

MAUREEN DOWD IS IRRESISTIBLE



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Maureen Dowd's column in today's *New York Times*:

"As though Bill Donohue didn't have enough to be cranky about." That's how Maureen starts her article. She had some good fun, at my expense, as she ripped into my criticism of Nicki Minaj's obscene and bigoted skit at the Grammys.

Maureen wasn't offended. Liberal Catholics never are. Oh, yes, they can get mighty angry when someone says Catholics can't think for themselves. That kind of anti-Catholic bigotry bothers them immensely. But when their religion is trashed by celebrities, they reflexively take the opportunity to show how open-minded they are. Indeed, their tolerance for intolerance is infinite, provided, of course, that the object of intolerance is their own religion. But watch out if a bigot rips into Jews or Muslims—they will have none of it. Homosexuals, obviously, are also off-limits.

Trying to get inside the head of a liberal Catholic is not easy, but it sure is fun. That's why Maureen is so irresistible.

DO CATHOLICS OPPOSE THE OBAMA MANDATE?



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments as follows:

Survey research was pioneered by Columbia University sociologists during World War II. By the time I was studying for my doctorate in sociology at New York University in the 1970s, the scientific nature of survey research had made great strides. But much depends on the methodology, as well as the questions asked.

The *New York Times* is reporting today that a majority of Catholics (it does not cite the percentage, either in the article or on the *New York Times*/CBS Poll website) “are at odds with the [Catholic] church’s official stance.”

A survey by the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life reports that 55 percent of all Catholics, and 63 percent of those who attend church weekly, are opposed to the Obama mandate.

A Rasmussen survey found that 77 percent of Catholics oppose the Obama mandate.

What’s going on? The *Times* asked respondents, “Do you support or oppose a recent federal requirement that private health insurance plans cover the full cost of birth control for their female patients?” Notice there was no mention of the religious liberty implications, nor of the issue of exemptions. It’s just about free services for women.

Pew asked whether there should be an exemption for religiously affiliated institutions that object. Similarly, Rasmussen asked whether “individuals should have the right to choose between different types of health insurance plans.”

In short, how the question is framed affects the answer. I will leave it to the reader to decide whether the *Times* asked about the real issue.

GEORGE WILL AND JAY CARNEY ARE BOTH WRONG



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on remarks recently made by columnist George Will and White House Press Secretary Jay Carney:

On Sunday, George Will said the following: “The Catholic bishops, it serves them right. They’re the ones who were really hot for ObamaCare, with few exceptions. But they were all in favor of this.”

Yesterday, Jay Carney said: “And I would simply note with regard to the bishops that they never supported healthcare reform to begin with.”

Both men are factually wrong.

Jay Carney needs a history lesson. No institution in American society has supported universal healthcare longer than the Catholic Church; they’ve been pushing for healthcare reform since Carney was riding a tricycle. The first Catholic

hospitals in the United States were founded by the Ursuline Sisters in the early eighteenth century—long before the American Revolution—and they served everyone, regardless of their ability to pay. Indeed, the first Catholic hospitals in history were founded in the fourth century, and from the very beginning they served non-Catholics, such as pagans.

George Will cannot name a single bishop—not one—who backed ObamaCare. On February 27, 2009, just a month after he was inaugurated, President Obama undid a Bush administration rule granting conscience rights to healthcare employees who refuse to take part in abortions. It was that kind of decision that eventually led the bishops to oppose ObamaCare.

The bishops have long championed universal healthcare as an American right. It's just that their idea of caring for people doesn't include killing some of them.

IS NICKI MINAJ POSSESSED?



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on what happened last night at the Grammys:

Nicki Minaj, fresh off looking like a fool with Madonna at the Super Bowl, showed up last night on the red carpet at the Grammys with a guy dressed like the pope. This was just a prelude of what was to come.

Minaj's performance began on stage with a mock confessional skit. This was followed by a taped video depicting a mock

exorcism. With stained glass in the background, she appeared on stage again with choir boys and monks dancing.

Perhaps the most vulgar part was the sexual statement that showed a scantily clad female dancer stretching backwards while an altar boy knelt between her legs in prayer. Finally, "Come All Ye Faithful" was sung while a man posing as a bishop walked on stage; Minaj was shown levitating.

