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Yahoo Watch: Congressman James McGovern

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Distinctly Catholic

Congressman James McGovern (D-Mass) is opposed to the Afghan War as he made clear in an interview last night on ?Hardball [1].? But, in making his case, he offered an argument that is not only wrong-headed, it is pernicious. He said that we should not be concentrating on nation-building in Afghanistan because we need to be concentrating on nation-building here at home.

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This argument is especially pernicious coming from someone who is a self-styled liberal. Certainly, our country is wealthy enough to both assist those who need unemployment benefits here at home and to take those measures abroad necessary to secure the safety and security of the nation. If there is a fundamental divide between Democrats and Republicans today, it is on the question of the role of government and the ability of government to meet the essential needs of our society. McGovern?s comments undermine the confidence Democrats profess to have in government.

McGovern may think that our policies in Afghanistan are ill-suited to accomplish the goal of making Americans safer. That is a perfectly respectable, albeit wrong, argument to make. But, the neo-isolationism of McGovern?s remarks put me in mind not of the great Democratic Party leaders of the past century, who pursued a liberal internationalism for which the citizens of Western Europe were profoundly grateful. They put me in mind of Charles Lindbergh.

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