The Catholic Connection to Barack Obama

by Phyllis Schlafly November 14, 2008

Google Ads are provided by Google and are not selected or endorsed by Eagle Forum

Do you wonder why 2008 election data show that the majority of Catholics voted for Barack Obama even though his record as Illinois State Senator proves him the most pro-abortion candidate who ever ran for President?

Perhaps one answer is that on the Sunday before Thanksgiving, millions of Catholics will again be putting in their church's collection plate their annual donation to what the pre-printed envelope calls "Campaign for Human Development: The Catholic Church working to end poverty and injustice in America; We'll turn your dollars into hope for the poor of our nation."

The generous Catholics who respond to that well-phrased appeal probably think they are making a Good Samaritan gift to provide necessaries to the down-and-out. Most would probably be shocked to learn that the money donated to the Campaign for Human Development (CHD) does not go for charity but for radical Obama-style community organizing.

Over the last ten years, CHD has given $7.3 million of Catholic-donated dollars to the Saul Alinsky-style group called ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now). When in 1998 some Catholics complained that CHD grants were not used for Catholic charity but were actually funding groups opposed to church teachings, CHD changed its name to Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD).

The name change did not redirect the flow of money. In 2007 alone, CCHD increased its support of ACORN, giving ACORN 37 grants totaling $1,037,000.

During 2007 and 2008, ACORN and its affiliated organizations were aggressively registering what they claimed were 1.3 million poor people. ACORN focused on new registrations in the key toss-up states of Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Florida.

You can listen on YouTube to clips from ACORN's national convention and decide for yourself how partisan it is.

CCHD knew how ACORN spent its money. CCHD's executive director, Ralph McCloud, admitted to Catholic News Service that "some of the funds that the Catholic Campaign contributed to ACORN in the past undoubtedly were used for voter registration drives."

Even though the pro-Obama political activity of ACORN had been widely reported, and employees of ACORN and affiliated organizations like Project Vote have been either indicted or convicted of submitting false voter registration forms in 14 states, in June 2008 CCHD approved grants of $1.13 million to 40 local ACORN affiliates for the cycle beginning July 1, 2008. Those grants were ratified by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops at its June 2008 meeting.

The CCHD-ACORN relationship suddenly became too embarrassing to ignore, and CCHD announced it was suspending (not canceling) the 2008 grants. But the reason given for suspension was not ACORN's partisan political activity or registration frauds; it was because Dale Rathke, the brother of ACORN founder Wade Rathke, had embezzled nearly $1 million from the organization and its affiliates back in 1999 and 2000.

CCHD also announced that it has formed a task force to ensure that Church funds are spent according to the guidelines of the Bishops' poverty-fighting program. Presumably, the previous millions of dollars given to ACORN were within the Bishops' guidelines.

Barack Obama knows the political value of ACORN. He gave $800,000 in campaign payments disguised as payments for "advance work" to an Alinsky front group called Citizen Services Inc.

Obama admits he got his start as a community organizer in Chicago, saying it was "the best education I ever had, better than anything I got at Harvard Law School." He tries to downplay his connection with ACORN, claiming he worked for churches, but he was trained by Alinsky's Industrial Areas Foundation and then spent years in the 1980s teaching the Alinsky method to others through several Alinsky offshoots such as Project Vote and Developing Communities Project in Chicago.

Saul Alinsky's son Lee David Alinsky felt compelled to remedy Obama's failure to give proper credit. In a letter to the Boston Globe in August after Obama's open-stadium rally in Denver, the younger Alinsky wrote: "Obama learned his lesson well. I am proud to see that my father's model for organizing is being applied successfully beyond local community organizing to affect the Democratic campaign in 2008. It is a fine tribute to Saul Alinsky as we approach his 100th birthday."

Saul Alinsky explained his community organizing tactics in his book "Rules for Radicals." His game plan was to divide the community into the Haves and the Have Nots, make the Have Nots believe they are unjustly treated by the Haves, build resentment against the American social and economic system, use church congregations to mobilize street agitators, and lobby government for higher taxes and big-spending welfare programs in order to confiscate the wealth and power of the Haves and turn it over to the Have Nots.

Alinsky dedicated his book to Lucifer, "the first radical known to man who rebelled against the establishment and did it so effectively that he at least won his own kingdom."

Another Alinsky quote seems remarkably prophetic: "Ego must be so all-pervading that the personality of the organizer is contagious, that it converts the people from despair to defiance, creating a mass ego."