

It's a shame to pick on just one individual when there are so many other deserving souls at the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) (USCCB) but [John Carr](#), who for years served as Secretary for its Department of Social Development and World Peace and now heads its Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development (same game; different name) has certainly been a major influence in the place.

Now, if one had no further knowledge than the above, one might reasonably expect someone serving an Episcopal conference of the Catholic Church under a title of "justice" and "human development" would be a champion of the most vulnerable a deeply oppressed, in short, of Catholic social justice teachings.

Instead, we discover that Mr. Carr has, while serving the USCCB, also chaired the board of the [Center for Community Change](#), not to mention other leadership positions with this progressive, pro-abortion political group. During this time, the USCCB awarded \$150,000 to the Center for Community Change through a 2001 Catholic Campaign for Human Development ([CCHD](#)) grant, promotes the group on its website, and has exchanged speakers at various events. Furthermore, at least 31 other CCHD grantees have worked with the Center, giving the Center's political work unofficial but very substantial support from a powerful Catholic body.

### **Center for Community Change**

One must then ask what the Center's political work is. A lay Catholic organization, the Bellarmine Veritas Ministry ([www.bellarmineministries.com](http://www.bellarmineministries.com)) has recently produced a disturbing report that, in particular, examines instances of the Center's overt, pro-abortion position. For instance, the Center's Executive Director Deepak Barghava has stated quite openly on the Center's website that it's fighting for "lifting restrictions on women's access to health services:"

### **Progressive Christian leader Wallis admits Soros funding**

#### North America

### **US Catholic bishops press for defunding abortions nationwide**

*Even as we continue to fight for affordability, for a public option, for greater efforts on racial disparities, for lifting restrictions on women's access to health services and immigrant inclusion, we believe it is important for all Americans to take stock of the truly important changes that the current reform will achieve.*

This position is expressed in the Introduction to a special project of the Center, its Movement Vision Project:

*The challenge posed by the lessons from the right is not just for individual, single-issue movements to articulate a shared vision but for those visions to add up to something even larger: a broader, multi-issue progressive movement. If related single-issue organizations working toward the same long-term goals would be more powerful, imagine the power of even more organizations, working across issues for the same ends. Certainly the issues are intersectional – foreign policy is inextricably intertwined with economic development policy; abortion rights and reproductive freedom intersect with criminal justice. Our solutions must intersect as well. [As quoted in "Momentum Briefing," a publication of the*

*Tides Foundation]*

The Center's resource library recommends an activists' guide to promoting abortion rights, *Reproductive Justice Briefing Book: A Primer on Reproductive Justice and Social Change* by SisterSong. A Center summary for the book says:

*Need a one-stop shop for information on reproductive justice? Well, SisterSong has got the right tool for you. This series of articles documents the struggle for reproductive justice and bridges this struggle with other issues within the social justice movement such as immigration and queer rights. Additionally, the series touches upon the future of the women's movement in relation to reproductive justice.*

These and other findings have led [Michael Hichborn](#), Director of Media Relations for the pro-life organization, [American Life League](#), to write:

*I have discovered ... full-blown Catholic cooperation with a pro-abortion and pro-homosexual organization at the highest levels of the CCHD. While John Carr and those he works with in the CCHD may profess to be pro-life, and we aren't questioning this, the fact of the matter is that whatever justification may be offered for this kind of cooperation is nothing short of the flaccid excuses pro-abortion "Catholics" in public office toss out when they profess to be "personally pro-life, but ...*

The Center's progressive political activism, particularly its support of abortion, is a bigger problem than one might think at first glance. As an organization, it "strengthens, connects and mobilizes grassroots groups to enhance their leadership, voice and power."

[[www.communitychange.org/who-we-are](http://www.communitychange.org/who-we-are)] These grassroots groups include Alinskyian organizing networks, deeply ensconced in Catholic parishes around the country.

For example, together with Gamaliel – one of these Alinskyian organizing networks – the Center co-sponsored a highly political and unabashedly partisan conference called "Realizing the Promise: a Forum on Community, Faith and Democracy."

Other Alinskyian organizing networks – PICO and Interfaith Worker Justice – have worked with the Gamaliel and the Center to push health care reform, despite its abortion components.

And the Industrial Areas Foundation, the premier Alinskyian organizing network founded by Saul Alinsky himself in 1940, has listed the Center for Community Change as an affiliate.

[[www.industrialareasfoundation.org/locate\\_e\\_mw.html](http://www.industrialareasfoundation.org/locate_e_mw.html)]; this is a cached page accessed on 2-1-10. On that date, the site was under construction and unavailable.]

## **Nothing New**

Carr's progressive networking is hardly new. For example, in 2001, the annual Catholic Social Justice Ministry Gathering focused on George Bush's Faith-based and Community Initiative and included speakers John Sweeney, then-president of the AFL-CIO union and a Policy Advisor for the United States Catholic Conference (now incorporated into the USCCB), and Ernesto Cortes, the Southwest Regional Director of the Industrial Areas Foundation.

Sweeney said that he and John Carr agreed that the Catholic Church and the labor movement needed to be more collaborative. The right to private property, said Sweeney, must be reconciled by the

understanding “that private property is a social mortgage.” Ernesto Cortes, for his part, appealed for organizing to keep the market “in its place.”

*The twin cry of Sweeney and Cortes for greater support of their respective brands of organizing, together with Krammer’s reminder that Catholic Charities had established a precedent for church/state cooperation, created optimistic anticipation among Conference participants. [Stephanie Block, “Faith-Based and Community Initiative: DiIulio Addresses the 2001 Catholic Social Ministry Conference,” The Wanderer, 3-15-01.]*

Going back even further, Carr appears among the signatories of the “Declaration of the ‘Mission to Washington,’ Joint Appeal by Religion and Science for the Environment (now called the National Religious Partnership for the Environment - NRPE),” Washington, D.C. May 12, 1992. The Appeal stated, among other things, that:

*...[T]he human community grows by a quarter of a million people every day, mostly in the poorest nations and communities. That this crisis was brought about in part through inadvertence does not excuse us.... We signers of this declaration - leaders in religion and science - call upon our government to change national policy so that the United States will begin to ease, not continue to increase, the burdens on our biosphere and their effect upon the planet’s people.... We believe there is a need for concerted efforts to stabilize world population by humane, responsible, and voluntary means consistent with our differing values.*

Catholic social teaching has never considered human beings a burden or called for “stabilization” of their numbers.

The [Bellarmine Veritas Ministry](#) concludes its report about the Center for Community Change, saying:

*This report, in conjunction with the previous research provided by American Life League and reported by LifeSiteNews, should put to rest any doubts that the Center for Community Change should not be considered an ally of the Catholic Church. While it may seem that the interests of the Church and the CCC intersect on several important issues such as health-care and immigration reform, a cursory examination shows that Church social teaching and the CCC’s guiding principles are, in fact, two separate roads leading to fundamentally different destinations.*

One might paraphrase this to apply to John Carr, as well: while it may seem that the interests of the Church and Mr. Carr intersect on several important issues ... a cursory examination shows that Church social teaching and Mr. Carr’s guiding principles are, in fact, two separate roads leading to fundamentally different destinations.