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Dr. Haas v. Father Lombardi

Michael Sean Winters | Feb. 15, 2013 Distinctly Catholic

My colleague John Allen has a story [1]posted today about the Vatican's selection of Ernst von Freyburg as the new head of the Vatican Bank. Mr. von Freyburg is also the chairman of Blohm + Voss, a German company that makes, among other things, warships. At the Vatican briefing, Father Frederico Lombardi, S.J. was asked about this connection. Here are the relevant passages from John Allen's story:

Jesuit Fr. Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesperson, said that von Freyberg's connection to a ship-making company "is not a counter-indication," praising his strong "human and Christian sensibility" as well as his "competence."

Lombardi also said that how a given ship is used once it's sold is not under the company's control.

Of course, a brand new warship, I suspect, has definite attributes that make it unsuitable for serving as a cruise ship. But, the question presents itself: If the Vatican can hire a man who will remain as chairman of a company that, among other things, makes weapons of war, and *that* is not considered cooperation with evil, do Dr. John Haas and the staffers at the USCCB think it is cooperation with evil when Catholic institutions purchase insurance that does not cover contraception, but will lead to the insurance company providing a stand-alone policy that covers cooperation, none of which requires the person with said coverage to actually use contraception? Or, why does the American Life League think that it is cooperation with evil for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development to partner with an organization which once attended a gathering of social advocacy groups that included groups who oppose certain teachings of the Church?

The issue of cooperation with evil is a real one, and an important one. But, in the hands of those with an ideological agenda, or just with the wrong termperament, it quickly descends into McCarthyism and/or scrupulosity

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[1] http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/pick-lead-vatican-bank-has-ties-warship-maker