

USCCB's Lame Defense of the CCHD

Well, it had to happen. The USCCB has come out with an attempt to rebut the American Life League's report of ongoing misuse of Catholic donation dollars by the CCHD. The USCCB rebuttal is here.

The USCCB alleges that ALL's report is nothing but a "repackaging of past charges already addressed by CCHD". To the USCCB: What are some examples of these "past charges" that have been corrected? I for one see no specific examples cited in the USCCB rebuttal. If no evidence of reform exists, I think it quite fair for ALL to broach those charges again.

One paragraph in the USCCB missive states, "They rely almost exclusively on unverified web-based information and primarily on internet sites of organizations that are NOT funded by CCHD. These accusations are almost always made without contact with the CCHD funded groups or diocesan staff."

Again, I'd like to see some specific examples. While we wait for such (and please don't hold your breath), let's look at some examples where the damning evidence is indeed on the CCHD grantees' websites.

I wrote an article last month that was published on Spero Forum and Defend Life. In it I examined some Maryland-based CCHD recipients. In the case for "Out For Justice", I pointed out where the very act of CCHD's funding of Out For Justice put them in partnership with the Open Society Institute. I then pointed out how the very website addresses themselves made plain that "People Acting Together in Howard" and "Partnership for Renewal in Southern and Central Maryland" are branches (respectively) of the Industrial Areas Foundation and the Gamaliel Foundation. Of course both these organizations - in their own websites - state quite openly their national affiliations with their Alinskyan parent organizations.

Here's a very confusing paragraph in the USCCB rebuttal: "Groups which work on legitimate issues were listed as 'partners' or 'members' of another organization which allegedly took actions in conflict with Catholic teaching. The CCHD funded group had never agreed to be a partner nor was a member of the other organization and had not participated in the development of an offending policy and was not even aware of the position that they were alleged to support. CCHD groups have asked that their names be removed and have protested the identification of their group with a policy that they had no role in developing, approving or advocating." Some clarification is in order. To wit:

If a CCHD group was unaware of an aberrant position taken by another "partner" or "member" organization, how could they have known that they should "protest identification"? (Refer to underlined portion.)

If indeed they were aware of another groups' anti-Catholic position and their name was misappropriated, why would not a CCHD group have initiated stronger action, such as a lawsuit? At the very least, one might have hoped that they would post a disclaimer on their own site.

Again (the perennial question), what are specific examples of such victimized CCHD groups? Also please cite the actions they have taken to correct those unfortunate identifications.

Here's some more smoke and mirrors: "Other accusations involve several CCHD funded groups offering sessions on their good work at a large meeting of thousands of people and a thousand other workshops, including some workshops and other activities in conflict with Catholic teaching. In

researching these allegations with local dioceses and groups, there was no evidence of CCHD funded groups supporting or participating in the objectionable workshops or activity, but rather they shared their own experiences on issues of common concern with the Catholic community and CCHD."

I don't know of any conference, etc that offers a "thousand other workshops". Usually these affairs offer maybe ten or twenty of them on given days during the conference. By the very act of joining in a conference, an organization lends to other organizations the credibility (or lack thereof) of its reputation to that of the other organizations; conversely it assumes some credibility (or lack thereof) of the others. Do the bishops think us so naive as to not realize that? In fact, would they be so blithe if the CCHD were giving a workshop just down the hall from a Ku Klux Klan or neo-nazi workshop? I think not.

Let me now call to all our minds an instance were indeed there was a real, authentic attempt to reform a diocesan CCHD program. In August 2010, Rey Flores, who was then the CCHD Director for the Archdiocese of Chicago, did initiate some real reforms. He rooted out a number of local grant recipients who were involved in anti-Catholic activities and replaced them with some pro-life pregnancy centers. However, the old progressive cartel in the archdiocese, led by liberal priests, rose up to dismantle the reforms and to return the Chicago CCHD to its function of siphoning Catholic dollars to progressive organizations. Flores himself was fired.

So much for "real reform" of the CCHD! We heard not so much as one peep from the national CCHD office about this debacle in Chicago. By the way, if ever there was a flouting of true social justice, it would be the treatment meted out to Rey Flores, who was fired for doing what he should have been doing - directing Catholic monies to worthwhile charities. Where was the justice due to Flores, when he, a father of a young family was fired and had to scramble for another job to feed his children?

It is my serious contention that the Catholic Campaign for Human Development is beyond reform. It is a blight upon Catholicism that should be abolished as soon as possible. At the very least, it should be stripped of the name "Catholic" (which it did not have originally) and expunged from the Church. Let's boycott any and all future collections and starve this nefarious beast.