

BLACK CLERGY ENDORSE CANDIDATES; MEDIA GO MUM

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on the lack of media protest of black clergy groups in Pennsylvania endorsing candidates for public office:

“There is nothing benign about white liberal racism—racism is racism, and all expressions are equally offensive. But this is exactly what is at work among media outlets in Pennsylvania. On Monday, the Pennsylvania State Coalition of Black Clergy endorsed Rep. Joseph M. Hoeffel, the Democratic candidate for U.S. Senator; it represents about 800 churches. Yesterday, the Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity, a chapter of the Pennsylvania State Coalition, endorsed Arlen Specter, the Republican candidate and incumbent senator; it represents about 450 churches. Both groups violated the law and not one media source registered a peep.

“There are parts of the *IRS Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations* that are open to interpretation, but some parts are crystal clear. It says that ‘churches and religious organizations’ are ‘absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office.’ Yet when two black Protestant groups make a formal endorsement of candidates for U.S. senator, no one from our watchdog media complains. All the *Philadelphia Inquirer* did was to report on the back-to-back endorsements, without ever mentioning in the story—or editorializing—that what was happening is patently illegal. The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* didn’t even run a story on the event.

“That this is happening at a time when Catholic bishops are being slammed by some newspapers for threatening to deny

Communion to pro-abortion politicians speaks volumes. However, we don't have one U.S. Constitution for Catholics and another for Protestants, nor do we have exemptions for African Americans. It is high time we insisted on one standard for all. We will contact the IRS about this matter."