None of this was by accident, and all of it was approved by The Recording Academy, which puts on the Grammys. Whether Minaj is possessed is surely an open question, but what is not in doubt is the irresponsibility of The Recording Academy. Never would they allow an artist to insult Judaism or Islam.

It's bad enough that Catholics have to fight for their rights vis-à-vis a hostile administration in Washington without also having to fend off attacks in the entertainment industry. The net effect, however, will only embolden Catholics, as well as their friends in other faith communities.

Contact Barb Dehgan, VP, Communications and Media Relations, The Recording Academy: barbd@grammy.com

OBAMA'S PLOY ADDS INSULT TO INJURY



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on President Obama's revised healthcare plan as it affects Catholic institutions:

President Obama's latest ploy just adds insult to injury. If the insurance plan of a Catholic institution must cover services it deems immoral, then such a healthcare plan is offensive, plain and simple.

The Catholic League, for example, uses Christian Brothers as its insurance carrier. So if a future employee of ours were to demand free abortion-inducing drugs, and she is allowed to request *free* drugs from Christian Brothers, then the rest of us would, in effect, be subsidizing her abortion. This is outrageous and will not stand judicial scrutiny.

When it comes to the First Amendment, there is no such thing as a half loaf. We want now, and in the future, the same rights we have enjoyed since the beginning of the republic.

The Obama ploy is also cynical: its effect is to peel off liberal Catholic opposition to Obamacare. In other words, the old divide and conquer strategy is in play. But it won't work as nicely as they think: there are too many practicing Catholics who will only be impelled to revolt.

Obama has decided to turn up the heat. He'll soon see how hot things get when Catholics team with Protestants, Jews, Mormons and others to recapture their First Amendment rights. Indeed, President Obama will now be remembered as the president who brought the culture war to a boil.

**BIRTH CONTROL IS NOT THE
ISSUE**



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the way the media are casting the controversy over the Obama healthcare plan:

In a name association game, when most people hear the words “birth control,” they think of the pill. Most Americans, including Catholics, treat the pill as something altogether different from abortion. So when pollsters ask about the Obama healthcare plan, framing the issue as one about birth control, it is not going to set off the alarms: mention abortion and everything changes. Now consider the evidence.

In a Lexis-Nexis search today, I linked the words “Catholic” “Obama” and “birth control,” and found that in the last week, there were 345 stories (there is always some repetition, particularly with wire services). Within this same grouping, when the words “morning-after pill” were included, the number dropped to 62; when “abortifacients” was linked to the initial three terms, there were 31 stories; and when the term “abortion-inducing drugs” was included, the number dropped to 20.

In other words, the media are framing the issue in terms of the least offensive issue. Add to this the fact that so many Americans just take a glimpse at the headline, which uniformly cites birth control, and the result is a massive distortion.

Why does the Obama plan include abortion-inducing drugs? Because that’s where he wants to go—he would like nothing better than to force all religious institutions to provide abortion coverage—and this is his way of prying the door open.

This issue is, first and foremost, about the First Amendment right to religious liberty. Secondly, it is about abortion. The lust for abortion that this administration has is

unparalleled, and its unrelenting drive to shove its radical secular agenda down the throats of the faithful is equally unprecedented.

OBAMA SPOKESMEN ARE INSINCERE



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on how President Obama's spokesmen are defending his healthcare plan mandating that Catholic institutions provide for services they deem immoral:

David Axelrod of the Obama campaign said yesterday that "We certainly don't want to abridge anyone's religious freedom, so we're going to look for a way to move forward that both provides women with the preventative care that they need and respects the prerogatives of religious institutions." Similarly, White House press secretary Jay Carney said yesterday that "the president is very interested in finding the appropriate balance between religious beliefs and convictions."

Both men are insincere. We know that there was division in the Obama administration when the Obama edict was being contemplated, and that the president sided with extremists like Kathleen Sebelius, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (anyone who raises money for a man dedicated to performing partial-birth abortions is obviously an extremist; she did so for Dr. George Tiller). So they had plenty of time to figure out a way not to punish Catholics, and they still decided to drop the hammer.

