

CHILD-ABUSING BIGOTS ENDORSE HILLARY

NARAL Pro-Choice America endorsed Hillary Clinton for the Democratic presidential nomination. It supports letting infants born of a botched abortion die unattended by doctors. Hillary said she was “honored” by the endorsement.

The vast majority of Americans are opposed to the current abortion policy which allows abortions to be performed at any time during pregnancy and for any reason. Only a small percentage of Americans support partial-birth abortion, the procedure that smashes the baby’s skull when he or she is 80 percent born. Almost no one supports walking away from infants who survive an abortion, allowing them to die on a physician’s table. NARAL does.

Sixteen years ago, NARAL was almost alone in opposing the Born-Alive Infants Protection Act, a bill that mandated medical care for children who survived an abortion. It even lied about its position. In 2000, Bill Donohue debated Kelli Conlin on TV about this subject; she was the executive director of the New York chapter of NARAL. She denied that NARAL opposed this bill, but he proved she was a liar; he also sent a copy of NARAL’s press release to NBC moderator Gabe Pressman following the show to settle the issue.

NARAL also has a long history of bigotry. Indeed, it was founded on anti-Catholicism, dating back to its inception in the 1960s. How do we know? Because one of its founders, Dr. Bernard Nathanson, a practicing abortionist, admitted many times that he made up lies about the Catholic Church hoping to discredit its moral voice. In fact, he said that the goal of NARAL in the 1960s was to associate Catholicism with “reactionary, pro-fascist positions,” thus making it easier to promote abortion. He later repented, told the truth about

NARAL, and became a Catholic.

Hillary is “honored” to be endorsed by anti-Catholic bigots who advocate infanticide. Perhaps she will be asked which position she likes most.

OBAMA OPPOSES RELIGIOUS PROFILING?

President Obama implored us to “reject any politics that targets people because of race or religion.” Regrettably, his opposition to religious profiling cannot be taken seriously. If anything, his administration has contributed to it.

The Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate is a classic case of religious profiling. Not only does it cherry pick Catholic non-profits by forcing them to pay for abortion-inducing drugs, it redefines what constitutes a Catholic entity: Catholic social service agencies that hire and serve large numbers of non-Catholics—that is what truly Catholic institutions do—are deemed to be no longer Catholic. This explains why the Little Sisters of the Poor were declared to be non-Catholic by the administration; it also explains why the nuns sued them.

When bishops complained that the HHS mandate was violating the conscience rights of Catholics, the Obama administration retaliated by issuing a gag order: it prohibited military chaplains to read from the pulpit a letter by Archbishop Timothy Broglio protesting this edict.

For many years, the Migration and Refugee Services, an agency run by the bishops, received a federal grant for its work

combating human trafficking. But because it opposes abortion as a remedy to “help” women, it was denied by the Obama team, even though its grant application received high scores from independent reviewers.

Catholics have every right to question Obama’s alleged sensitivity to religious institutions. After all, he invited Catholic dissidents to the White House to meet the pope, and has welcomed vile anti-Catholics such as Bill Maher and Dan Savage. By contrast, there is no record of him ever embracing anti-Muslim bigots. That’s because Muslims are treated with greater respect than Catholics.

SCALIA CHAMPIONED RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

The untimely death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia is a setback for religious liberty; he was one of its greatest defenders. We are happy to report that Bill Donohue came to his defense right at the start of the new year.

In a speech before Catholic youth in Louisiana, Scalia said that the Constitution was never meant to be neutral about religion. Indeed, he said, “there is no place for that in our constitutional tradition.” He admitted that “you can’t favor one denomination over another,” but that doesn’t mean that religion cannot be favored over non-religion.

Scalia’s comments ignited a firestorm. For example, professor Jeff Schweitzer accused him of “gross ignorance unbecoming of a justice of the Supreme Court.” The marine biologist should stick to studying fish.

Scalia's critics said he ignored the meaning of the establishment clause which supposedly bars government aid to religious institutions. In fact, it was written in support of the primary clause, the free exercise clause. University of South Dakota law professor Patrick M. Garry, author of *Wrestling with God: The Courts' Tortuous Treatment of Religion*, notes that "The first and foremost concern of the framers of the First Amendment was not to create a separation of church and state, but to guarantee religious freedom. And the absence of an established church was just one aspect of achieving freedom of religion."

Garry demolished the idea that the First Amendment is neutral about religion. "The First Amendment framers did not intend to strip religion of its uniqueness, or to make it exactly equal to every secular institution in society. To the contrary, the establishment clause aims only to keep government from singling out certain religious sects for preferential treatment, not from showing any favoritism to religion in general."

The founders publicly funded the building of churches, paid for the salaries of ministers, and allowed for state churches. That has changed, but Scalia was right to say that there is nothing in the Constitution that requires the government to be neutral about religion.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY FRIGHTENS SECULARISTS

January 16 was Religious Freedom Day, a day that most Americans are proud to support. There were some, however, who

were frightened by it.

