

ENEMIES OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ATTACK BUSH

Catholic League president William Donohue commented today on how the enemies of religious freedom greeted President Bush's State of the Union address last night:

"Religious liberty is meaningless unless it can be publicly expressed. It is not persuasive to say that religion can be expressed in houses of worship, but no place else, and still maintain fidelity to religious liberty. To take another example, if we banned all displays of artistic expression in public—from paintings to music—and relegated them to museums and concert halls, everyone would declare that such a decision bristled with hostility to the arts. That is why it makes sense to see the enemies of the public expression of religion as the enemies of religious liberty, per se.

"Many of the enemies of religious liberty exposed themselves today when they attacked President Bush's proposal that would give drug addicts a voucher that could be used for treatment in either a secular or religious organization. By doing so they also showed their fear of change and animus to inclusion. Consequently, they would deny addicts a right to choose by excluding them from programs available to the rich.

"Who are these groups? The National Organization for Women, People for the American Way, the ACLU, Americans United for Separation of Church and State—all of them rang their constitutional bells over a proposal that would permit an addict the right to choose a priest, minister, rabbi or imam for help (God forbid that an atheist with an M.S.W. might be passed up!). It should also be mentioned that the Interfaith Alliance, a motley crew of left-wingers, was critical of the plan. But at least they had guts: the National Council of Churches had nothing to say about Bush's initiative, though it

did find time to blast him on Iraq.

“I love it when this crowd says that one of the reasons why they are opposed to Bush’s plan is because religious social programs ‘lack accountability.’ What they mean is that big brother (their real deity) can’t police them the way he can a government monopoly.”