

Pundit Vitriol is Only Newsworthy When it Comes From the Right

☒ I'm a conservative... and I have absolutely no trouble recognizing when a public figure from my side of the political spectrum makes a derogatory comment that goes too far.

Radio commentator, Rush Limbaugh recently made such a comment when he referred to Sandra Fluke as a "slut" and compared her to a prostitute on his radio program. Fluke is a law student at Georgetown University who testified before the U.S. Congress earlier in the week. Limbaugh's overall point in discussing her testimony was absolutely valid. He objected to the absurdity and audacity of Fluke believing that she has the right to have other people flipping the dime for her personal use of contraceptives (which she estimates at \$3,000). Still, his language did indeed cross the line, and that's easy for me to accept.

The media has gone absolutely ballistic over Limbaugh's comments. Sandra Fluke has been a featured guest on numerous national news broadcasts where she's been given the opportunity to respond, Republican presidential candidates have been pressed to comment on the controversy, and President Obama even made a highly publicized phone call to Fluke to personally comfort her.

What I *don't* understand is why liberals in the media don't seem to get too bent out of shape when that same style of vitriol comes from *their* side of the aisle.

Case in point, Washington Post columnist Charles Lane weighed in on the controversy on FOX News' *Special Report with Bret Baier* last Friday. A regular panelist on the show, Lane said

this in response to Limbaugh's comments: "I've been covering politics and stuff in Washington for 30 years, and I can't remember a more hateful outburst from a public figure that was less possible to justify by any political disagreement." It was clear by Lane's demeanor as he spoke that he absolutely believed what he was saying.

Now, Charles Lane seems like an intelligent man to me. He's clearly in tune with the national news and current events. If he wasn't, he wouldn't be featured on Bret Baier's show and he wouldn't work as a columnist for the Washington Post.

So, it's surprising to me that Lane never heard Bill Maher refer to Sarah Palin multiple times as a "c*nt", endorse the rape of Elisabeth Hasselbeck, and wish death upon Glenn Beck. It's surprising to me that he never heard MSNBC's Ed Schultz call Laura Ingraham a "slut" or Keith Olbermann call Michelle Malkin a "big mashed up bag of meat with lipstick." It's surprising to me that he never heard Larry Flynt call Sarah Palin's son with Down Syndrome a "brain dead vegetable", or heard of the *The Family Guy* episode where the same child was mocked for being the born the way he was. It's surprising to me that he never heard of the Playboy columnist who wrote about the top ten conservative women he'd like to "hate-f*ck". It's surprising to me that he never read of Newsweek's Andrew Sullivan writing that he had an orgasm (he actually used a much cruder term) when reading a message from Sarah Palin. I'm surprised that he never heard Rage Against The Machine front man, Zack de la Rocha say that "every last rich white" president from Truman to Bush "should be hung, and tried, and shot." It's surprising to me that he never heard hundreds of high profile media pundits refer to members of the Tea Party as "racists" or "terrorists" and compare George W. Bush to Hitler. There's nearly an endless list of this stuff, and these examples aren't from the last 30 years... They're just from the last few.

Let me make it clear that my point isn't that two wrongs make

a right. On the contrary. I think what Limbaugh said was reprehensible and I'm glad he apologized for the language he used.

My point is that when it comes to the liberal media, vitriol doesn't seem quite that bad or particularly memorable when it's being used against people they happen not to like. That's why when Rush Limbaugh or Ann Coulter makes a provocative statement it becomes national news. We see it discussed on *The Today Show*, *Good Morning America*, *The View*, the national evening newscasts, *The Tonight Show*, *The Late Show*, and on many more outlets. Prominent Republicans are called on to condemn the rhetoric, and if they don't, they're labeled as panderers and cowards. Yet, when Bill Maher, the MSNBC hosts, or any one of the rest of usual suspects from the *professional left* does the same thing, there's a pretty good chance you'll only hear about it on FOX News. And prominent Democrats are never called upon for comment. Why is that? Are these people any less of advocates for the Democrats than Limbaugh and Coulter are for the Republicans? Absolutely not. Yet, the notion that you'll hear a reporter ask President Obama, Nancy Pelosi, Hillary Clinton, Joe Biden, or Harry Reid to condemn something Bill Maher says is unfathomable.

Bernie Goldberg often says that expecting the liberal media to recognize their personal biases is like expecting a fish to know it's wet. I can't think of a better provable example of this than when it comes to partisan vitriol.

Another Deal with the Devil –

What Did the Catholic Church Expect?

✘ A lot has been written recently about the Obama Administration and the controversy with the Catholic Church. The mandate in Obamacare requires all employers to provide birth control to their employees as well as abortifacients – the morning-after pills that can contribute to the abortion of a fertilized egg. Obviously, the Catholic Church’s teachings oppose their use and it caused what the WSJ called a “firestorm.”

Not surprising, the Obama administration backed off its requirement that religious employers cover contraception in health plans, but, instead, is now requiring the insurance companies to provide such coverage without explicitly charging either the religious employer or worker. In other words, the insurance companies will now have to foot the bill which means recovery of those costs will, no doubt, be picked up by all policyholders in the form of higher premiums.

While the supporters of the provision in Obamacare tried to obscure the discussion by turning it into a women’s issue, I believe it was an assault on religious liberty.

I think Jordan Sekulov and Matthew Clark, in a Washington Post article they wrote, summed it up perfectly. “The First Amendment begins with these immortal words, ‘Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . .’ Yet, the Obama administration made the determination, that regardless of the tenants of a particular faith, it will require religious institutions to provide for its employees (i.e. pay for something) that violates the very purpose and religious beliefs of the institution itself.”

Whether the Obama administration would acknowledge as much, I think its reconsideration of the mandate was a political move and aimed at alienating as few potential voters as possible.

Whether you agree with the position of the administration or the Catholic Church, isn't the issue here. What I found more interesting is something I hadn't thought about but was reminded of by a good friend of mine while discussing this issue.

He reminded me that the Catholic Church was in favor of Obamacare way back when. And he was perfectly correct. I had forgotten that the Catholic Church did not care too much about the rights of other employers when they supported this massive health care bill. In November of 2009, for example, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops had "delivered a critical endorsement" to Pelosi "by signing off on a late-night agreement to grant a vote on an amendment barring insurance companies that participate in the exchange from covering abortions." In other words, so long as abortions would not be covered, the Bishops were officially in favor of a bureaucratic plan that could spell the end to freedom of choice in health care and the eventual bankruptcy of the U.S.

In another example, Kevin Appleby, a representative of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, explained why the Bishops were so desperate to pass the health care bill. He said that the Bishops wanted a federal health plan to absorb the costs being borne by the nation's 600 Catholic hospitals to cover illegal aliens.

Not everyone remembers that the Catholic Church supported Obamacare but Presidential-hopeful Rick Santorum remembers: "They embraced it and ...here's what I said to them. Be careful when you have government saying that they can give you rights, that you have a right to health care, and government's going to give you something, because once you are now dependant on government, they, not only can they take that right away, they

can tell you how to exercise that right, and you can either like it or not. And that's the problem. That's what the Catholic Bishops Conference didn't get, that there's no free lunch here, folks. If you're going to give people secular power, then they're going to use it in a secular fashion. And that's why, you know, I hate to say it, but you know, you had it coming...."

As my friend reminded me, be careful what you wish for. When you give the federal government this type of power, what do you expect?

Unfortunately, the Catholic Bishops didn't read the fine print and now it's all coming back to haunt them. Hmm? Isn't this what happens when you make a deal with the Devil?

I get it. The Catholic Church should've known better.