

SOCIAL JUSTICE, BIDEN STYLE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the latest proposals from President Biden:

In the name of helping families, President Biden wants to reward many of those who broke into our country illegally by making them millionaires. However, American families that are living here legally and elect to place their children in religious child care centers have to wing it on their own.

On October 31, Fox News reporter Peter Doocy asked President Biden “Is it true we’re going to give \$450,000 to border crossers who are separated?” Biden simply looked away and scratched his head.

On November 3, Doocy said to the president that news reports were surfacing that “your administration is planning to pay illegal immigrants who are separated from their families at the border up to \$450,000 each, possibly a million dollars per family. Do you think that might incentivize more people to come over illegally?”

Biden took umbrage at Doocy’s comment, accusing Fox News of “sending that garbage out,” adding that “it is not true.” After rhetorically raising the question that Doocy asked, he flatly said, “That’s not going to happen.”

What Biden calls “garbage,” however, is the official policy of his administration. It’s just that he was the last to find out. Now, like the obedient soul he is, he’s on board.

On November 4, Doocy asked Karine Jean-Pierre, Deputy White House press secretary, about the \$450,000 prize for illegal aliens. She said the president was “perfectly comfortable” with that decision. Doocy then asked, “what changed, from yesterday” when Biden said, “That’s not going to happen?” She skirted his question, choosing instead to blame Trump for

creating this problem.

Biden's professed interest in child care is well documented. Speaking of his big social spending bill, he said in August, "Child care is personal to me—that's why I've put it front and center in my Build Back Better Agenda." On October 26, he said of this bill, "Every American family deserves access to high quality, affordable child care." This is a lie.

On pp. 1399-1400 of the 2,468 page Build Back Better Act, H.R. 5376, it addresses child care for religious entities. "A recipient of funds under this subsection may not use the funds for modernization, renovation, or repair of facilities that are primarily used for sectarian instruction or religious worship or in which a substantial portion of the functions of the facilities are subsumed in a religious mission."

In other words, Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims and Mormons who place their children in a child care center of their faith are not entitled to any assistance.

The words "child care" are cited 370 times in the bill. The legislation is allowing \$400 billion in child care and preschool, but religious child care centers will not get a penny.

The bottom line is clear. Bust into our country illegally and you stand to become a millionaire. Put your kid in a religious child care center, and you're on your own. This is the face of social justice, Biden style.

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AMERICAN VALUES SURVEY IS HYPER-POLITICAL

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a new survey that is seriously flawed:

The pollsters were mostly wrong again on Election Day—in some cases by a huge margin—thus making a mockery of psephology, the statistical study of elections. It doesn't have to be this way: statistical models are not the problem; the problem is poor sampling. Unfortunately, much of the survey research done these days is not much better, often allowing the political bent of those conducting it to color the outcomes.

One of the most glaringly hyper-political surveys ever done was just released by the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI), in partnership with the Brookings Institution. "Competing Visions of America: An Evolving Identity or a Culture Under Attack?" is the title of this year's American Values Survey.

PRRI has a partisan record, so it is not surprising that it would conduct a flawed survey, though this one is by far its worst undertaking. On the other hand, the Brookings Institution has a good reputation, making this co-venture regrettable.

To be sure, there is much about this survey that is quite good, and helpful to sociologists like myself. But there are several aspects to it that are so indefensible as to discredit it.

The report was written in part by the CEO of PRRI, Robert P. Jones. He is not a sociologist; his Ph.D. is in religion. He is most well known for promoting the idea that white Christian men pose an existential threat to American democracy, feeding the left-wing trope that white supremacists are one of the

nation's most pressing problems.

It is not until the latter part of the report that there is a segment on this subject—Trump supporters are singled out for rebuke—but it is front- and-center in the marketing of the survey. Indeed, the first subject in the press release is titled, “Anti-Democratic Beliefs and Support for Political Violence on the Right.”

We just came off a year when left-wing violence almost destroyed Portland, Seattle, Minneapolis and other cities. The spike in crime that affected most big cities is at least partly the result of left-wing mayors and district attorneys taking a hands-off approach to crime, ordering cops to stand down. Meanwhile Antifa and Black Lives Matter killed dozens of innocent people, and trashed so many stores in cities like New York that it turned them into a ghost town for much of the year.

