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Hichborn Hits His Own Thumb Again

Michael Sean Winters | Nov. 16, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

I make it a point not to respond to comments on the theory that my job is to say what I have to say and get the discussion rolling, and commentators can pick up the conversation and run with it.

But, Mr. Michael Hichborn, of the American Life League, whose attacks on the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) I examined yesterday [1], chose to bring to the comments section what he claims is more ?evidence? to the discussion. Alas, his ?new evidence? is more of the same: Innuendo and guilt by association thrown at the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. He does not bother to address a single one of the issues I raised.

However, there is something new in Hichborn?s latest attack. He demonstrates not only a McCarthyite tendency to attribute guilt by association as he did previously, but now Hichborn indulges a Breshnevite capacity for the flat out lie, directly contradicting himself. Hichborn writes, ?To be clear, RCN is not making the claim that CIW is a pro-abortion or pro-homosexual organization, but that its membership with such alliances disqualifies it as an example of ?CCHD?s remarkable work? due to its violation of the guideline concerning coalition memberships.? To be ?clear,? the opening line in the November 4, 2010 document Hichborn distributed reads, ?CCHD renewal document spotlights grantee that participates in promotion of abortion, homosexual ?rights,? and other issues in conflict with Catholic social and moral teaching.? The ?grantee? in question is the CIW.

So, which is it? Does Mr. Hichborn stand by the highlighted first sentence of his November 4 statement or does he now concede that CIW is not itself participating in the promotion of abortion or gay marriage? The reason this is important is not only that common decency required that he leave the poor farmworkers in the CIW out of his anti-CCHD rantings, but because the forcefulness of the initial charge, with no evidence to support it, is indicative of Hichborn?s methods. In his zeal, he loses a sense of proportion, a sense of balance and, finally, a sense of decency.

Hichborn?s ?smoking gun,? this time is a document ?submitted by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers explicitly supporting ?reproductive health care.? This fact alone proves that CIW fails to meet criteria laid out in the new CCHD guidelines.?

Does it? I read the phrase ?reproductive health care? and I think of Dr. Jacobson, the nice doctor who delivered me many moons ago. I hope the CIW ?explicitly? supports reproductive health care, or should we expect our women folk to give birth without the aid of any health professionals? Should we expect them to just go for a walk and ? bang ? there?s baby! In another text Hichborn cites, the words ?women?s rights? are highlighted, but the Church has no problem with women?s rights and has always been quick to point out that our concern for the unborn includes, of necessity, a concern for the fifty percent or more of the very, very young women who never get to be born because of abortion. The Church supports women having equal opportunities in society. (Yes, some criticize the Church for not ordaining women, but ordination ? like the other Sacraments -is improperly understood when it is understood in rights language.) What, then, is Hichborn talking about when he highlights or underlines the fact that a document signed by CIW?

Mr. Hichborn?s attacks are a perfect illustration of the old adage that if one?s only tool is a hammer, every

problem becomes a nail. But, Mr. Hichborn: You are not hitting the nail on the head, you are hitting your own thumb. For your own sake, please stop.

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