women (and children) so unhappy? To be exact, over the past week, amendments to the health care reform bill sponsored by Sen. Orrin Hatch and Sen. Mike Enzi that would prohibit the public funding of abortion have gone down in defeat, all to the applause of the Obama administration. Something has got to give. If abortion is bad, then it makes no sense to subsidize it. After all, there is a reason why we don't subsidize air or water pollution.

On that same day, the president pledged to support “robust” conscience-clause protections for health care workers. This was in keeping with the pledge he made at Notre Dame in May. “Let’s honor the conscience of those who disagree with abortion,” he told the graduates, “and draft a sensible conscience clause...” This begs the question: Why are his surrogates in the Democratic party pushing to kill conscience rights? To be exact, yesterday the Democrats killed an amendment by Sen. Tom Coburn to provide conscience-rights protections for health care workers.

This is break point for Obama and Catholics. The president either means what he says when he talks to Catholics, or he doesn’t.

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## **DEBUNKING THE MYTH-BUSTERS: ABORTION IS IN HEALTH BILLS**

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented today on the health care bills:

In today’s New York *Daily News*, there is an article seeking to debunk various myths about the health care bills. Unfortunately, the two reporters were guilty of floating the myth that “None of the bills working their way through Congress provides any federal funds for abortion.” Thus does the *Daily News* join a list of other media outlets that have disseminated this nonsense; AP had the decency to reverse itself.

Abortion *is* in the bills. Here’s the proof: Amendments to explicitly exclude abortion from the bills have been sponsored by Rep. Bart Stupak, Rep. Joe Pitts, Rep. Eric Cantor, Rep.



Sam Johnson, Sen. Mike Enzi and Sen. Orrin Hatch. In every case, they lost. Want more proof? When Rep. Pitts asked Committee Counsel about whether the amendment by Rep. Lois Capps would allow the secretary of health and human services (HHS) to cover abortion in the public plan, he was told it did. And since HHS head Kathleen Sebelius supports partial-birth abortion, is there anyone in his right mind who thinks she would balk at authorizing abortion? Want more proof? On Aug. 10, when Rep. Zoe Lofgren was specifically asked about this subject, she said, "Abortion will be covered as a benefit by one or more of the healthcare plans available to Americans, and I think it should be."

Let's be frank: abortion is no more mentioned specifically in these bills than appendectomies are, but because both are legal, both are understood to be included. That is why attempts to exclude abortion were made. That they failed should settle the issue. Yet the following pro-abortion groups continue to lie and say abortion isn't covered: NARAL, Planned Parenthood, Center for American Progress and People for the American Way. Interestingly, *MoveOn.org* is firing e-mails all over debunking five myths about the bills. It is correct on all five. Noticeably absent from its list is abortion. That's because they know it's in the bills.

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## **OBAMA SEEKS RELIGIOUS SUPPORT FOR BILL; BISHOPS ALREADY SAY NO**

On August 19, President Barack Obama will join in a call-in and audio Webcast with religious leaders seeking to win their

support for a health care bill. Catholic League president Bill Donohue explains why the bishops won't be on board:

Yesterday, Justin Cardinal Rigali, chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, reaffirmed the bishops' position that it is unacceptable to include abortion funding in a health care reform bill. His [letter](#) was sent to every member of the House.

While commending some efforts to include protection for state laws regulating abortion, and leaving intact existing federal laws governing conscience rights, Rigali drew a line in the sand regarding two features of the House bill: (a) he objected to the provision that the Secretary of Health and Human Services would be empowered to mandate abortion coverage in the public plan, and (b) he labeled as a "legal fiction" and an "illusion" the argument that the bill doesn't, in effect, provide federal subsidies for abortion.

Cardinal Rigali was especially forceful in pointing out low-income Americans opposed to abortion will be "**forced by the federal government**" (his emphasis) to pay for abortions when they purchase the public plan. Which means that practicing Catholic non-white poor women will be forced to pay for the abortions of rich white women—women who equate abortion with a root canal.

It's not too late for Obama to get the bishops, and most Catholics, on board. He can bring them back to the table if he follows the model of his predecessors—bar the government from funding abortions as a health care benefit. If he doesn't, if he sticks to his guns and seeks to coerce Americans into funding abortion, it will be a mistake of monumental importance.

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# EEOC-CHARLOTTE UNDER SCRUTINY

The following letter was written today by Catholic League president Bill Donohue to Reuben Daniels, Jr., director of the Equal Employment Opportunity District Office in Charlotte, North Carolina:

Dr. William Thierfelder, president of Belmont Abbey College, was notified in March that an investigation by your office of alleged wrongdoing was closed. At issue was the right of a Catholic college not to provide coverage for abortion, artificial contraception and voluntary sterilization. Now he has been informed that the case has been reopened.

Would you please submit to me all documentation, including e-mails, office memos, and the like, that are relevant to this reversal? For example, if an error in judgment was initially made, it is important to know what it was and who made it. It is also vitally important to know the exact reasons why this case has been resurrected, and whose decision it was.

I am not pointing fingers, just doing my job. And that job is to combat discrimination against Catholics and defamation against the institutional Church. As you know, the First Amendment insulates religious decision-making from the purview of state authorities in most instances. If it is your position that the First Amendment is not operative in this case, I would appreciate knowing why.

This issue arises at a time when millions of Catholics, led by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, are gravely concerned about religious rights being jeopardized under new health care bills. It is important, therefore, that you allay our concerns by providing evidence that there is no animus against Belmont Abbey, a Catholic institution.

Contact: [Reuben.Daniels@eeoc.gov](mailto:Reuben.Daniels@eeoc.gov)