The report, however, has nothing to say about this issue. It is only concerned about right-wing violence, which was miniscule compared to the degree of violence carried out by the left.

Has God granted America a special role in human history? In 2013, 64% said yes, but today the figure has dropped to 44%. That is surely worth exploring. The report simply offers the findings, without drawing any conclusions. Fine. But the press release tells a different story. It says that those who answered affirmatively evince “Christian nationalist sympathies,” citing Republicans as an example (68% of whom agree with the statement).

This is cruel and dishonest. Simply because someone believes that God granted our nation a special role in history does not make him a Christian nationalist, a term employed by Jones as roughly analogous to white supremacists. He's wrong. In fact, his own survey undercuts his narrative. What was not

said in the press release, but is said in the report, is that 67% of Black Protestants agree with the statement. Are they also white supremacists?

The report's coverage of critical race theory also smacks of politics. It offers data on what Americans think about this subject, and then says, "Despite some high-profile flare-ups over this issue in the media," most Americans believe that students should be taught about the nation's "best achievements and worst mistakes."

This is a lousy segue. The latter has nothing to do with the former. Critical race theory teaches students that there are oppressors, namely white people, and the oppressed, namely black people. It makes judgments about people based on their skin pigmentation, not their individual attributes. In short, it is a racist ideology, designed to drive a wedge between whites and blacks.

Many other examples could be given, but what really shows the left-wing bent to this report is the way it treats media sources. Throughout the report it scores respondents who get their news from "Fox News" (cited 28 times) or "far-right" media outlets (asked 31 times). It never defines the latter. Nor does it ask about "left-wing" news sources.

The term "far-right" suggests fascist or Nazi-leaning. In the press release, we learn that the authors of this research believe that Newsmax and One America News are "far-right" sources! On p. 25 of the report, in footnote #10, it defines CNN, MSNBC and public television as examples of "mainstream news." Only someone living in a left-wing bubble thinks this way.

This isn't professional research—it's a left-wing hack job. If CNN, MSNBC and PBS were labeled "far-left" in a survey, it would be written off as a right-wing study. Finally, in keeping with the game plan, "mainstream" CNN hosted a show on

the report. Pity the viewers who believe they were listening to objective social scientists.

POPE-BIDEN MEETING STILL UNRESOLVED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue reexamines the meeting last week between the pope and the president:

Many Catholics were dismayed, if not furious, with news reports indicating that Pope Francis told President Biden on October 29 that he was “a good Catholic” and “should keep receiving Communion.” The Vatican has neither confirmed nor denied this account. [As I said when the news broke](#), we have good reasons to be skeptical of Biden’s rendition.

After taking another look at this issue, examining the exact words used by Biden—not relying on media interpretations of what he said—my skepticism is growing. The president was asked about this matter at two press conferences: one on October 29, and the other on October 31.

On October 29, Biden was asked, “Mr. President, did the issue of abortion come up at all?” The first words out of his mouth were, “No, it didn’t.” Then he contradicted himself saying, “It came up.” So which account is true?

After Biden said, “It came up,” he then said what the media widely reported. “We just talked about the fact that he was happy I was a good Catholic and I should keep receiving Communion.”

If the first version is right—abortion never came up for

discussion—then it seems peculiar, to say the least, for the pope to tell him he should “keep receiving Communion.” What would be the context for such a statement, if not abortion? After all, the entire controversy is about Biden’s pro-abortion record, so it is hard to imagine the pope imploring him to “keep receiving Communion” absent any discussion of abortion. Are we to believe he said this out of the blue?

If abortion did come up, what did the pope say to him about it? Just recently Pope Francis said that “abortion is murder. Those who carry out abortions kill.” Such an unequivocal remark suggests it is unlikely that the pope would discuss abortion without talking about it in such graphic terms. That would surely have made Biden uneasy, yet he did not appear to be that way when he spoke.

At the same press conference, Biden was asked, “Did you discuss the U.S. Conference of Bishops?” He answered, “That’s a private conversation.” This begs the question: Why would a discussion of the bishops’ conference be considered a private matter but not one that affects him personally, namely his suitability to receive Communion?

It is entirely possible that Biden is lying.

