

NORTHWESTERN UNIV. CROSSES THE LINE

The following letter by Bill Donohue to the president of Northwestern University explains why Catholics, as well as Jews, are concerned about concessions granted by the school to pro-Hamas students.

May 6, 2024

President Michael H. Schill
Office of the President
Northwestern University
633 Clark Street
Evanston, IL 60208-1100

Dear President Schill:

I am writing to you in my role as president of the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization. I am also a veteran, a former college professor, and former member of the board of directors of the National Association of Scholars.

It is one thing to learn that protesting students are insisting that Northwestern hire at least two Palestinian visiting professors, and offer scholarships for five Palestinian undergraduates; it is quite another to learn that their demands have been accepted.

The reason this matters to Catholics, as well as to Jews, is that it raises the specter of bringing hate-mongers to the campus. This is hardly a stretch given the open embrace of Hamas on the part of some of the protesters.

Let's face it—the protesters are looking for their ideological next of kin to fill these spots. They are not interested in bringing Middle Eastern scholars to the campus, especially

those who might differ with their understanding of events. Their vision of history is the Hamas vision.

It is not a matter of debate what Hamas wants. The 1988 Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement, also known as the Hamas Covenant, is quite explicit. What it says about Christians explains why this is of particular interest to the Catholic League.

Here is a selection from the Hamas Covenant that details its overall objective.

“There is no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad.” It is very specific. “The Day of Judgement will not come until Moslems fight the Jews (killing the Jews), when the Jew will hide behind stones and trees.”

The Hamas Covenant also targets Christians. In a passage taken from the Koran, Muslims are advised how to deal with appeals for peace made by “the infidels.” The message is unambiguous. “But the Jews will not be pleased with thee, neither the Christians, until thou follow their religion.”

Accordingly, Muslims are told the only answer is to have Jews and Christians live under Sharia law. “Under the wing of Islam, it is possible for the followers of the three religions—Islam, Christianity and Judaism—to coexist in peace and quiet with each other. Peace and quiet would not be possible except under the wing of Islam.”

More recently, in 2022, Mahmoud al Zahar, a co-founder of Hamas, said, “We are not liberating our land alone. The entire 510 million square kilometers of planet Earth will come under [a system] where there is no injustice, no oppression, no Zionism, *no treacherous Christianity* (our italics).”

No one who endorses this rhetoric should be teaching on any college campus. Not for a moment would someone be permitted to promote the agenda of the Klan. And not for a moment should

anyone have a place in academia who seeks to promote the agenda of the Hamas Covenant.

Complicating matters for Northwestern is its record on free speech.

The 2024 survey of free speech on campus conducted by College Pulse and the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) gave Northwestern a "Poor" rating.

Indeed, it was listed near the bottom of colleges and universities on free speech measures: of the 254 that were studied, Northwestern ranked 242. Given this reality, how can we expect Christian and Jewish students to disagree with professors who adopt the Hamas worldview?

Giving into the demands of protesters has already created legal problems for Northwestern. It is being sued for violating the 1964 Civil Rights Act: offering almost \$2 million in scholarship funds, faculty positions, and student-organization space to Palestinian students and staff is not likely to pass muster in the courts. This is discrimination, pure and simple.

I implore you, and the Board of Trustees, to reconsider your stance. It is wrong morally and legally to capitulate to highly objectionable student demands. It also sends a message to current and future students that if they engage in civil discord they will be rewarded for doing so. At that point, the purpose of the university—the pursuit of truth—collapses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.
President

cc: Peter M. Barris, Chair, Board of Trustees
Adam R. Karr, Vice Chair

Virginia M. Rometty, Vice Chair
Michael S. Shannon, Vice Chair