

BBC CHIEF TESTIFIES BEFORE PARLIAMENT

October 23 – George Entwistle told members of Parliament today that there was no cover-up of the Jimmy Savile scandal, and that no pressure was put on “Newsnight” editor Peter Rippon to cancel a documentary on Savile last December. But not everyone is buying his account.

It is known that after working on a program to expose Savile’s exploits, and finding many women who claimed to have been abused by him, the documentary never aired. It is also known that the BBC was planning to air three tributes to Savile last Christmas. One member of Parliament, John Wittingdale, was skeptical of what Entwistle said, stating that the new BBC chief “was in the process of commissioning the most fulsome tributes to Jimmy Savile, which went out on the BBC over that Christmas, and I just find it very surprising that, having been told by the director of news, given a warning, he didn’t think it appropriate at least to ask what the investigation was about.”

Parliament members are also expressing disbelief that Entwistle’s predecessor, Mark Thompson, knew nothing. P.D. James, the famous crime novelist, said that “Thompson has dropped George Entwistle right in it by stepping down as the BBC’s director-general when he did.” James added that “It seems everyone knew about Jimmy Savile.” Everyone, apparently, but Mark Thompson.

Just recently the head of the National Association for People Abused in Childhood, Esther Rantzen, admitted that she knew Savile had abused children, but never did anything about it. “We made him into the Jimmy Savile who was untouchable, who nobody could criticize.” Now that Savile is dead, there is less justification for not telling the truth. Which is why

Thompson is sure to be grilled by Parliament.

NYT FEUD HAS THOMPSON ON THE ROPES

October 24 – If Vegas were taking odds on whether Mark Thompson will take over as the new president and CEO of the *New York Times* Company, the smart money would bet against him. After what *Times* public editor Margaret Sullivan said about him recently in her blog, he's already on the ropes.

Sullivan asks, "how likely is it that the *Times* Company will continue with its plan to bring Mr. Thompson on as chief executive?" Questioning his integrity about his statement that he knew nothing about a spiked documentary exposing Jimmy Savile, she writes, "His integrity and decision-making are bound to affect The Times and its journalism—profoundly. It's worth considering now whether he is the right person for the job, given this turn of events." If this wasn't enough to finish Thompson, she adds, "What are the implications for the Times Company to have its new C.E.O.—who needs to deal with many tough business challenges here—arriving with so much unwanted baggage?"

Sullivan, it would appear, is playing rabbit for *New York Times* publisher Arthur O. Sulzberger, Jr. It suggests that Thompson has been spoken to about stepping aside but has proven to be obstinate, which is why Sullivan has been rolled out to smack him in public. Either that or she is going out on a limb.

Recently more than 1,200 files were released on suspected child abusers in the Boy Scouts. Also, a Rhode Island judge

was recently asked to unseal documents in a lawsuit dealing with the Legion of Christ, a Catholic order of priests which has been tainted by a sexual abuse scandal of its own. In both instances, the *Times* was among those seeking the files.

Parliament needs to secure the BBC files with an eye toward uncovering the truth about the BBC and the *New York Times*.

NEW YORK TIMES IS IN A REAL PICKLE

October 24 – Mark Thompson was the director-general of the BBC when it killed a “Newsnight” documentary last December on the sexual exploits of BBC child rapist Jimmy Savile. Thompson, who worked at the BBC since 1979, recently said that he had “never heard any allegations or received any complaints” about Savile when he worked at the BBC. Really?

Thompson made his profession of ignorance on October 7; that same day, the BBC’s own press office contradicted him. Also on October 7, it was reported that last December, Thompson was “warned by an angry senior journalist about the potential consequences of axing the Newsnight investigation.” Today it is being reported that a well-respected BBC foreign correspondent also spoke to Thompson at the Christmas party about this issue; she says she informed him of the “broad context” of what happened. Now Thompson is saying that he recalls hearing something about this, but didn’t ask for details.

If the *New York Times* were really on this story it would know that none of this is new. Consider this report by British pundit Guido Fawkes: “Thompson was tackled about the axing [of

the report exposing Savile] at a pre-Christmas drinks party, so he cannot claim to be ignorant of it.” Moreover, when the BBC was asked to respond, it refused. This was reported on February 9, 2012. If I know it, why doesn’t the *New York Times*?

BBC AND COPS KNEW ABOUT SAVILE

October 26 – The number of allegations against Jimmy Savile has now hit 300; more than 400 inquiries are currently being pursued. It is not as though this is breaking news to Scotland Yard: another allegation that was previously brought to its attention surfaced last night, bringing to seven the number of times Scotland Yard investigated Savile. Whether the top cops are crooked or just plain stupid doesn’t matter: what matters is that Savile was always given a pass.

The BBC is just as guilty in covering up this monster’s crimes. The incoming president and CEO of the *New York Times*, Mark Thompson, wants us to believe that he “never heard any allegations” against Savile while at the BBC (he started in 1979). If this is true, it makes him a rare find for the *Times*: everyone else had at least heard about Savile.

