

IRANIAN THUG WELCOMED AT COLUMBIA

Columbia University in New York City hosted Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at a September 24 forum. The Catholic League wasted no time criticizing Columbia's decision to offer the tyrant a platform of legitimacy, citing his persecution of religious minorities. Bill Donohue debated both the Columbia dean and the Columbia professor who invited Ahmadinejad on the "Today" show. He said they should both resign.

Donohue took issue with the propriety of a university hosting the Iranian president. "A university does believe in freedom of speech," he said, "but freedom of speech is a means toward an end. The end of a university is the pursuit of truth." Donohue said that "Ahmadinejad belongs in the Beacon Theatre, Central Park, Madison Square Garden. A university stands for something different."

Anyone who supports terror, pledges to destroy a sovereign nation (Israel), punishes by death anyone who "insults" religion (Article 513 of the Iranian Constitution), and thumbs his nose at the international community has no legitimate place at a university. And by denying the Holocaust, Donohue told Matt Lauer, Ahmadinejad is "spitting in the face of every Jew in New York City."

Donohue noted that Columbia president Lee Bollinger called off an appearance by Ahmadinejad at the campus last year, and wondered why he was welcomed this year: "[Bollinger] said the reason [Ahmadinejad] is not coming to the university is because he doesn't represent the values of the academy. Now, either something has happened at Columbia and they've dissolved their values or Ahmadinejad has cleaned up his act."

Donohue also took issue with Columbia's phony free speech

argument. "If Columbia believes that freedom of speech is the highest virtue," he argued, "why did they not allow the founder of the Minutemen [Jim Gilchrist] to speak there two weeks ago? That's because they found his speech objectionable."

We are grateful to the "Today" show for inviting Donohue to speak about this issue.