Frederick Clarkson was frightened. He is the author of *When Exemption is the Rule: The Religious Freedom Strategy of the Christian Right*, an analysis of Christian legal organizations and their impact on society. His thesis is that “the evangelical Protestant Christian Right and American Roman Catholic bishops [have] forged a lasting alliance.” Specifically, they want to carve out “theocratic zones of control.” As such, it poses a threat to religious liberty.

Supporting Clarkson is Patricia Miller. What really interests her, and Clarkson, is sex. They detest religious exemptions that “threaten reproductive and LGBT rights.” Both have their work flagged on the website of Religion Dispatches, an anti-Christian site. Not surprisingly, Clarkson formerly worked for Planned Parenthood, and Miller is the author of a pro-abortion book.

This is the way the Left works. First, they promote a libertine agenda, one that does violence to liberty, properly understood, and to civil society. Second, they foster increasing encroachments by the state on religion. Third, when religious-liberty advocates fight back, seeking to insulate practicing Christians and Jews from an overreaching state, they are accused of creating a theocracy. Indeed, Rev. John C. Dorhauer, who wrote a preface to Clarkson’s work, says we are faced with the prospect of turning America into “a theocratic state, or a collection of mini-states.”

Yuval Levin offered a more astute understanding of this subject. Writing in the February edition of *First Things*, he noted that Madison recognized that “religious liberty is the freedom not to be coerced into doing that which your religion prohibits you from doing.” The Catholic League stands with Madison.

Clarkson and Miller should be worried: Our side is not walking

away from this fight for freedom.

A TOUGH TIME FOR SECULARISTS

In Kentucky recently, a federal judge ruled that the state could not deny a sales tax rebate to a Christian group, Answers in Genesis (AiG) for a theme park it is constructing featuring a life-size Noah's Ark replica. To deny it would amount to pressuring AiG "to give up its religious beliefs, purpose or practice in order to receive a government benefit," the judge said. The ruling was a defeat for Americans United for Separation of Church and State, which continues to oppose the rebate.

In Tennessee, a bill to provide educational vouchers for parents of children in low performing public schools, advanced through a crucial House committee. Americans United opposes this bill, because many of the private school alternatives are faith-based. They would keep children trapped in failing public schools rather than allow them to choose a quality education in a faith-based school.

A group of atheists gathered in protest outside the Jan. 28 Republican presidential debate in Des Moines, Iowa. They were dismayed that "a growing number of presidential candidates are basing much of their candidacy on their religious beliefs." Presumably they are even more dismayed by the latest Pew Survey showing that 51 percent of Americans would be less likely to vote for a candidate who does not believe in God.

VATICAN REMOVES SHADY PANEL MEMBER

The Vatican has announced that Peter Saunders, one of two representatives of abuse victims on its Commission for the Protection of Minors, has been suspended from the commission.

Saunders refuses to go quietly, however, saying only Pope Francis can dismiss him from the commission—even though, by his own statement, the commission's vote to suspend him was unanimous, save for one abstention. So unless we are to assume bad faith on the part of *every one* of the 16 other commission members—beginning with its president, Cardinal Sean O'Malley of Boston—there must be some merit to the members' conclusion that they could not work with Saunders.

We have long had our own concerns about Saunders. From his savage attack last June on Australian Cardinal George Pell—whom Saunders never met—branding him as “callous,” “coldhearted,” “almost sociopathic”—to seeming inconsistencies in Saunders' personal tale of abuse, we have good reason to question his character.

Our own research found that Saunders began his story by describing abuse at the hands of one man, alternately identified as “a family member,” “a family friend,” and, finally, his brother-in-law. Abuse by priests was only later—and sporadically—added to the story. Then, in a story in the *New Statesman* in September of 2010—just prior to Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Britain—Saunders described abuse by the head teacher of his Catholic primary school and two Jesuit priests at his secondary school. For these reasons alone, it makes no sense to have Saunders on this commission.

NEBRASKA BISHOPS RIP GENDER IDEOLOGY

Recently, a statement was issued by Nebraska bishops opposing a gender identity policy pushed by a state organization.

The Nebraska National School Activities Association had recently voted—against the express will of a majority of its districts—to allow transgender participation in high school sports and other activities. The three Nebraska Catholic bishops opposed this decision, and have asked the association’s representative assembly to overturn it on April 8.

If the ruling is not overturned, it would mean that boys who think they are girls could compete against girls in sports, and vice versa. The bishops called attention to the undemocratic nature of the decision, but their most pithy remarks addressed the core issue: gender dysphoria.

“Any person who experiences gender dysphoria is entitled to the respect and dignity that is the right of every human person,” the bishops said. But they added that such concerns “must be provided with due consideration to fairness and the safety, privacy, and rights of all students.” They did not avoid what is really at stake.

Referring to the ruling, the bishops said, “It would be unjust to allow a harmful and deceptive gender ideology to shape either what is taught or how activities are conducted in our schools.” They said it would have a “negative impact” on students, especially their attitudes towards “the fundamental nature of the human person and the family.”

The bishops are right: This ruling transcends sports. It invites boys and girls to think that their sexual differences, grounded in nature, are malleable. They are not—they are constitutive of who we are. “Gender” refers to socially learned roles governing the sexes, cues which are taken from nature, and are largely ratified by culture. To wit: It is not culture that makes boys more aggressive than girls—it’s their testosterone level.