Thompson now admits that he was tipped off about the spiked “Newsnight” report on Savile’s exploits and he—like everyone else at the BBC—never bothered to tip off the cops about all the women who were interviewed for the report. “Newsnight” editor Peter Rippon, who recently resigned, said he thought the women had contacted the police. Wrong. But he could have. So could have Thompson: he was told by more than one employee

about this mess at a Christmas party last December, but he elected to do nothing about it.

Thompson's successor, George Entwistle, smacks of the same elitism and arrogance that colors the BBC hierarchy. On Wednesday, he was asked why he shut out all those "Newsnight" reporters who tried to warn him about the consequences of spiking the Savile report. He said he doesn't believe it is "always appropriate" to "talk to people on the shop floor."

If ignorance is bliss, these guys must be basking. And for this, Mark "Mr. Clueless" Thompson is being awarded \$3 million—just for signing—with the *New York Times*.

BBC AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

November 6 — *New York Times* op-ed page columnist Joe Nocera has asked some tough questions about Mark Thompson's knowledge of the Jimmy Savile matter. Concerning the question of whether Thompson ever heard about rumors of Savile's predatory behavior, Nocera cuts him a break, saying that "given the byzantine nature of the BBC bureaucracy, these are plausible denials."

Nocera's position is not without merit. The only reason I mention this is because of the double standard held by some of the harshest critics of the Catholic Church: they say that Pope John Paul II must have known about predatory priests in the employ of the Holy See, and that Pope Benedict XVI (then Cardinal Ratzinger), must also have known. Yes, of course they knew there was a problem, but just how big it was, and exactly who was involved is another matter altogether.

Thompson defends himself, in part, by saying that the enormous

size of the BBC—23,000 employees, eight TV channels, 50 radio stations—made it impossible for him to know details that were known to others. Again, this position is not without merit. But the BBC is tiny next to the Church.

The pope governs an institution with over 1 billion members residing in every part of the globe. Besides the Roman Curia and the College of Cardinals, those who work for the pope include: more than 5,000 bishops; 400,000 priests; almost 40,000 permanent deacons; 55,000 non-ordained male religious; over 700,000 female religious; and over 100,000 seminarians. They work in over 3,000 dioceses serving some 220,000 parishes throughout the world.

If Thompson is to be cut some slack, wouldn't justice demand that the pope be treated at least as generously? It should now be clear why I wrote these 12 reports.

VOTERS SPLIT ON KEY ISSUES

President Barack Obama won by a small margin in the popular vote (50.6% to Governor Mitt Romney's 47.8%), but he won by a large electoral college margin (332-206). President Obama won big among minorities (African Americans, Asians and Latinos), young people, homosexuals, Jews, secularists, and women (especially single women).

By a margin of 53% to 38%, voters blamed President George W. Bush for *current* economic problems, not President Obama. Obama also won the "empathy vote" (he was the candidate "who cares about people like me") by a huge margin. On those measures alone, it made it difficult for Romney to win.

On several state ballot initiatives, voters were almost evenly

split on most measures.

Until the election, those who sided with the pro-traditional marriage side were 32-0 in the states, and the only places where gay marriage advocates were able to win were in states where either judges or legislators decided to break with tradition. But on Election Day, voters in Maine, Maryland and Washington voted narrowly for gay marriage; in Minnesota, voters rejected a state constitutional amendment banning gay marriage (though it is still not permitted by state law).

Colorado and Washington State voted to legalize marijuana use for recreational purposes, however a federal law banning marijuana is still in place. Florida voters refused to repeal the Blaine Amendment that prohibits public funds for any religious entity; the law is a vestige of the anti-Catholic prejudices of the 19th century. Affirmative action was stricken by voters in Oklahoma, and a law legalizing doctor-assisted suicide lost in Massachusetts. Voters in Montana passed a law requiring parental notification on abortion.

The political polarization is a reflection of the cultural divide. We are in many ways a country split between practicing Catholics and Protestants who hold traditional moral views, and those of a secular bent who hold very liberal views. The room for compromise is small, making certain the likelihood of a protracted cultural war.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE CATHOLIC VOTE

Catholics are a quarter of the electorate, and they voted for President Barack Obama over Gov. Mitt Romney by the same

margin as the total electorate, 50%-48%. Contrary to what many pundits said, this figure suggested that the bishops' campaign for religious liberty, waged against the Health and Human Services mandate, actually paid off: Obama got 54% of the Catholic vote in 2008 to John McCain's 45%.

Some commentators talk about the Catholic vote as if it were monolithic, and others say it doesn't exist. It would be more accurate to say there are four Catholic votes: practicing and non-practicing; white and Latino.

Among practicing Catholics, Obama received 42% to Romney's 57%; among non-practicing Catholics, Obama picked up 56% while Romney got 42%.

