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# Fear-Mongering From Left & Right

Michael Sean Winters | Nov. 16, 2009 NCR Today

What do Democratic Senator from Iowa Tom Harkin and former New York mayor Rudy Guiliani have in common? Usually, not very much, but this past weekend, both of them decided to indulge the politics of fear-mongering.

Harkin is joining the backlash against the Stupak Amendment. He told the Iowa Independent that he was distressed by the concern of pro-life Senators, and citizens, that the government not provide subsidies for abortion. ?You can take this on down. You could just say that anybody that got a federal loan for housing could not get an abortion,? he said. ?You can take this and just keep going on and on and on with no end in sight.? Actually, Senator, the legislature of which he is a part gets to decide where to draw, or not draw, the lines on abortion subsidies. They should do so thoughtfully, not by scaring people into thinking that the USCCB is going to turn the Farmers? Home Administration into a pro-life outfit.

Rudy Guiliani is even worse. He was on the Sunday talk shows denouncing the President?s decision to bring the perpatrators of the September 11 attacks to justice in a New York courtroom. He said the trials would put New York at risk. Surely, the law enforcement officials in New York are capable of providing security for a trial. Surely, the prisons in New York are capable of containing a criminal. Wherein, precisely, is the risk? Guiliani has said repeatedly, and correctly, the Al-Queda and its allies are always plotting new attacks. If this is so, I can see how they might be interested in disrupting the trial of their comrades in arms, but that only makes the threat they pose more specific, not more likely. And, just as surely, a more specific threat is an easier against which to defend than a diffuse one.

Harkin and Guiliani should both be ashamed of themselves. There are serious issues at stake in both the pro-life consequences of the health care reform effort and in the decision to bring terrorists into the U.S. court system. Spreading fear helps nothing.

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