

The Bigger Scandal: Catholic Church Funding of ACORN

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The evidence of Catholic collaboration with Marxist and “progressive” networks is substantial.

Federal funding of ACORN is not just a Democratic Party or Obama Administration problem. As [a chart](#) (PDF) produced by House Republican Leader John Boehner shows, most of the federal money going to the organization was provided under President George W. Bush. This is not something that most Republicans want to talk about, especially now that they can use ACORN funding as a weapon against Obama and the Democrats. To Boehner's credit, however, he had sent [a letter](#) to Bush asking him to block all federal funding of ACORN. The Bush Administration did not comply.

While Obama has strong ties to ACORN, they were originally established through the U.S. Catholic Church, which has also funded ACORN and similar organizations to the tune of millions of dollars. This is another taboo topic for most of the media. Even conservative news organizations are afraid of raising the issue, apparently fearing being tagged with the "anti-Catholic" label.

But the truth has been seeping out in mysterious ways. In a Politico.com [story](#) about Barack Obama's friendly meeting with the Pope, reporter Josh Gerstein featured information that made it clear that the President's Catholic connection goes back to his days as a community organizer and that Obama's associates understand and appreciate this fact.

Deputy National Security Adviser Denis McDonough was quoted as saying that Obama's work as an organizer on the South Side of Chicago "was funded partly" by the "Catholic Church campaign for human development..." He was referring to the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), an annual collection authorized by the U.S. Catholic Bishops which is advertised as a charity to "break the vicious cycle of poverty" but in reality has funded left-wing political organizations such as ACORN to the tune of millions of dollars.

McDonough, a former Senior Fellow at the George Soros-funded Center for American Progress (CAP), was the moderator of a May 10, 2006, CAP [event](#) on "How Catholic Progressives View the Role of Faith in Governance."

Conservative Catholics concerned about this problem have documented that millions of dollars of Catholic money over the last four decades has gone into Saul Alinsky-style networks which pursue their own brand of socialist direct action. CCHD itself acknowledges funding ACORN projects with grants totaling more than \$7.3 million during the last 10 years.

Filling in more of the details of the story that Deputy National Security Adviser Denis McDonough referred to, conservative Catholic writer and activist Stephanie Block has [documented](#) that Obama was lead organizer in Chicago for the Alinskyian Developing Communities Project. It received a \$40,000 Catholic Campaign for Human Development grant in 1985 and another \$33,000 grant in 1986.

The Capital Research Center has just published "[Left-wing Radicalism in the Church](#)," a major report on this topic by Matthew Vadum.

While he was in Chicago, Obama was trained by top Alinskyian organizers. One was the ex-Jesuit, Greg Galuzzo, lead organizer for Gamaliel. The Developing Communities Project operated under the Gamaliel Foundation, a network of Alinskyian organizations that also received CCHD grants.

The Developing Communities Project, which hired Obama as lead organizer, was an offshoot of the Calumet Community Religious Conference of Alinsky-trained Jerry Kellman. The network of community organizations Alinsky founded, known as the Industrial Areas Foundation, also received CCHD grants.

The grants are being used, however, not just to seize power, but to change the minds of traditional Catholics. Indeed, this is a necessary prerequisite for taking power.

Alinskyian training sessions in the religious context are designed not to develop or cultivate a personal relationship with Christ and promote traditional values and cultural institutions but to engage in Marxist political activity and radical change. Stephanie Block puts it this way: "Their worldview is marred by visions of class struggle and perpetual revolution. They are systematically trained to renounce moral truth in favor of consensus-based 'values.'"

What has happened over the course of years, some of these experts say, is that Catholics trained in Alinskyian thought have become confused about moral issues and problems. They think, for example, that opposition to the death penalty is on the same moral plane as opposition to abortion, even though Catholic moral teaching has never precluded capital punishment. They believe that fighting "global warming" is as important as saving the lives of unborn children or preventing the killing of the elderly. They are trained to fight for abortion and homosexual "rights" in violation of traditional Catholic Church teaching.

The [BigGovernment.com](#) videos of questionable ACORN activities have outraged taxpayers and members of Congress. Many Catholics will be angered by the revelations-

if Fox News dares to publicize the evidence-of how their money has been funneled to ACORN and similar organizations by the official Catholic hierarchy.

The evidence of Catholic collaboration with Marxist and "progressive" networks is substantial. A documentary, "The *Democratic Promise: Saul Alinsky and His Legacy*," notes that "Alinsky envisioned an 'organization of organizations,' comprised of all sectors of the community-youth committees, small businesses, labor unions, and, most influential of all, the Catholic Church." A [website](#) devoted to the documentary cites the Catholic Campaign for Human Development as one of several organizations "actively practicing Alinsky's techniques."

The [Citizen's Handbook](#) to radical organizing notes that "Much of IAF [Industrial Areas Foundation] organizing occurs through Christian churches particularly the Catholic church."

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops [cut off funding](#) to ACORN last November, citing allegations of corruption at the organization. But money to other Alinsky-style groups has not been terminated.

If ACORN's federal funding is cut-off-and that's still a big "if"-some conservative Catholics believe that the damage has already been done. They say the proof is in the fact that most Catholics voted for Obama. They say the proof is in the fact that Obama was welcomed as a conquering hero when he visited Notre Dame, the premier Catholic university in the U.S.

In the same way that Obama's friendly meeting with the Pope has to be understood, his enthusiastic reception at Notre Dame can only be appreciated in the context of his hiring and training by Jerry Kellman, an apostle of Saul Alinsky and convert to Catholicism at the CCHD-supported Industrial Areas Foundation. Kellman's Calumet Community Religious Conference had itself been created and supported by several local Catholic churches.

Like Frank Marshall Davis, the Communist Party member who guided Obama's early years in Hawaii, Kellman has been called a "[mentor](#)" to the future President.

Alinsky had his own Catholic connection, having had the support in Texas of Catholic Bishop Bernard J. Sheil and the Catholic Diocese in the San Antonio area. This then became a center of support for Marxist-oriented Liberation Theology and opposition to the Reagan policy of preventing Communist takeovers of Central American countries in the 1980s.

Father J. Bryan Hehir, who in 1983 delivered a series of lectures at the far-left Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) entitled, "Matthew, Marx, Luke, and John" illustrates the continuing left-wing drift of the Catholic Church in foreign affairs. Hehir, who served on the staff of the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops in Washington, D.C., from 1973-1992 and now teaches at Harvard, appeared on an October 15, 2007, Center for American

Progress [panel](#) on "pursuing the global common good." Obama's adviser McDonough was also on the panel.

This "common-good approach to foreign policy" will be on display at the United Nations this week as President Obama and his advisers personally greet the dictators and despots of the world.

Some of the advance publicity has focused on figures such as Libyan dictator Moammar Gadhafi showing up at the U.N. But take a look at who's already there. The presidency of the U.N. General Assembly has been transferred from a Communist Catholic Priest, Miguel D'Escoto, who received the Lenin Peace Prize from the old Soviet Union, to a Libyan government official, Ali Treki.

Cliff Kincaid is the Editor of the AIM Report and can be reached at cliff.kincaid@aim.org