

IS GLENN BECK ANTI-CHRISTIAN?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue weighs in on the flap over Glenn Beck's comment that people should leave their church if it is promoting "social justice":

Glenn Beck has been slammed all week for his flip remark, and some have accused him of being anti-Christian. Let's examine what he said.

Beck said that "social justice" and "economic justice" are "code words." Of course they are: they are code for economic redistribution. "Pro-life" is also a code word—it means anti-abortion. For the record, the Catholic Church embraces both a social justice and pro-life position. It is pro-union, believes in universal health care, promotes a "preferential option for the poor," and is opposed to abortion, assisted suicide and embryonic stem cell research.

Many are hammering Beck for saying, "Am I advising people to leave their church? Yes!" A closer read of what he said shows he followed that quip with, "If I am going to Jeremiah Wright's church. If you have a priest that is pushing social justice, go find another parish."

Beck didn't say Christians should abandon their religion. He recommended shopping around to find a more conservative parish if one is dissatisfied with hearing left-wing sermons. Nothing new about that. In the Catholic Church, there are priests who are stridently left-wing and stridently right-wing; many parishioners shop accordingly. Protestants shop by leaving one denomination for another. And so on.

Some of those who have criticized Beck have done so in a sincere way. Others are just phonies. Just yesterday, we dealt with an issue which is far more serious than a sarcastic remark—we called out a radical feminist leader for branding pro-life Catholic congressman Bart Stupak "un-American." And

the day before we protested news stories accusing the bishops of “polluting” the health care debate. But we heard nothing from the social justice crowd about these matters. Wonder why.

POWERFUL JEW QUIETLY SHAPING ABORTION, HEALTH BILL DEBATE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments as follows:

No, this is not a news release about Rahm Emanuel, though it could have been. After all, he is the pro-abortion Jew who is working quietly to shape the health bill. But I wouldn't have characterized his lobbying that way. Why? Because to do so would have smacked of Jew-baiting. NPR, however, ran an article today about Richard Doerflinger, the pro-life point man for the bishops, that read, “Powerful Catholic Quietly Shaping Abortion, Health Bill Debate.” The inartful headline marred an otherwise fair piece.

NPR looks innocent next to others. In the past week, Slate.com has questioned, “Whither Ecumenism? Catholics Interfere with a Rival Doctrine.” Newsweek ran a piece entitled, “When Bishops Play Politics: A New Generation Gets Righteous.” Examiner.com used this headline: “Religion Pollutes, Threatens Health Care Reform via Abortion, Catholic Bishops.” And RHRealityCheck.org posted an article beckoning readers to “take a good, hard look at just how the Bishops are cooking it up...Covering-up their real intentions with lofty sentiments about morality and justice while they cook-away, and deal-away, behind closed doors....”

“Jews Interfere.” “When Rabbis Play Politics: A New Generation Gets Righteous.” “Religion [Judaism] Pollutes.” “Rabbis Deal-Away, Behind Closed Doors.” Such bigotry would never be published by any of the aforementioned media outlets.

Now the inevitable. Connie Saltonstall, a Michigan activist, has decided to challenge Rep. Bart Stupak in the Democratic primary; Stupak is leading the fight against abortion coverage in the health bill. Citing his “personal, *religious* views,” she says it is “reprehensible” for him to “deprive his constituents of needed health care reform because of those views.” (My italics.) You guessed it—Stupak is Catholic.

MUSLIM MASSACRE OF CHRISTIANS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue calls into question media coverage of Muslim violence against Christians in Nigeria:

According to *The Australian*, “dozens of bodies lined the streets” of three Christian villages in northern Nigeria. “Other victims of the weekend’s Muslim fury jammed a local morgue, the limbs of slaughtered children tangled in a grotesque mess.” Children were scalped, “most had severed hands and feet,” and “officials estimate that 500 people were massacred in night-time raids by rampaging Muslim gangs.” According to one eyewitness media account, “They then set homes on fire and attacked men, women and children. Many were decapitated.”

Now here is how CNN is reporting the story. “Gangs of machete-wielding Muslims have been blamed for the weekend slaughter of hundreds of Christian villagers in Nigeria, but analysts say it would be wrong to assume the conflict was rooted in

religion.” Of course: When Muslims massacre Christians, religion never has anything to do with it.

“Some analysts,” the story continues, “believe the weekend slaughter was a revenge attack for the killing of around 150 members of the Hausa Muslim community by Christian mobs in Kuru Karama south of Jos, in January 2010.” Well, let’s see. Back in January, a U.N. media outlet reported that Muslim and Christian leaders in Kuru Karama, a predominantly Muslim village, “met to make a pact with the police to defend any attacks by outsiders.” But guess what happened? “Several hours later youths armed with machetes attacked the village.” And we know who likes machetes.

