

ASSAULT ON FREE SPEECH REJECTED



Bill Donohue comments on the Supreme Court's decision today striking down a Massachusetts law that created a 35-foot buffer zone near clinics for those protesting abortion:

Today's ruling, *McCullen v. Coakley*, did not address the morality or the legality of abortion, which is why this case, which was wholly about free speech, should have been a slam dunk decision for everyone. It was for the high court: it voted 9-0.

So who are those that are opposed to free speech? The ACLU, for one. Every ten years or so it finds a few neo-Nazis or Klansmen to defend, and then convinces elites that it is a champion of free speech. But it takes no courage to defend crackpots who pose no real threat to our liberties. A better test would be for the rabidly pro-abortion ACLU to defend the free speech rights of pro-life advocates. Again and again, it fails to do so. In this case it explicitly remained neutral, filing an amicus brief on both sides. Which means it wasn't neutral on the First Amendment, its *raison d'être*: it flatly rejected it.

The pro-abortion industry was unanimous in its contempt for free speech. Jan Erickson of the National Organization for Women Foundation told us in January what she thinks of protesters who pray at abortion clinics: "There can be no other way to describe in a single word what antiabortion protesters have engaged in for four decades and that is *terrorism*." (Her italic.) Her colleague, Terry O'Neill, is just as irrational. She said pro-life protesters "want to be

able to grab patients, get in their faces, scream at them that they are immoral, and having an abortion is a mortal sin and a risk to their health, among other falsehoods.”

The good news is that these lying fanatics lost today. But we need to reflect, not relax. Just think for a moment who these people are: Their entire professional life is dedicated to killing unborn babies and killing the First Amendment. So what's left once life and liberty have been snuffed out?

This is a great day for those who believe in life and liberty, and no one deserves a greater shout-out on these two issues than Nat Hentoff. He has courageously defended these twin freedoms his entire life.