Pope Francis has said, “Gender ideology is demonic!” Yes, by confusing boys and girls about what nature, and nature’s God, has ordained, only trouble can follow.

COVERING UP FOR ACT UP

New York Times reporter James Barron recently wrote a story about former Senate majority leader George Mitchell being named the grand marshal of this year’s New York St. Patrick’s Day Parade. He mentioned that a gay group led by Brendan Fay is being allowed to march in this year’s parade. He recounted how much has changed since a gay uprising in 1989. “The controversy began in December 1989,” he wrote, “when thousands demonstrated outside St. Patrick’s Cathedral over statements made by Cardinal John J. O’Connor on abortion, homosexuality and AIDS.”

That is not exactly what happened. Barron left out the most salient aspect of this protest—what happened inside the cathedral. He should read his own newspaper’s account.

The *Times* editorial of December 12, 1989 described how demonstrators “stormed St. Patrick’s Cathedral.” It noted that “They entered the cathedral and repeatedly interrupted the service. They lay down in the aisles, chained themselves to

pews and sought to shout down Cardinal O'Connor as he said mass. One protester is reported to have disrupted even the administering of communion with an act of desecration that deeply offended worshippers."

The act of desecration was spitting the Eucharist on the floor. No wonder Mayor Ed Koch, who was there, said he was shocked by the "fascist tactics" of the protesters.

Everyone knows that if Catholics demonstrated outside a hall where gay activists were holding forth, and some of them went crazy—storming the event—no reporter, then or later, would ever write about it without mentioning what happened inside. Yet gay fascists can disrupt a Mass and desecrate the Eucharist, and years later the *Times* only noted that "thousands demonstrated outside St. Patrick's Cathedral."

It would be wrong to say this is poor journalism—it's rewriting history.

OSCAR VOTERS LACK DIVERSITY

Al Sharpton is angry that for two years in a row, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences did not nominate any black actors. "Hollywood is like the Rocky Mountains," he said, "the higher up you get the whiter it gets." He added that Hollywood has a "fraudulent image of progressive and liberal politics and policies."

Is Sharpton right? We know from a *Los Angeles Times* poll that Oscar voters are 94 percent white. We also know that they are 76 percent male and that their average age is 63. They are also heavily Jewish. Writing in *the Jewish Journal*, Abe Fried-Tanzer said, "It is no secret that there are Jews all over

Hollywood.” Indeed, the *Jewish Forward* said it is merely a “sociological observation” to note that “Jews run Hollywood.”

Is there a problem that Oscar voters are mostly older Jewish guys? Yes, but not because they are older, or white, or Jewish: it’s because their values, which are decidedly liberal-left, are not representative of the American public. As such, traditional-minded persons are severely underrepresented in the voting process.

When we speak of diversity, too much attention is given to anatomy and ancestry. What counts is diversity of thought, not sex or race. The same problem exists on college campuses: those who hold conservative values are in small supply.

Regarding the Jewish element, Bill Donohue would personally prefer a Hollywood run by Jews such as Michael Medved and Dennis Prager than he would one run by Catholics such as the Cuomos, Pelosis, or Kennedys.

Sharpton was right to complain about the lack of diversity in Hollywood, but he was wrong to focus on biological criteria—the real problem is in the mindset of the voters. Only when we can be sure that practicing Catholics, evangelical Protestants, observant Jews, Mormons, and others have a representative seat at the table can Hollywood escape the rap that it is hypocritical.

GOLDEN GLOBES’ REVEALING MOMENTS

The Hollywood crowd has a great sense of humor about some things, but even those who delight in pushing the envelope

have boundaries.

TheWrap, which covers Hollywood, quoted Golden Globes host Ricky Gervais saying that “‘The Martian’, was a lot funnier than ‘Pixels,’ but then again, so was ‘Schindler’s List.’” TheWrap reporter Jeff Sneider observed that “While everyone seemed to appreciate the shot at Adam Sandler [‘Pixels’ star], the ‘Schindler’s List’ punchline elicited some audible shock in the audience as well as TheWrap’s newsroom.”

Sneider continued, “Clearly, the Holocaust is no laughing matter, but apparently child molestation is. In talking about this year’s awards darling ‘Spotlight,’ a movie about priests sexually abusing children, Gervais scored with a joke about Roman Polanski calling it ‘the best date movie ever.’”

This was the joke: “The Catholic Church are [sic] furious about ‘Spotlight,’ as it exposes the fact that 5% of all their priests have repeatedly molested children and been allowed to continue to work without punishment. Roman Polanski called it the best date movie ever.”

Most reviewers dispute Sneider’s account. They call attention to the noticeable groans in the audience. Indeed, *USA Today* named the quip, “Winner of the Golden Groaner prize.” But even this is inadequate.

In fact, there was no groan after the (inaccurate) remark about priests: The audience groaned only when their hero, child-rapist Roman Polanski, was mentioned.

The groans and laughter at these events are an excellent window into the Hollywood mind, shallow though it is. Tinseltown has its hot buttons, not among them being cheap shots at priests.