

NYC MAYOR ANGERS SECULARISTS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on remarks made by the mayor of New York:

New York City Mayor Eric Adams angered secularists yesterday when he spoke at an interfaith breakfast event. After his closest aide, Ingrid Lewis-Martin, introduced him as someone who “doesn’t believe” in separation of church and state, her boss took the stage and said, “Ingrid is so right.” “Don’t tell me about no separation of church and state. State is the body. Church is the heart. You take the heart out of the body, the body dies.”

Adams continued this line of thought, saying, “I can’t separate my belief because I’m an elected official.” He then made an observation that was just as contentious. “When we took prayers out of schools, guns came into schools.”

As expected, this didn’t sit well with left-wing secularists and their religious next of kin. Rabbi Abby Stein, who is an LGBT activist, said Adams’ remarks were “unhinged and dangerous.” Donna Lieberman of the New York Civil Liberties Union, a militant secular organization, said his comments left her “speechless.”

Fabien Levy, a spokesman for Adams, said that Adams was merely trying to show that faith guides his actions. That is no doubt true. Adams has been in office long enough for us to know if he was literally attempting to abridge the First Amendment rights of New Yorkers.

It is paradoxical, to say the least, to hear left-wing activists hyperventilate over Adams’ speech. The fact is there is a very real threat to separation of church and state these days, and it is coming from organizations like the ACLU: they are using the state to encroach on the rights of the faithful. It is not the church that is busy abridging the rights of the

state; it is the other way around.

When secularists like the ACLU lobbying for the Equality Act—which would allow the state to tell Catholic doctors and hospitals that they must perform abortions and sex-reassignment surgeries—they are showing their contempt for separation of church and state.

While it is too facile to contend that when prayer was banned in the schools, guns came in, it is nonetheless true that over the past half century the schools have become radically secularized, triggering a series of social problems. So Adams' more general point merits attention.

It is also interesting to hear the ACLU whine over Adams' remarks about separation of church and state when it *never* criticizes Adams, or other black public officials, when they take to the pulpit and make blatantly political speeches in churches when running for office.

Similarly, none of these secularists, who are usually big fans of diversity, bothered to criticize Adams for his guest list of speakers. He is a Protestant, and those invited to speak were Jewish, Buddhist and Muslim leaders. In a city that is heavily Catholic, why was no Catholic leader invited to speak?

If Adams wants to win the support of churchgoing New Yorkers, he needs to step up to the plate and take on those school officials and teachers who are trying to sexualize children: they have no right to invite students to question their nature-determined sex status. That is a true violation of the religious rights of their parents. First Amendment anyone?