White House supporters of Obama's edict are pointing to a poll

that shows a slight majority of Catholics supporting Obama's plan. But the poll is flawed. As always, the question affects the outcome. The poll never mentioned that the federal government would place sanctions on Catholic institutions if they did not comply, and that ultimately it could lead to pulling federal funds to Catholic hospitals, effectively shutting them down. Nor did the poll mention that the Obama plan mandates that Catholic entities provide abortion-inducing drugs. In short, the question was dishonest. Just wait until all Catholics find out what's really at stake.

What Obama is doing is just an opening for mandating abortion coverage in every healthcare plan.

OBAMA PUSHED US TOO FAR



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the Obama administration's healthcare plan that effectively mandates that Catholic organizations provide coverage for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception and sterilization:

The Obama administration has made three strategic errors: 1) this issue is first and foremost not about contraception—it is about religious liberty 2) by mandating that Catholic entities provide coverage for abortifacients, the Obama administration has made it clear that its ultimate goal is to demand that all healthcare plans provide for abortion coverage, and 3) it seriously underestimated the clout of the bishops.

We have been inundated with support from Protestants, Jews, Mormons, and others. When the federal government seeks to

impose a radical secular agenda on religious entities, denying them the right to exercise their doctrinal prerogatives, it is trampling on the First Amendment rights of the faithful.

Everyone knows that contraception is not only inexpensive, it is widely available free of charge. What the Obama administration has done by demanding that Catholic non-profits provide coverage for abortion-inducing drugs is to put the camel's nose in the tent—the slippery slope mandating that Catholic hospitals perform abortions has been stepped on.

Today's crop of Catholic bishops, led by Cardinal-designate Timothy Dolan and Bishop William Lori (he heads the *Ad Hoc Committee on Religious Liberty*), is more willing than ever before to engage the culture and not walk away from a fight. So Obama's advisers really blew it big time when they counted on the usual Catholic passivity—these are not ordinary time.

We are currently weighing several options on how to proceed. No legal strategy is off the table. Stay tuned.

Click [here](#) to read the *drudgereport.com* piece on our effort

SEBELIUS CATHOLICISM

DISRESPECTS



In an article titled "Our Rule Respects Religion," Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius writes in today's *USA Today* that "we specifically carved out from the [healthcare] policy religious organizations that primarily employ people

of their own faith.”

Catholic League president Bill Donohue responds as follows:

Secretary Sebelius knows very well that Catholic agencies have a long and distinguished record of hiring and serving non-Catholics, so to say that they can only qualify for an exemption by turning away those who are not Catholic from Catholic schools, hospitals, hospices, orphanages, shelters for battered women, and the like, is a plea for *discrimination* and an insult to Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

Sebelius is wrong to say that the administration’s rule is identical to that of states like California. As Carol Hogan of the California Catholic Conference said last week, her state’s rule is not identical. Moreover, in states like Wisconsin, which are weighing various options on extending exemptions to religious entities, they are in a holding pattern until it is clear how Obamacare flushes out nationally.

Sebelius did not address the fact that Obamacare allows at least two religious groups an exemption—the Amish and Christian Scientists. So why does it discriminate against Catholics?

Last week, President Obama said at the National Prayer Breakfast that “We can’t leave our values at the door.” Someone needs to tell him that this moral imperative includes Catholics.

P.S. I just got back from Florida where I received the “Defender of the Faith Award” from Legatus, the group of Catholic CEO’s founded by Tom Monaghan. Never before have I seen Catholics as riled up as they are about this unprecedented assault on Catholic civil liberties. Stay tuned for further developments.

WILL MADONNA BEHAVE?



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on Madonna's Super Bowl halftime show:

On October 4, I issued a news release calling into question the propriety of having Madonna perform at the 2012 Super Bowl; she was rumored to be one of the artists under consideration. I advised against it, citing her anti-Catholic legacy. I also cited the decision of the NFL to rescind its invitation to 'N Sync's JC Chasez from singing during halftime of the 2004 Pro Bowl Game because of concerns over his behavior [to read that release click [here](#)].

On October 11, I made public a letter I sent that day in the overnight mail to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell asking him not to extend the invitation to Madonna [click [here](#) to read it]. He chose not to respond; subsequently, the 53-year-old pop star was selected to perform at the Super Bowl.

The ball is now in Goodell's court. Unfortunately for him, he no longer has control of it—Madonna does. Now let's see if she behaves. If she doesn't, Goodell will have to answer to all Americans.

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