

IS FOX NEWS LOSING ITS NERVE?

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments about an incident on Fox News yesterday:

Yesterday, shortly before Neil Cavuto's show on Fox News aired at 4:00 p.m. ET, I was asked if I would go on with him, by phone, to discuss the Notre Dame fire. I agreed.

I was shocked when Neil cut me off, simply because I entertained the thought that it might be terrorism. I did not mention any religious or secular group that may have been involved, and indeed would not have speculated at all were it not for a recent series of ugly anti-Catholic events in France.

Here is what I said.

"Well, Neil, if it is an accident, it's a monumental tragedy, but forgive me for being suspicious. Just last month, a 17th century church was set on fire in Paris. We have seen Tabernacles knocked down, crosses have been torn down, statues have been smashed."

Neil said, "Bill, we don't know that, we don't know. So if we can avoid what your suspicions might be, I do want to look at what happens now."

Neil is wrong. We do know that. In fact, it already happened. I was trying to put the Notre Dame fire in context.

After another exchange, I went back to my point saying, "I'm sorry, when I find out that the Eucharist is being destroyed and excrement is being smeared on crosses—this is what's going on now." Neil cut me off saying, "Wait a minute, Bill. I love you dearly, but we cannot make conjectures about this so thank you, Bill. I'm sorry, thank you very, very much."

I have known Neil for a long time. He's a good guy. But what

he did yesterday was unfair. My guess is he was following the marching orders from above.

If Fox News wants to be agnostic on the origins of the Notre Dame fire, that's fine. But when hosts won't allow guests to have their own opinion—even when it is couched in entirely reasonable terms—then it's clear that Fox has a problem. Is it losing its nerve?