

OBAMA SHOULD RETURN MAHER'S DONATION



Catholic League president Bill Donohue makes public his letter to President Barack Obama. To read our report on Bill Maher, click [here](#). Donohue's letter is printed below.

Dear Mr. President:

On March 6th, you called for more civility in the national dialogue on important issues. One way to demonstrate your fidelity to this noble goal would be to return the \$1 million donation that Bill Maher recently gave to a superPAC that is supporting your reelection.

If Maher had made one or two untoward comments about priests over the years, that would hardly be cause for concern. But that is not the case. In fact, he has a long history of speaking about priests in the most degrading and despicable way possible. And it is not just priests who are the target of his vitriol: Maher's remarks about Jesus, Our Blessed Mother, and the Sacraments are similarly obscene.

Please take the time to read what Bill Maher has said about Roman Catholicism; a copy of his comments is enclosed. I am certain you will be revolted by his hate speech.

It would be a very important cultural marker if you would return his donation. I look forward to reading your response.

Sincerely,

William Donohue

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT



Catholic League president Bill Donohue responds to a post today on the Catholic News Service (CNS) website:

In a blog post today titled “Setting the Record Straight,” CNS seriously misrepresents the position of the Catholic League. CNS was taken to task by us yesterday for not listing on its website as a feature story the March 2 letter from Cardinal Timothy Dolan, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, to his fellow bishops.

After fielding a complaint by CNS—they maintained that a story on Dolan’s letter was sent to its client list on March 5—we amended our news release. What is troubling, however, is the statement today by CNS that we “seriously misrepresented” this issue. We did not.

Our complaint turned on one matter: the failure of CNS to post as a prominent news story on its website the controversy over Cardinal Dolan’s letter. We knew they had posted an abbreviated story in both its “News Briefs” and blog section, but that is hardly the same as listing the story in its highly featured news story section. After all, they thought it important to highlight a story on the need of pastors to spend more time on church suppers. Surely Cardinal Dolan’s fight with the Obama administration over its attempt to abridge the religious liberty rights of Catholics merits at least equal

billing.

I just wanted to set the record straight.

SHILLING FOR OBAMA



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments as follows:

The Catholic left is so deep in the tank for Obama that they are working publicly to undermine the bishops. First a little background.

On March 2, Cardinal Timothy Dolan, speaking for the bishops, said that at a recent meeting between the bishops' conference staff and the White House staff, the former were told by the latter that the issue of religious liberty was "off the table." Moreover, following the February 10 Health and Human Services mandate, Bishop William Lori, the point man for the bishops on religious liberty, said there was "no prior consultation" with the bishops before the edict was issued.

In a piece for the Religion News Service today, David Gibson quotes an administration official who denies all of this, effectively saying Dolan and Lori are liars. The official says, "The White House has put nearly every issue requested by the bishops on the table for discussion...only to be rebuffed." Indeed, the operative even accuses "some bishops and staff" of

politicizing the issue. [Gibson refuses to name his source. So much for transparency.]

Gibson reports that “some USCCB staff members involved in the talks are veteran culture warriors” who often take “a harder line” than the bishops. But could they be more extreme than Alexia Kelley, the left-wing Catholic who presides over the near moribund faith-based programs? Before landing her White House job, she was funded by atheist billionaire George Soros; she ran a dummy Catholic entity, one that Soros greased to the tune of hundreds of thousands through his Open Society Institute.

Gibson also says that “Catholic officials from other institutions” are working more quickly to resolve problems than the bishops’ staff is. Again, we have no idea who they are. No matter, not only do these activists have no official standing, there is nothing for them to resolve—they’re all shilling for Obama.

CARDINAL DOLAN’S CHALLENGE



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the reaction to Cardinal Timothy Dolan’s letter of March 2 to the bishops:

As the president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Cardinal Timothy Dolan outlined last Friday his many concerns about the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) directive mandating that the insurance companies of religious employers pay for abortion-inducing

drugs, contraception and sterilization. For the most part, his letter has been met with stunning silence.

Dolan made it clear that the bishops will not budge in their demands for religious liberty. Neither the January 20 initial HHS Rule, nor the amended February 10th directive, satisfy religious liberty concerns. He correctly noted that “We’ll still have to pay” under the so-called accommodation provisions.

It was revealing to learn that when members of the USCCB recently met with the White House staff, they were told that the HHS Rule is set in cement. So much for dialogue. Moreover, the Obama staff informed the Catholic officials that they should follow the “enlightened” voices at *America* magazine (the Jesuits agree with the administration). Dolan was pointed in his criticism: “The White House seems to think we bishops simply do not know or understand Catholic teaching and so, taking a cue from its own definition of *religious freedom*, now has nominated its own handpicked official Catholic teachers.”

Catholic News Service never commented on, or posted, Cardinal Dolan’s letter in its “News Stories” section; instead, it relegated it to its blog postings [while there was no CNS story on this issue posted to its website, there was one that was sent to its client list]. The liberal Catholic media—*America*, *Commonweal* and the dissident *National Catholic Reporter*—have gone mute. Dolan’s challenge deserves a response.

The Catholic League commends Cardinal Dolan for telling it like it is. To read the letter that some don’t want you to read, click [here](#).

RELIGIOUS RIGHTS REJECTED



Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on today's Senate vote to table the "Respect for Rights of Conscience Act":

The 51-48 vote to table an amendment by Sen. Roy Blunt that would guarantee rights of conscience for the employees of religious institutions does not end the debate.

There is a bill sponsored by Rep. Jeff Fortenberry that would also secure conscience rights for people of faith, and it has already garnered a near-majority of House members. Also available as a possible remedy are the rights encoded in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. And, of course, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on the ObamaCare legislation later this month; a decision is expected in late spring.

The Obama administration has chosen to shut out the Catholic voice (save for the dissidents). Consider the following:

- Archbishop William Lori has said that there was no discussion between administration officials and the bishops prior to the decisions of January 20 and February 10 that effectively mandated Catholic institutions to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, contraception and sterilization.
- Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Kathleen Sebelius has admitted under questioning that the Justice Department was never asked to consider the religious-rights implications of her draconian directive.
- Dr. Linda Rosenstock, who served on a committee of the

Institute of Medicine that was empowered to study the HHS mandate, said on Tuesday that at no time did anyone on the committee ever weigh the issue of religious rights.

Obama does not want to dialogue—he wants to dictate. Game on.