Back to CNN. It cited an ugly Muslim-Christian incident in 2001 in the same area. What started the Muslim massacre back then? “A Christian woman had tried to cross the road through a group of Muslims during Friday prayers.” Yeah, that’ll do it every time.

It’s time to stop viewing Muslim-Christian violence through the lens of moral equivalency.

MEDIA BIAS ON RELIGIOUS COVERAGE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue offers several examples of media bias drawn from today’s newspapers:

Orthodox Rabbi Baruch Lebovits was found guilty yesterday on eight counts of sexually abusing a 16-year old boy in

Brooklyn. When a Catholic priest is *accused* of embezzlement—never mind sexual abuse—it typically merits a front-page story in the New York *Daily News* and the *New York Post*; the *New York Times* usually places such stories in a less prominent spot. On Rabbi Lebovits, the *Daily News* ran a 334-word story on p. 15; the *Post* put a 143-word piece on p. 6; and the *Times* ignored it altogether.

The *New York Times* ran another lengthy story today about Charles Pellegrino, author of a book on Hiroshima that has been withdrawn by his publisher over concerns that Pellegrino used fraudulent sources and has been less than candid about his credentials and other matters. Both today's story, and the one from March 2, discuss some of Pellegrino's other writings, but neither mentions a book he co-wrote, *The Jesus Family Tomb*, that was widely shown to be a hoax: the book said there was evidence of a tomb housing the remains of Jesus and his family.

There are lots of Protestants and Jews who are pro-abortion and support the health care bill currently being considered, but their religion never seems to get mentioned in the press. The AP has a story today citing opposition to the bill from Rep. Bart Stupak, noting that he is a "Roman Catholic" who has been questioned about his religious views.

Regarding the Muslim murder of Christians in Nigeria, we found 34 headlines citing "religious" violence; four mentioned "Christian-Muslim violence"; and only one, *The Times* (of London), said anything like "Rampaging Muslim Gangs Trap Christian Victims in Nets."

None of this is by accident, and none of it is indicative of a cabal. It's all a reflection of a deep-seated anti-Catholic animus on the part of many elites. And these examples are all drawn from just today's news stories.

KANSAS WEIGHS BILL TO TAX CHURCHES

A bill in the Kansas House of Representatives that was initially introduced to repeal the sales tax exemption of all non-profit organizations was recently amended to target only religious non-profits. The bill, which will be debated next week, would penalize the Catholic Church and organizations like Catholic Charities, as well as other religions and charitable groups.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue commented as follows:

We would expect something this brazen in states like New York, Illinois or California, not Kansas. Surely the sponsors know that in the unlikely event they succeed, the courts will strike the legislation. Not only do houses of worship and their charitable ancillary groups fulfill the express purpose of granting a tax-exempt status in the first place—servicing the common good—they cannot be singled out among non-profits in such a discriminatory manner. If it were libraries, hospitals, foundations or colleges and universities that were subject to having their tax-exempt status pulled, it would be met with great resistance. Bet on Catholics, as well as Protestants, Jews and others, to register their outrage.

We know that due to incompetence and cowardice, Republicans and Democrats at the federal, state and local levels have created a fiscal nightmare for the American people. To think they can resolve this issue by punishing the faithful is as irresponsible as it is delusional.

Kansas House Speaker Mike O'Neal is opposed to the bill.

Contact: mike.oneal@house.ks.gov

REMEMBER—MIKE IS ON OUR SIDE!!!

SENATE TO VOTE ON DAWN JOHNSEN

After failing to win approval to head the Office of Legal Counsel in the Justice Department last year, Dawn Johnsen was renominated by President Obama this year. Today, the Senate Judiciary Committee approved her; her nomination will now go before the full Senate.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue reacted this way:

In the minds of many, on both sides of the aisle, Dawn Johnsen is considered controversial for many reasons. Of interest to the Catholic League is one issue—her anti-Catholic bigotry.

In 1988, Dawn Johnsen worked on a brief, *United States Catholic Conference v. Abortion Rights Mobilization*, that sought to strip the Catholic Church of its tax-exempt status. The brief could have targeted all those religions which are anti-abortion, but it did not. Instead, it singled out the Catholic Church for punishment.

I am writing today to every member of the Senate asking just one question: Are you aware that Dawn Johnsen, who will soon be voted upon by the full Senate, sought to strip the Roman Catholic Church of its tax-exempt status in 1988?

My letter is intended as a big FYI.

