

PELL'S RELEASE TRIGGERS BACKLASH

Most people are normal and desire justice. Abnormal people prize revenge. A case in point is the reaction to the release of Cardinal George Pell from an Australian prison. Normal people are happy with the news, but there are always the abnormal ones.

Neither the *Boston Globe*, *New York Times* nor the *Washington Post*—the three most critical newspapers of the Catholic Church—put the Pell story on the front page (the latter two buried it on p. 19), but it is a sure bet they would have had his conviction been upheld.

The first reaction to the acquittal of Cardinal Pell from the *New York Times* was to hammer the justice system in Australia. There is too much secrecy in their system, the two reporters said. They are right. The Australian courts are not nearly as transparent as the American courts. But if this were a problem, why did the newspaper not sound the alarms when the vector of change was moving against Pell? Why did they wait to register a complaint only when he won?

The reporters cited as an example the court's decision to pull from bookstores a work by Louise Milligan, *Cardinal: The Rise and Fall of George Pell*. The judge wanted to avoid a contempt of court charge.

Who is she? Milligan is a hero in anti-Catholic circles in Australia, which are quite big. Speaking of Pell, she once said, "He's a man for years was telling the rest of us how to live our lives—not the least how to live our sex lives." There it is again: It's always sex that drives Church haters over the edge. For them, the three most dreaded words in the English language are "Thou Shalt Not."

The first article Milligan ever wrote about Pell appeared in the April 16, 2001 edition of the Australian. It was about gay fascists who tried to storm St. Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne. They were screaming, "George Pell, Go to Hell." Like Milligan, the gays objected to his defense of Catholic moral theology. [NOTE: Australian media reported that "Rot in Hell Pell" and "No Justice" were scribbled on the doors of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne following Pell's acquittal.]

BishopAccountability is the favorite source of left-wing journalists who don't like the Catholic Church. It's idea of priestly justice is to leave the names of exonerated priests on its website, suggesting to readers they may be guilty. One of its officials, Anne Barrett Doyle, said in relation to Pell's release that "it is distressing to many survivors, the decision doesn't change the fact the trial of the powerful cardinal was a watershed."

One can almost hear her groan. Not a word about putting an innocent man in solitary confinement for crimes he never committed. It was a watershed, alright—it was one of the most egregious cases of injustice ever endured by a high-ranking member of the Catholic hierarchy.

SNAP (Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests), which the Catholic League played a major role in crippling in the United States, spoke for its Australian members saying, "We are dismayed and heartbroken that Cardinal George Pell has successfully challenged his conviction for sexually abusing two choirboys and will be freed from prison." In other words, justice doesn't matter. Punishing the Catholic Church is what matters. They are abnormal.

Voice of the Faithful, another mostly moribund American letterhead, said, "The court's ruling leaves clergy abuse survivors and supporters wondering where justice lies." This proves once again that this pitiful band of elderly Catholic dissidents was never interested in Church reform. Justice,

according to them, is when the person they hate gets punished, independent of his innocence. They are abnormal.

We stand with what Pope Francis tweeted right after Cardinal Pell was freed.

“In these days of #Lent, we’ve been witnessing the persecution that Jesus underwent and how He was judged ferociously, even though He was innocent. Let us #PrayTogether today for all those persons who suffer due to an unjust sentence because of someone had it in for them.”