

Catholic Baiting Pundits Score Buchanan

The rise in popularity of presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan has triggered a trail of Catholic baiting remarks from some of the nation's leading political pundits. The following comments all appeared in the latter part of February.

*** On ABC's *Nightline*, there is a thinly veiled attempt to establish a cause and effect relationship between Buchanan's Jesuit training and his alleged sympathy for bigotry.

*** On NBC's the *McLaughlin Group*, *Newsweek* columnist Eleanor Clift said of Buchanan that "He's even more giddy than when he kept the Uzzi and the rosary beads under that chair."

*** On CNN's news with Wolf Blitzer, Mark Russell opined, "You've heard him say, 'When I take my hand off the Bible, my friends, I will put Rottweilers and pit bulls on the Mexican border, and nuns into the public schools.' Or is it nuns on the Mexican border and Rottweilers in the public schools?"

*** In articles that appeared on the same day in the *New York Observer*, one speaks of "Mr. Buchanan's nominal religion" and the other states that he is a "fervent member" of Roman Catholicism. It is also said that Buchanan is a "champion of the unborn, the orthodox and perhaps even the Latin mass."

*** The *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and *Newsweek* closely examine Buchanan's religion with an eye toward explaining his "fascistic" politics.

*** *Newsday* on Long Island, the *News* in Stuart, Florida, and the *Oregonian* print cartoons that malign Buchanan by attacking his religion.

William Donohue made the following remark about this development today:

“This kind of commentary is despicable. Presidential candidates should be assessed on the basis of their views, not their religious background. If the same tactic had been used to discredit Arlen Specter, it would have been quickly branded anti-Semitic. Why this assault isn’t labeled Catholic baiting is a telling statement on the media. The constant references to Buchanan’s ‘Jesuit’ training, especially when coupled with critical statements about the candidate, is done not to educate but to inflame. The media should retire its red flags once and for all.”