

RABBI ARYEH SPERO, R.I.P.

[Bill Donohue](#)

Rabbi Aryeh Spero passed away on June 25. I knew him for decades and consider him to be one of the most brilliant and bravest men I have ever known. Kind and thoughtful, he was a stalwart in the conservative movement. He was also a good friend of Catholics.

Aryeh was often called “America’s Rabbi.” He founded the Caucus For America, which is “dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the historic and unique American culture and civilization.” He was also the spokesman for the Conference of Jewish Affairs and was a founding Advisory Board Member of CASEPAC.

In 2015, Aryeh published *Why Israel Matters to You*, a fictional account of a young man who learned how important Israel is for every American. In 2012, he authored *Push Back: Reclaiming the American Judeo-Christian Spirit*, a work that astutely analyzed current conditions, offering cogent recommendations.

In 1979, he was the first rabbi to publicly endorse Ronald Reagan for president. In 2020, he offered his blessings to Donald Trump at the Republican National Convention.

As an Orthodox rabbi, Aryeh took great umbrage when a gay rabbi who claimed to be Orthodox held a same-sex ceremony in 2011. Aryeh was one of 100 distinguished Orthodox rabbis to register his objections.

Ever the activist, in 2019 Aryeh led a sit-in at Rep. Nancy Pelosi’s office. He did so in response to Pelosi’s warm embrace of anti-Jewish Democrats, Rep. Ilhan Omar and Rep. Rashida Tlaib. Pelosi had bowed to the two bigots by watering down a statement condemning anti-Semitism. Always fair-minded,

Aryeh argued that it was hardly an expression of anti-Semitism to criticize George Soros, the atheist billionaire donor to left-wing causes.

Aryeh and I worked together on many campaigns. Whether it was condemning anti-American zealots, or those with an animus against Jews or Christians, he was always ready to join the next culture war battle. In 2014, we issued a joint statement supporting the NYPD and condemning anti-police agitators.

Like most who take their religion seriously, Aryeh was not offended by Christmas celebrations. Indeed, he loved them. In 2017, he blasted the ACLU, saying, "America needs Christmas as a public expression: not only for its magic and delight, but as a testament to the Judeo-Christian roots upon which this country was founded."

When the media and many activists, including conservative Catholic notables, turned on innocent Catholic white boys from Covington Catholic High School, falsely portraying them as racists, Aryeh came to their defense. "This is a contrived and false episode pounced on by people who hate religious white Catholics and are always on the look-out to demonize Catholics. These people are bigots."

In 2020, Aryeh and I released a statement to the media commenting on the decision by WarnerMedia to pull "Gone With the Wind" from its HBO Max package because of "racist depictions." If it were opposed to "anti-Catholic depictions" as well, we said, "it would have shut down Bill Maher's HBO show years ago."

A man like Aryeh doesn't come around too often. It was my pleasure to have known him. Our prayers are with him, his wife Beth, and their sons.