After admitting that abortion never came up, he quickly pivoted. Why? Because he saw an opening, an opportunity to report to the press the most important thing he wanted from the pope—a chance to undercut those U.S. bishops who are deeply troubled about his pro-abortion record (they will be meeting in less than two weeks to discuss this subject). Having been denied the photo-op the White House desperately wanted, he had to come away with something that served his interest. The Communion issue had to be in the forefront of his mind.

At the October 31st press conference, Biden was asked, “For these Catholics back home, what did it mean for you to hear

Pope Francis, in the wake of this—in the middle of this debate, call you a good Catholic? And what did he tell you—should that put this debate to rest?”

“Look, I’m—I’m not going to—a lot of this is just personal,” Biden said.

But it wasn’t personal just two day earlier. In fact, he showed no hesitancy in getting the word out that the pope regarded him as such a good Catholic that he allegedly encouraged him to “keep receiving Communion.” What changed? Could it be that the Vatican contacted the Biden team and asked them to quash this issue, knowing that Biden’s account was not accurate?

Our incurious media are not asking these questions. That’s because they want to protect the pope and the president, both of whom they like.

There are too many unanswered questions to put this matter to rest. The unwillingness of the Vatican to confirm or deny Biden’s account, and Biden’s inconsistent and implausible responses—only adds to the problem. This doesn’t make either side look good.

PEW RELIGION SURVEY IS SKEWED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on a new Pew Research survey on religion:

The validity of a survey often turns on the precise wording of questions. Indeed, it is possible to construct two different sets of questions for the same respondents on the same subject and generate two different outcomes.

For instance, if the goal is to show how tolerant liberals are of diversity in education, it makes sense to ask questions about the demographic makeup of the faculty. If the goal is to show how intolerant liberals are of diversity in education, it makes sense to ask questions about the ideological makeup of the faculty.

An honest survey would include both sets of questions, then asking, which should matter more in higher education—the demographic or ideological diversity of the faculty?

The Pew survey recently released, “In U.S., Far More Support Than Oppose Separation of Church and State,” is skewed to make liberals look more tolerant than conservatives.

For example, respondents were asked to choose between the following: “Cities and towns in the U.S. should be allowed to place religious symbols on public property OR Cities and towns in the U.S. should keep religious symbols off public property.”

The questions are disingenuous. It is illegal for cities or towns to place religious symbols on *some* public property venues, but not others, and it matters whether the municipality owns the symbols or whether some religious entity does. It may also matter whether the religious symbols have to be surrounded by secular symbols.

For instance, if the site of the religious symbol is near the seat of government, such as inside or outside city hall, they can only be erected if adorned by secular symbols. Why? Because otherwise the average person could conclude that the government is endorsing religion. If, however, the site is a public forum—a place like a city park where freedom of speech is open to everyone—then no secular symbols need to be placed near the religious ones.

In other words, by asking whether a government agency can place religious symbols on public property, the question is

skewed against doing so (even so, 39% said yes and 35% said no). It would have been more enlightening to ask whether private citizens should be allowed to place religious symbols on public property, especially in venues that are open to everyone.

Similarly, respondents were asked if teachers in public schools should be allowed to lead students in Christian prayers. This is a seriously skewed question.

By law, teachers cannot lead students in prayer, but it is legal for students to lead other students in prayer on school grounds. That, of course, was not what was asked. Also, there was no need to inject Christianity into the debate. Respondents could have been asked if they think teachers should allow students to open the day with a prayer (of their choosing). But that would get in the way of the narrative.

As always, Democrats, Jews and those with no religious affiliation are the least likely to support the public expression of religion (atheists are the most hostile); Republicans and Christians are the most likely. The survey authors, of course, do not use terms such as "the public expression of religion"; they prefer phrases such as "separation of church and state."

The term "separation of church and state" is itself in need of explaining. Religious bodies are given federal funds to run their charities. Is that a violation of church and state lines, and should that be illegal?

Pew says it is grateful to Andrew L. Whitehead and Samuel L. Perry, authors of "Taking America Back to God: Christian Nationalism in the United States," for their input. It certainly shows.

I wrote about their book in the October issue of *Catalyst*, our monthly journal. I have something in common with these men: I, too, am a sociologist. However, we see the world through an

entirely different lens.

To cite one example, they argue that if someone believes the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are divinely inspired documents, that proves they are Christian nationalists. Tagging such people with this pernicious term is simply irresponsible. Indeed, it evinces an animus.

Pew has done very fine work, overall. This survey is not among its best.