White Catholics gave Obama 40% of their votes while Romney earned 59%; Latino Catholics gave Obama 71% of their votes while Romney earned 27%.

From previous survey research published by the Pew Forum, we know that practicing Latino Catholics are less likely to support the Democrats than are non-practicing Latinos.

What this shows is that the more practicing a Catholic is, of any ethnic background, the less likely he is to support the more secular of the candidates.

Finally, there is a serious question whether non-practicing Catholics should be considered Catholic. By way of analogy, if someone tells a pollster that he is a vegetarian, but has long since abandoned a veggie-only diet, would it make empirical sense to count him as a vegetarian? Self-identity is an interesting psychological concept, but it is not necessarily an accurate reflection of a person's biography.

BEWARE ADVICE FROM FOES

In the wake of the election, practicing Catholics and Protestants of a traditional orientation were inundated with advice from their liberal brethren. The advice generally went like this: to win future elections, conservative Christians need to moderate their views on abortion, gay marriage, immigration, and other issues. In other words, they need to move left so that the liberal agenda can be fulfilled without resistance.

No serious Catholic or Protestant can ever accept the abortion-rights agenda. Moreover, there is less reason to do so now than ever before: more Americans consider themselves to be pro-life than at any time since *Roe*. This does not mean, however, that pro-life candidates who are manifestly stupid should be nominated.

No serious Catholic or Protestant can ever sanction gay marriage. To do so is not only a breach of Christian teaching, it is a recipe for social instability. This issue remains divisive, but it is worth recalling that until millions of out-of-state dollars were poured into a few state initiatives, the pro-traditional marriage side was 32-0 in state elections.

Immigration is different. On April 20, 2006, Bill Donohue wrote, "The position that the Democrats have staked out on this issue is something many Americans, myself included, feel is superior to that of the Republicans." For starters, Republicans should cease silly talk about deporting 11 million people and start talking about realistic pathways to citizenship (while simultaneously securing our borders). The American people may not have invited immigrants to come here illegally, but they, along with both the Republicans and the Democrats, have found it very convenient to look the other way while millions did. This ambivalence must end, and it must be reflected in new legislation.

Finally, the religious liberty campaign sponsored by the bishops must go forward. Our foes would like to see it end, which is all the more reason why it must succeed.

PULPIT POLITICS

M. Alex Johnson of NBC News and the editorial board of the *Los Angeles Times* were quite upset with the pro-Romney clergy leading up to the election. Yet, they had absolutely nothing to say about pro-Obama clergy members.

Consider the facts. The Pew Research Center recently released its findings on this: "Black Protestants are twice as likely as churchgoers to be hearing about the candidates at church." Moreover, "Nearly half (45%) of black Protestant churchgoers say the messages they hear at church favor a candidate, and *every one of those says the message favors Obama.*" [Our italics.] Apparently NBC News and the *Los Angeles Times* missed that report. They must have also missed the news story by Rachel Zoll of the Associated Press; she did a fair job covering this subject, citing the Pew findings.

The evidence that black ministers have been using the pulpit to promote Obama is hardly new. Just recently, the *Charlotte Observer* and the *Washington Post* offered plenty of detail on this issue. Also of interest is California Governor Jerry Brown: he campaigned in black churches for his ballot initiative to soak the rich.

Top prize for hypocrisy, however, went to Nicholas Cafardi, a law professor at Duquesne University. On November 2, in a column he wrote for a Catholic dissident newspaper, he attacked Bishop Daniel Jenky for a letter that the Peoria bishop recently asked his priests to read at Mass regarding

the election. The letter, which Cafardi describes as a “non-endorsement endorsement,” amounted to “a partisan political rant.” Yet on that very same day, it was reported that Cafardi was one of over 60 “faith leaders and ministers” who signed a statement that *literally endorsed President Obama*. Indeed, they raved about everything from ObamaCare to Head Start, both abject failures.

Different strokes for different folks? Or left-wing politics as usual? Both answers are correct.

DeGENERES LETS LANGE RIP NUNS

Jessica Lange is mostly known as King Kong’s girlfriend, though she has found a new life bashing nuns in the FX disaster, “American Horror Story: Asylum.” Joining with her recently was the ever sensitive Ellen DeGeneres, a woman who bravely stands up against gay bashing. But when it comes to bashing the Catholic Church, she is quite at home acting as an accomplice. Never once did she challenge Lange.

On an episode of the daytime talk show “Ellen,” Lange and DeGeneres had a good time feeding the worst possible stereotype of “mean” nuns. Lange admitted, with typical Hollywood brilliance, that she “wasn’t raised in any kind of religious situation, so, I mean, we didn’t go to church or anything.” We believe her. In discussing nuns, words like “insanity” and “evil” just rolled off their incoherent lips.

Lange ended by saying that her character, Sister Jude, “is the result of this kind of crazy, wild, drunken, loose life she lived before.” Sounds like even Kong would have dumped this tramp.