

# PUNDITS SLAM PALIN ON WITCHCRAFT

At the end of September, reports surfaced that an African minister once asked God to protect Republican vice-presidential hopeful Sarah Palin from witchcraft. After we saw the unwarranted attacks that followed these reports, we immediately issued a news release pointing out the duplicity of those who made them.

In 2005, Sarah Palin went to church and found that a visiting minister from Kenya, Bishop Thomas Muthee, was performing the service. He offered a prayer asking Jesus to keep her free from “every form of witchcraft.” Palin said nothing—she simply kept her head bowed throughout the blessing. Why this was newsworthy is one issue, but why it quickly became the subject of scorn is another.

For the past two decades, Americans have been lectured by educators and the chattering class that we must respect cultural, religious, racial and ethnic diversity. It seems that exceptions to the creed of multiculturalism are only made when it suits the ideological agenda on the left. Enter Keith Olbermann: He exploited this incident, on his September 24 show, as a brush to paint Palin as an extremist. Moreover, he used this single blessing to unfavorably contrast the African minister to Barack Obama’s spiritual mentor, Rev. Jeremiah Wright. The MSNBC commentator incredibly said that Wright—who spewed hate speech in front of Obama for 20 years—“seems pretty mainstream by comparison.”

Bill Donohue commented to the media by saying: “Witchcraft is a sad reality in many parts of Africa, resulting in scores of deaths in Kenya over the past few decades. Bishop Muthee’s blessing, then, was simply a reflection of his cultural understanding of evil. While others are not obliged to accept

his interpretation, all can be expected to respect it. More than that—Muthee should be hailed for asking God to shield Palin from harmful forces, however they may be manifested. And for this he is mocked and Palin is ridiculed.”

We finished our statement by saying, “We know that many cultural elites have a hard time embracing religion, but is it too much to ask that they show some manners when discussing subjects which most Americans hold dear?”

When Ben Smith of *Politico* got wind of our release he contacted Donohue and tried to trip him up on the wording from our statement; the line he had trouble with was, “Witchcraft is a sad reality in many parts of Africa...” Donohue told Smith that he was speaking sociologically and wasn’t saying that he believed in witches. Harvard professor Jacob K. Olupona echoed Donohue’s statement saying, “His [Muthee’s] prayer reflects his own background and his own training and his own world view. America may not believe in witchcraft, but witchcraft is a reality (in Africa).”

It is clear that the disingenuous pundits will stop at nothing to silence the religious crowd. They preach multiculturalism, but proceed to slam a cultural tradition. It is this same crowd that will try to slip us up on anything they can; too bad for them, we can see right through it.