

DNC IMPLODES ON RELIGION; RELIGION CZAR QUIT

Op-Ed by Terry Eastland, *Wall Street Journal*,
8/6:

“On Monday, the New York-based Catholic League publicized Ms. Peterson’s position, and by Wednesday, she had resigned from the DNC, explaining that it was ‘no longer possible for me to do my job effectively.’ ... When the Catholic League (ever the watchdog) noted Ms. Vanderslice’s left-wing activist past and said she was more suited for a job with Fidel Castro, the campaign quarantined her from the press.”

The Catholic League scored another victory in August by getting the top religious advisor to the Democratic National Committee (DNC) to resign. We had previously managed to get John Kerry’s religious director silenced by his campaign.

On Friday, July 23, Democratic National Committee Chairman Terry McAuliffe announced the appointment of Rev. Brenda Bartella Peterson as the first-ever Senior Advisor for Religious Outreach to the DNC. One week later, on Friday, July 30, we learned of this hire and immediately investigated her.

On Monday, August 2, we issued a press release noting her support for atheist Michael Newdow in his attempt to get the words “under God” stricken from the Pledge of Allegiance. We issued two more news releases on Peterson on Tuesday and Wednesday. She quit late-day Wednesday, saying she couldn’t take the pressure any more. We declared victory on Thursday. By Friday, the Catholic League was being cited all over the Internet and newspapers across the nation. To find out exactly

how we pulled this off, **read pages 4-7**; we have reproduced all the news releases that finally finished her.

This was the second time in less than two months that the Catholic League scored a victory on this issue. In the last issue of *Catalyst* we noted our defeat of Mara Vanderslice, the woman who was appointed by the Kerry campaign as his Director of Religious Outreach. The Kerry campaign put a gag on her once she was revealed as a Left-wing extremist who was known to associate with anti-Catholics.

The reaction to our latest effort ran the gamut from exuberance to condemnation. We got phone calls and e-mails from across the country congratulating us for a job well done. But we also received our share of nasty and sometimes vulgar comments.

It is important for both parties to reach out to people of faith. But they must do it in a way that is sincere. It is really not that difficult a task, considering that when it comes to public policy issues, practicing Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims have more in common with each other than they do with the non-observant in their own ranks.

The issue of religion is not going away in this presidential campaign. Our role is that of a monitor—of both parties—and it is a job we will not shirk.