

BLAMING CHRISTIANS FOR THE VIRUS IS PARANOID

It is not unusual for authors of a new book to seize opportunities to plug their work. But the March 27 op-ed in the *New York Times* by Katherine Stewart breaks new ground. After inventing a bogey man—"Christian Nationalists"—she then blames them for the coronavirus. Here is some background information.

When George W. Bush won reelection in 2004, no issue brought voters to side with him more than "values." These "values voters" sent a shock wave through the ranks of the secular elite in the Democratic Party, and they responded by founding rogue lay Catholic groups such as Catholics United and Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good. They also discovered the virtue of "God talk" and an expressed interest in government faith-based social programs (absent the faith element, of course).

Those phony tactics were buttressed by an onslaught of bigoted attacks that branded conservative Christians "theocrats." It didn't get them one vote. Now the same crowd is back arguing that "Christian Nationalists" are a threat to the country.

In July 2019, those who hate religious conservatives released a document, "Christians Against Christian Nationalism." They said this new enemy "demands that Christianity be privileged by the State and implies that to be a good American, one must be Christian." One wonders why these nefarious Christians settled for *implying* that everyone be a Christian—why didn't they *demand* it.

Stewart is one of the proponents of this crazed idea. In her op-ed she drops a few anecdotes citing some wild-eyed remarks made by a few pastors, and then unloads by blaming Trump for

listening to these people, resulting in an allegedly poor response to the coronavirus.

This is a cheap game. It would be like conservatives blaming left-wing cable television channels for the coronavirus. How so? By suggesting, and in some cases stating, that Trump is a bigot for putting a ban on travel from China. He did that on January 31, ten days after the first case of the virus hit the U.S. This led the Chinese-Communist friendly head of the World Health Organization to label Trump a “racist,” and Joe Biden responded by saying he was fomenting “xenophobia” and “fear-mongering.”

The medical community acknowledges that Trump saved an untold number of lives by making this decision. Would it now be fair to blame his left-wing critics for the coronavirus? No, only a Christian conservative who thinks the way Stewart does would blame them.

Finally, to show how much Stewart hates religious conservatives, consider that she is upset with Trump for saying he hopes we are “just raring to go by Easter.” What’s wrong with that? “He could have said, ‘by mid-April.’” Yup, this is proof that Christian Nationalists are running the country.

This is the level of intellectual scholarship that the *New York Times* fancies these days. The newspaper of record is now mainstreaming paranoia.