

LAWMAKER MARKEY RIPS BISHOP DIMARZIO

Catholic League president Bill Donohue addresses remarks made yesterday by New York Assemblywoman Margaret Markey:

Catholics in New York State are very concerned about a bill sponsored by Assemblywoman Margaret Markey that would discriminate against the Catholic Church by opening the door to endless claims of sexual abuse while at the same time giving the public schools a pass. Obviously, Catholic leaders oppose her bill and much prefer the legislation sponsored by Assemblyman Vito Lopez which would establish an equal playing field for private and public institutions alike. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that Brooklyn Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio would vigorously oppose Markey's bill and support Lopez's effort. What is surprising is the disturbing language used by Markey in retaliation.

Markey has accused Bishop DiMarzio of being "on the borderline of jeopardizing his not-for-profit status." She also went so far as to warn him: "If I were the bishop, I would walk very cautiously."

I have news for Markey: If I were her, I would not try to intimidate a bishop. Not only does she show absolutely no respect for the First Amendment provisions guaranteeing freedom of speech and freedom of religion, her attempt to silence any religious leader shows utter contempt for elementary standards of decency.

I might add that her silence in the wake of countless efforts by leaders of other religions working against legislation they find inimical to the best interests of their community smacks of prejudice and duplicity. If she wants to sponsor legislation that would muzzle the free speech of all religious

leaders, then she should do so. Failing that, she should get off her high horse and stop with her ugly threats against Bishop DiMarzio.

Contact Markey at MarkeyM@assembly.state.ny.us

FREE SPEECH IN CONNECTICUT: CATHOLICS NEED NOT APPLY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue addresses the state of free speech for Catholics in Connecticut:

Three months ago, two lawmakers from Connecticut sought a state takeover of the governing structure of the Catholic Church. This gambit, which we properly labeled a “fascist stunt,” lost. The reason it lost is because of the courageous reaction of Catholics, led by their bishops, and organizations like the Catholic League. Among the steps taken to thwart this unconstitutional abridgement of religious liberty was a rally at the state Capitol.

In retaliation, some state officials are now seeking to penalize the Roman Catholic Diocese of Bridgeport, led by Bishop William E. Lori. They have accused the Bridgeport Diocese of breaking the state’s lobbying laws. On May 29, Bishop Lori filed suit seeking an injunction to stop the punitive measures from being implemented.

What is at stake is practically every liberty enshrined in the First Amendment: freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, religious liberty and the provision guaranteeing separation of church and state. First the tyrants sought to take control of the Catholic Church, and now their lackeys are trying to

muzzle the free speech of Catholics. Had this been reversed—had the bishops sought to take command of the legislative functions of the state of Connecticut and then proceeded to get a gag order placed on lawmakers—everyone who is now silent would be apoplectic.

Just last month, there was a rally in Hartford demanding universal health care. According to *Courant.com*, approximately 140 “clergy and religious folks marched to the state Capitol to ask to talk. They wore clerical collars, suit coats and hijabs, and chanted and carried signs that said, ‘Muslims for Health Care,’ and ‘Health Care for All.’” This rally occasioned no threats by state officials of any kind.

Contact Carol Carson, the person who is behind this anti-Catholic effort and is being sued by the Diocese of Bridgeport: Carol.carson@ct.gov

SCAPEGOATING O'REILLY

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a story in today's *New York Times* that details how some of Bill O'Reilly's critics are trying to blame him for the death of Dr. George Tiller:

In all of Bill O'Reilly's denunciations of Dr. George Tiller, he never once called for anyone to even post his address on the web, never mind call for his death. Yet O'Reilly is being blamed for Tiller's murder. If O'Reilly's critics had any sense of decency, or fairness, they would have long condemned what *Hustler* king Larry Flynt once said about the Fox News Network personality.

On August 5, 2003, Flynt launched a National Prayer Day,

calling for O'Reilly's death. Flynt asked God "to afflict Bill O'Reilly with a brain aneurysm that will lead to his slow and painful death. O, Lord, may his blood vessels bulge out of his head and explode without mercy."

To my knowledge, none of O'Reilly's foes have ever damned Flynt for this despicable comment. They therefore have zero moral capital to lash out at O'Reilly for his criticisms of a man who proudly took the lives of over 60,000 children.

THE POLITICS OF TILLER'S DEATH

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented on the death of Dr. George Tiller:

The Catholic League unequivocally condemns the killing of serial killer, Dr. George Tiller. As I said on the CBS Evening News, "We have to get the message out that life means we have to respect all life, including somebody as bad as Dr. Tiller was." Unfortunately, his death has already occasioned a highly political response from his allies.

From what we know of the suspect, Scott Roeder, the ex-con fits the profile of a deranged man. Yet there are those who are already trying to pin the blame on others. Andrew Sullivan and the *Daily Kos* have fingered Bill O'Reilly and are running a video of O'Reilly's past denunciations of Tiller. Worse than this irresponsible accusation is the hypocrisy of the *Daily Kos*: above the O'Reilly video is an advertisement for an upcoming interview on C-Span2 with Bill Ayers, the urban terrorist who is a hero in some left-wing circles.

Others are busy collectivizing the guilt. Kim Gandy, president of the National Organization for Women, refers to "those who are behind this murder," suggesting that this is part of a pro-life cabal. Vicki Saporta, president of the National Abortion Federation, also blames "individuals" for Tiller's death. Similarly, Dr. Warren Hern, a late-term abortionist from Colorado, said Tiller's death was the result of "a fascist movement in this country."

Perhaps the ultimate politicization is the decision by U.S. Attorney Eric Holder ordering federal marshals to protect "other appropriate people and facilities around the nation." Thus does Holder feed the frenzy of the pro-abortion industry that what happened to Tiller is the work of the pro-life community. We will closely monitor these developments.