

DONOHUE AND HAGEE MEET

The following article was written by Deal Hudson, the publisher of the website, InsideCatholic. It first appeared on CatholicOnline on May 16 and is reprinted here with permission. Hudson, who attended the May 15 meeting with Bill Donohue and Pastor Hagee (along with Hagee's wife and his associate, David Brog), recounts here what happened.

Today at 3:30 pm I had the pleasure of introducing Rev. John Hagee to Bill Donohue, president of the Catholic League, at Donohue's office in Manhattan.

Pastor Hagee was in town for an evening speech at the United Nations on Israel and asked if I would introduce him to Donohue.

With Hagee was his wife Diana, who plays a significant role in the ministry of his church, and David Brog, executive director of Christians United for Israel.

As Rev. Hagee entered the office and started meeting people, I heard Donohue's booming voice from around the corner, "I hear a Southern accent, it must be Pastor Hagee!"

Hagee, I could tell, wasn't quite expecting that kind of smiling, gregarious welcome. I had told Hagee that he and Donohue would hit off, but I don't think he really believed me. They did, in fact, hit if off and in a big way.

Donohue took the Hagees, Brog, and I into the library and showed them the view of the city from the 34th floor of his offices at 7th Ave. and 34th St. Then he invited all the staff of the Catholic League to meet the Hagees. The mood was jovial, warm, and welcoming. Any shadow of tentativeness on the Hagee's faces immediately vanished.

We went into Donohue's office for our chat, but first he

showed the Hagees the window through which he saw the World Trade Center Towers fall to the ground on 9/11. He told the story of taking his staff to a local pizza restaurant where they prayed together, with the result that some Jews seated nearby asked if they could join in.

The conversation lasted about 45 minutes—Hagee had to get back to the UN for his evening speech. During that time Hagee and Donohue affirmed not only the reconciliation but also their future partnership on matters of importance to both them: life, marriage, family, and support for Israel.

Donohue said, “Pastor, you are my friend from this point forward and nothing’s going to change that. We have our theological differences but we Catholics and Evangelicals need to work together—that is the liberals’ worst nightmare.”

The Hagees couldn’t have agreed more with Donohue, and they talked at length about getting more Catholic support for Christians United for Israel. Donohue made it clear he shared their concern for supporting and defending the existence of Israel against Islamic extremism.

Hagee rose to leave, and he held out his hands and said “Let us pray.” We prayed in the style I learned as a Southern Baptist growing up in Texas. It’s amazing how quickly it all came back to me as we prayed for unity among ourselves and for charity in all that we do.

As we were leaving, a reporter from the *San Antonio Express-News* called Donohue for an interview. Donohue did the interview as we stood there. It was obvious that Donohue’s report on the meeting was not what the reporter wanted to hear. When the reporter asked if Donohue was trying to help John McCain, I thought the answer was unassailable: “If I am trying to help John McCain why would I have called Rev. Hagee anti-Catholic in the first place?”

What can you say to that? The answer is “nothing.”

The meeting of John Hagee and Bill Donohue may have started something that will create important repercussions in the months and years to come.