

ALBANY LAWMAKERS MUST CENSURE ADELE COHEN

On March 3, Bill Donohue wrote to every member of the New York State Assembly asking them to censure one of their colleagues, Adele Cohen. The request was occasioned by Cohen's treatment of Catholics when they met to discuss tuition tax credits. Donohue explains as follows:

"On February 14, when eighth-grade students from St. Patrick's School in Bay Ridge met with Cohen, they were treated to a lecture on how women should not be stay-at-home moms. Her dismissive treatment of the students grew worse when she met the pastor and principal of St. Bernadette's in Dyker Heights: Cohen literally shut the door in their faces. What occasioned her insolence was a comment made by the principal, Sister Joan DiRienzo, that Cohen's refusal to even meet with the group from St. Bernadette's would be remembered in November. According to Sister Joan, 'In the very brief time we had with Ms. Cohen, asking to be heard, she made a derogatory comment to me personally. She was not only rude, but also sarcastic.'

"Sensing that she had offended Catholics, Cohen tried to spin the issue by writing a letter to Brooklyn Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio claiming she was victimized by the Catholics who met with her. But even in this instance, she couldn't hide her contempt for Catholicism: 'It makes me wonder what kind of education the Church is providing in its schools.'

"Now if a group of Orthodox Jewish clergy, parents and children met with a Catholic lawmaker about the need for school vouchers and were subjected to an ideological harangue about the merits of stay-at-home moms, had a door slammed in their faces and were treated with insolence, what would happen? Add to this a scenario where the lawmaker writes a prominent rabbi complaining about the way he was treated and

ends with a snide comment about the kind of education being afforded in neighborhood yeshivas. Wouldn't that person be labeled a bigot? And wouldn't that be considered grounds for censure?

"The disgraceful behavior of Assemblywoman Adele Cohen makes her unfit for public office. A vote to censure her needs to be taken."

We have no realistic hope of getting Albany lawmakers to turn on one of their own, but no public person wants bad publicity. Besides, it is rumored that Cohen wants to become a judge. This won't help her chances.