

OPEN LETTER TO OLYMPIC CHIEF

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This letter was sent to the president of the International Olympic Committee.

July 29, 2024

Mr. Thomas Bach
President
International Olympic Committee
Maison Olympique
1007 Lausanne
Switzerland

Dear Mr. Bach:

As president of the largest Catholic civil rights organization in the United States, I am imploring you to conduct an investigation into the obscene antics that marked the opening ceremony at the Paris Olympics. There is reason to believe senior members of the French government knew what Thomas Jolly was planning to do and did nothing to stop it. They may even have given their blessings to this stunt.

French president Emmanuel Macron was not kept in the dark. He learned that Jolly was planning a “great story of emancipation and freedom.” More important, it was reported by the *New York Times* that Macron had “a keen interest in the show” and met with Jolly “regularly.” It is hard to believe they didn’t discuss the show’s content.

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo also had strong interest in the show; she, too, met with Jolly regularly. According to the *Times*, she said his production would be “playful, with a message of

the city's 'openness to the world and the pleasure of diversity.'" It is hardly a big leap to conclude that Jolly disclosed to her his "playful" skit, one that would celebrate the "pleasure of diversity."

Tony Estanguet, the President of Paris 2024, appointed Jolly to be Artistic Director of the Olympic ceremonies. In his statement in 2022 heralding his choice, he bragged how Jolly's "extraordinary shows are proof that he knows how to break norms and take them to the next level."

How revealing. Are we to believe that what Estanguet had in mind was a mockery of Islam?

The Associated Press reported the week before the opening ceremony that Jolly remained "extremely tight-lipped about what would eventually transpire at the ceremony." He admitted, "I'd be fired if I tell you anything." Perhaps. Had he disclosed what his show was about, he may have gotten fired because of the worldwide pushback from Christians. He certainly would not have lost favor with the French elite. Not one of the three that I mentioned has condemned Jolly's bigotry.

You are in a position to get to the bottom of this. Jolly did not pull this off by himself. Those in positions of power need to be questioned about what they knew, when they knew it, and why they didn't act to stop this vulgar assault on Christian sensibilities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.
President