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KUHNER: Obama threatens religious liberty

Mandating contraception coverage violates the Christian conscience

By [Jeffrey T. Kuhner](#) and Jeffrey T. Kuhner

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Like many leftists, President Obama has deep contempt for Christianity and democracy. This is why his administration has declared war on the [Catholic Church\(/topics/roman-catholic-church/\)](#) and religious liberty.

Health and Human Services Secretary [Kathleen Sebelius\(/topics/kathleen-sebelius/\)](#) recently went ahead and approved last year's decision to mandate that many religious organizations provide health insurance plans to their employees that include contraception, abortion-inducing drugs and sterilization coverage - and this must be done without charging a co-pay. In other words, Mr. Obama has done something that is ominous and unprecedented: compelling religious groups to embrace and subsidize free birth control. Catholic universities, hospitals and charities must either betray their fundamental social teachings or drop insurance coverage for their employees, thereby triggering massive financial penalties under Obamacare. The choice is simple: Abandon Catholic doctrine or go out of business.

The ruling will not simply devastate the Catholic health care system and elaborate social network, which includes soup kitchens, adoption centers, immigrant services and parochial schools. It directly assaults and violates the conscience rights of Catholics. The [church\(/topics/roman-catholic-church/\)](#) teaches that contraception is a sin, an immoral attempt to obstruct God's will of when and whether human life should be created. It is the ultimate embodiment of pride: man trying to act as God. That is why opposition to birth control is at the heart of the Catholic faith.

The [church\(/topics/roman-catholic-church/\)](#) teaches that the primary purpose of sexual activity within the sacred bonds of marriage is procreation - to perpetuate humanity from one generation to the next. For nearly 1,500 years, such thinking underpinned the Christian West. That was then; this is now. Since the 1960s, modern society is obsessed with contraception, abortion and sexual hedonism. The results have been declining birth rates and shrinking native populations. Literally, the West is dying. As the late Pope John Paul II put it, we are in the grips of "a culture of death." Birth control is a key pillar. It is a seminal aspect of the socialist drive to establish a secular utopia - smash the traditional family by relentlessly advancing the sexual revolution. The pill and the condom are the hammer and sickle of cultural Marxism. Decades ago, the Vatican warned that birth control eventually would lead to the West's demise. A civilization unable - and unwilling - to reproduce itself is doomed.

Yet even if one does not care a scintilla about the [church\(/topics/roman-catholic-church/\)](#)'s stance on contraception, the ruling should frighten everybody - Christian and non-Christian. America was founded upon one key principle: religious freedom. The Pilgrims fled religious persecution. Our Founding Fathers deliberately created a republic banning an established church, such as England's [Anglican Church\(/topics/anglican-communication/\)](#), and championed a nation where different religious denominations could exist - and flourish - without government harassment. Religious liberty lies at the core of American freedom. In fact, the Founders considered it so important that it comes before all other rights enshrined in the First Amendment. [James Madison\(/topics/james-madison/\)](#), the primary author of the Constitution, said, "Conscience is the most sacred of all property." The Obama administration is telling Catholics that their conscience rights can be trampled with impunity. The state has the power to coerce people to support and pay for practices they find morally repugnant and contravene their fundamental religious beliefs. This is tyranny.

Mr. Obama is the most radical president in our history. He is spearheading a liberal social revolution, not just an economic one. He supported partial-birth abortion - the heinous procedure of killing babies just before they are to be delivered. His administration refuses to uphold the Defense of Marriage Act. He has enabled homosexuals to serve openly in the military, transforming the armed forces into a vast laboratory for social engineering. His signature legislation, Obamacare, allows for the federal funding of abortion. Hence, Christians will be forced to have their tax dollars subsidize the mass murder of unborn children - a

direct attack on their most basic religious tenets. He is making Christians complicit in infanticide.

To commemorate the 39th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, Mr. Obama made a remarkable and revealing statement. He said legalized abortion is indispensable “to ensure that our daughters have the same rights, freedoms and opportunities as our sons to fulfill their dreams.” In other words, being pregnant is a burden - an obstacle - to be overcome. That a human life is destroyed is irrelevant to him and the feminist left. Murder, it appears, is sometimes necessary to achieve liberalism’s much-vaunted goal of personal liberation.

“Religion is the opiate of the masses,” Karl Marx said. This is why Marxists and their fellow travelers have sought to eradicate religious faith - especially Christianity. Tens of millions of Christians were slaughtered by Vladimir Lenin, Josef Stalin and Mao Zedong. At its core, communism is based on anti-Christian bigotry (just as national socialism is infused with anti-Semitism).

Mr. Obama is a militant secularist. His aim is to purge religion from the public square, forcing it to retreat into the private sphere - making it nothing more than a personal lifestyle choice. He wants us to leave our faith at the door when engaging in civic life. Yet religion is natural to human beings. The only way radical progressives can forge a secular social order is through a repressive state.

The Obama administration is eroding the First Amendment, assaulting the conscience rights and religious liberties of Catholics and waging a relentless campaign to destroy America’s Judeo-Christian values. Catholics must engage in civil disobedience. Otherwise, Mr. Obama will succeed in dismantling our republic. Today, he is coming for us. Tomorrow, it will be you.

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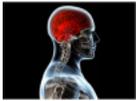
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