SEBELIUS MISLEADS ON HEALTH BILL

Rep. Bart Stupak and Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius appeared on "Good Morning America" today to discuss abortion funding in the health care bill endorsed by President Obama. Stupak maintained that the bill provides for abortion coverage; Sebelius said it did not.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue shows that Sebelius is wrong:

On December 8, 2009, CNN reported that "The Senate on Tuesday rejected an amendment to tighten restrictions on federal funding for abortion in the sweeping health care bill it is debating." It added that the amendment "mirrored language in the House bill that prevents any health plan receiving federal subsidies from offering coverage of abortion."

On November 5, 2009, the *New York Times* quoted Harvard Law professor Laurence Tribe who wrote a memorandum analyzing the House bill. He said that the House bill, "as it currently stands, does not authorize governmental funding of abortion."

Now if the Senate rejected an amendment that "mirrored language in the House bill," and the House bill "does not authorize governmental funding of abortion," then it is obvious that Sebelius misled the nation. And I would add, willfully so.

“DON’T ASK, DON’T TELL” ALARMS THE FAITHFUL

Catholic League president Bill Donohue explains why it is necessary for those reviewing the military’s “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy to study the free speech and religious liberty implications of repealing it:

Over the past week, I have had many discussions with people from several religions about the decision to withdraw the invitation previously extended to Tony Perkins from speaking at a National Prayer Luncheon at Andrews Air Force Base. The invitation was pulled because Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, supports “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.” In response, I wrote a letter to Maj. Gen. Darrell D. Jones, Commander of the Air Force District of Washington, expressing my concerns. Recent conversations have convinced me that much more is at issue than just the Perkins travesty.

At issue are the legitimate concerns of many in the Catholic and Protestant communities: What will happen to the free speech and religious liberty rights of those who serve in the military, especially the clergy, if “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is repealed?

We will now contact the Senate Armed Services Committee asking for a review of the impact that a repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” might have on these First Amendment rights. We will also contact those in charge of leading the assessment of gays in the military, namely, Jeh Johnson, general counsel for the Department of Defense, and Gen. Carter Ham, U.S. Army Forces Europe commander.

What we need to know is obvious. If Perkins, who is a civilian, is being punished for supporting the existing policy, God only knows what will happen to those in uniform if

they voice disapproval of a new policy. Until this constitutional issue is resolved, further review of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” should be put on ice.

BIGOTRY ENTERS MICHIGAN COURTROOM

Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights is filing a formal complaint today with the Michigan Attorney Grievance Committee regarding the anti-Catholic comments made by defense attorney Henry Scharg; it is also pursuing other avenues of redress.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue explains why:

In a Wayne County Circuit Court trial concerning a woman charged with smothering her newborn daughter to death, her attorney, Henry Scharg, has sought repeatedly to malign trial judge Dan Ryan, accusing him of allowing his Catholic religion to color his judgment in the case. Not only has Scharg called into question Ryan’s affiliation with Ave Maria Law School, he has sought to remove the judge from the case.

What happened on March 1, however, was much worse. Scharg was angered over the fact that Ryan was taking vacation time to teach at Ave Maria on Mondays (the fact that Ryan rearranged his Monday schedule this past week to accommodate Scharg undercuts his complaint). In any event, on p. 10 of the transcript from Monday’s hearing, Scharg is quoted as saying, “This is the equivalent to an African-American man being on trial and the judge taking Mondays off to attend Klan meetings.”

Scharg has no business representing anyone. To compare an accredited Catholic law school to a racist terrorist organization is more than despicable—it constitutes rank anti-Catholic bigotry. Indeed, this remark is so egregious as to warrant severe punitive sanctions, if not disbarment. We will do what we can to see that justice is done.

Contact Executive Court Administrator Ronald R. Ruffin:
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D . C . ARCHDIOCESE HALTS SPOUSAL BENEFITS

Starting today, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington will no longer extend health benefits to spouses of new employees and to spouses of current employees not already receiving these benefits.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue supports this decision:

This decision by the Washington Archdiocese was driven by the marriage inequity activists who will brook no dissent in their crusade to ram their gay-marriage agenda down the throats of the faithful. They know full well that no Catholic entity is about to prostitute its own teachings merely to do business with the government. Unfortunately, that is exactly what is at stake: Catholic Charities had to halt spousal health benefits lest it be sued for discriminating against homosexuals who will shortly claim to be married in the District.

Nature, not the Catholic Church, was the first to ordain that

it is biologically incongruous for a man and a man to conceive a child. That ability is wholly the reserve of a man and a woman, and no amount of social and legal fictions can alter it. This issue isn't about equality, it is about creating an inequitable condition—allowing people of the same sex the same rights afforded men and women—that will only disable the institution of marriage in the long run. Which is why it must be resisted.