

# Does the New York Times Employ Idiots or Bigots?

When I was a kid, I used to watch the New York St. Patrick's Day Parade on TV with my grandfather. An Irish immigrant and former member of the New York City Police Department, Patrick Flynn wouldn't miss watching that parade for all the money in the world. Then when I went to high school, I marched in the parade every year, enjoying it even better than watching it on TV. Now as an adult, and as president of the Catholic League, I spend my time filming homosexuals protesting their exclusion from the parade. There's not much fun in that. Nor is there much fun reading the media's twisted reaction to those who seek to crash the march. .

As to be expected, the *New York Times* champions the cause of the parade-busters. This past March, it openly condemned the Ancient Order of Hibernians (the parade's sponsors) for denying gays the right to parade under their own banner. Though the courts ruled last year that the Hibernians could bar gays (the New York ruling was not binding on the courts in Massachusetts), the controversy continues in the culture. In an editorial that appeared two days before the march, the *Times* blamed the Hibernians for exercising their constitutional right to freedom of association. It charged them with sending "a divisive, needlessly cruel message," and labeled the parade "an event that denigrates part of the city." The *Times* implored all politicians not to march in "this benighted display of bigotry."

Well, well. Now that's anger for you. The normally staid Ivy Leaguers at the *New York Times* don't like it when Irish Catholics celebrate their heritage. According to the *Times*, the intolerant ones are not those who show contempt for the traditions of others, but those who seek to secure their customs.

Now it would be instructive to know what the *Times* would say if heterosexuals asked to march in the Gay Pride Parade under the banner "Straight Is Great." It would be just as interesting to learn of the *Times*' reaction to a request by the Ku Klux Klan to enter a parade sponsored by African-Americans. Jews have parades, too, so does that mean that the PLO is free to participate in their events as well? Will the pro-abortion crowd allow pro-lifers to march with them the next time they take to the streets? Most important, would the *Times* call gays, blacks, Jews and radical feminists bigots for denying straights, the Klan, the PLO and pro-lifers the right to bust open their parades?

So why wouldn't the *Times* call its ideological friends bigots for doing the same thing as the Hibernians? Sure, politics is a part of it, but it's not the whole of it. Let's face it, there are anti-Catholic bigots working at the *New York Times*.

In the same March 15th editorial, the *Times* said that "the Hibernians are the only ones staging a march that excludes people because they are open about a different sexual orientation." Now there are either idiots working there or there is anti-Catholicism at work. You choose. The fact is that Jews, Hispanics, Moslems and others have all barred gays and lesbians from marching in their parades as a separate unit. The *New York Times* must know this because that's where I read about it. So you figure it out. Are they idiots or bigots?

Perhaps you're undecided. Try this. On May 8, 1993, Alan Finder of the *New York Times* wrote a column entitled "Another Parade Furor: Salute to Israel Uninvites Gay Group." The article, as the title implies, is about the decision of the Salute to Israel Parades' sponsors (the American Zionist Youth Foundation) to bar gays and lesbians from marching in the parade. Are we to believe that the editorial board which approved the March 15, 1994 editorial condemning the Hibernians didn't know about the ruling of the American

## Zionist Youth Foundation?

Even if we generously assume that the editorial board did function like a bunch of idiots by not remembering what appeared in its own newspaper, that still doesn't rule out bigotry. Bigots have a very selective way of interpreting reality. Indeed, that's one of their defining marks. The *New York Times*, as anyone who reads it regularly must admit, is unequivocally committed to the gay rights agenda. That doesn't make it anti-Catholic. But blind spots have a way of forming when zealotry is at work. And blind spots often suggest something deeper.

The St. Patrick's Day parades that my grandfather liked so much are now seen by some as an exercise in bigotry. There is bigotry at work all right, but its source lay not with the parade's sponsors.

– *William A. Donohue*