

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and religious liberty rights of those who serve in the military, especially the clergy, if “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is repealed?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.

JESUS-TOMB HOAX EXPOSED AGAIN

During Lent of 2007, movie director James Cameron released a documentary on the Discovery Channel claiming to have evidence of a Jerusalem tomb that allegedly houses the remains of Jesus and his family. Working with Cameron was Dr. Charles Pellegrino, who co-authored a book on the subject with Simcha Jacobovici, *The Jesus Family Tomb: The Discovery, the Investigation, and the Evidence That Could Change History*. Catholic League president Bill Donohue debated Cameron and Jacobovici on “Larry King Live” and confronted Pellegrino on the “Today Show.” He argued that the entire story was a “Titanic Fraud.”

News reports today confirm that Henry Holt & Company has halted printing of *The Last Train from Hiroshima* by Charles Pellegrino. The publisher states that one of the key sources the author relied on was a fraud (not disputed by Pellegrino). Also questioned is the existence of two priests mentioned in the book (the author concedes that there is no such person as Father John MacQuitty, but that a pseudonym was used which he “forgot to disclose in the book’s acknowledgments”). Finally, Victoria University says he was never awarded a Ph.D.

Bill Donohue comments as follows:

I knew these guys were blowing smoke. After all, Israeli archaeologists were quick to dismiss their claims, as were professors from the Biblical Archaeology Society. Beyond this, how did I know this was a hoax? Here is what I told Pellegrino on the "Today Show" about the book he co-authored: "There's not one citation in the book, there's not one footnote, there's not one endnote. Both of us have doctorates. We know the way science proceeds. You go through a peer review or you present your findings in a scientific journal." Now I know that unlike my Ph.D. (from NYU), his is a fraud. Just like the entire caper.

The larger issue is why many in the media were so willing to swallow the Jesus-tomb moonshine in the first place. I have a hunch, and it's unsettling.