

CPAC IS A DISGRACE

The American Conservative Union (ACU), which is the host of the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) extended an invitation to American Atheists for this year's CPAC Conference, but they eventually decided to rescind this decision.

It took Brent Bozell, president of the Media Research Center, to set off the alarms at CPAC. But it was too late: Bozell was right to say that it made no difference that the ACU and CPAC backed down. Donohue had his own reasons for agreeing with him.

In 1989, Donohue spoke at the 16th annual CPAC conference on the subject, "Liberty and the ACLU." Even back then, it was clear to him that conservative principles were being compromised, which is why he wound up debating an empty chair: after Ira Glasser, the head of the ACLU, refused to debate Donohue, he was disinvited. Were it not for a protest by Reed Irving of Accuracy in Academia, and the support Donohue received from The Heritage Foundation (he had just completed a year there as a Bradley Resident Scholar), the second invitation would not have been granted.

Regarding the latest incident, a spokesperson for ACU said that it withdrew the invitation to American Atheists because of the "divisive and inappropriate language" of its president, David Silverman. In other words, had Silverman used more temperate language, the invitation to the CPAC Conference would have still been open. Hate speech is hate speech, whether delivered with invective or polish.

There is more than incompetence at work here. CPAC is a disgrace. They should have learned by now that big tents have a way of collapsing in the middle.