

GUINNESS ANGERS CATHOLICS; BOYCOTT LAUNCHED

As we reported last month, on the evening of March 16, the day before St. Patrick's Day, Guinness announced that it was pulling its sponsorship of New York's parade because gays were allegedly banned from marching.

This 11th hour decision, which angered pub owners who had already stocked their bars with Guinness, was based on a lie: contrary to what Guinness said, gays have never been banned from the parade; they simply cannot march under their own banner (the same is true for pro-life Catholics). The timing, the reason given, and the punitive response, explains why we called for a boycott.

This issue of *Catalyst* provides plenty of information on how the boycott unfolded. We do not call for a boycott without good reason. But when Catholics are insulted—and this insult extends to every Catholic ethnic group, not just the Irish—it must be taken seriously. We cannot allow these corporate bullies to get away with this decision with impunity.

Our campaign is growing. We contacted the senior officials at Guinness in London and in Norwalk (the Connecticut office is home to the U.S. headquarters). We did several eblasts—we tapped our extensive email list asking our allies to support the boycott. We wrote to the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Knights of Columbus, beer distributors, and others. We started an online petition drive.

We have no hard data on how the boycott is working, but we are attempting to access it. Anecdotal-ly, we have plenty of reason to believe that we are scoring. Pub owners have pulled the Guinness tap, replacing it with Murphy's Stout. Pub customers have stopped ordering the famous Irish brew. The

word is out: Guinness is no friend to the Catholic community.

We are under no illusions that a behemoth like Guinness can be taken down. But it can be wounded; even a small decline in sales causes corporations angst. Moreover, no company wants bad PR, no matter how wealthy it may be.

Guinness made a rash decision, hoping it could get away with sticking it to Catholics while befriending homosexuals. How dumb. Almost everyone who drinks Guinness is *not* gay, and the average consumer is disproportionately Irish, Catholic, and male. But sometimes ideology overrules business interests, as well as common sense.

On pages 4-6, you can read how we presented our case to the media (there is some unavoidable repetition). We are very appreciative of those who have joined the boycott, and we ask that everyone spread the word. See p. 7 for information about contacting Diageo, the parent company of Guinness. Your voice matters.

DIVERSITY LIE

It is one of the biggest myths of our day to say the United States is a religiously diverse nation. It manifestly is not. But there is a lot of money, and ideological investment, at stake in pretending otherwise. Consider the following.

A Pew Research Center study on global religious diversity was released on April 4: with the exception of the *Washington Times*, not a single large-circulation newspaper in the nation ran a story on it.

The study found that “from a global perspective, the U.S.

really is not at all that religiously diverse.” Indeed, “95% of the U.S. population is either Christian [78%] or religiously unaffiliated, while all other religions combined account for less than 5% of Americans. As a result, the U.S. ranks 68th out of 232 countries and territories.” Similarly, as a Gallup poll found, 95% of all Americans who identify with a religion are Christian.

The Pew study classified the U.S. as “moderate” in terms of religious diversity. With good reason: Jews are 1.8%, Buddhists are 1.2%, Muslims are .9%, Hindus are .6%, and folk religions are .2%. Moreover, the U.S. is less religiously diverse than such nations as Jamaica, Bermuda, France, Germany, Sweden, Tanzania, and Ethiopia.

The media blackout is not hard to explain: the data undercut the multicultural argument used by anti-Christian organizations. We are overwhelmingly Christian, and as such we should not flinch from acknowledging this verity whenever appropriate. Our roots are Judeo-Christian; they are not Hindu-Islamic.

THE MYTH OF DIVERSITY

William A. Donohue

The greatest threat to freedom these days comes not from neo-Nazis, or from any other group on the lunatic fringe: it comes from those who tout the virtue of diversity. Unfortunately, they are clustered in the command centers of our culture, making it impossible to avoid them.

To be specific, they work in higher education, the media, the entertainment industry, the publishing world, the arts, the

non-profit sector, and in Internet communications. Not everyone who works in these fields is a menace to liberty, but too many are. Their commitment to diversity extends only to demographics. Even there, their commitment is qualified: I have never met a white person who said he supports diversity in the workforce who didn't try to land a job for a friend or a lover. Affirmative action be damned.

Ironically, the one kind of diversity these people loathe is the only one tied to the pursuit of freedom: diversity of thought. Indeed, they more closely resemble the thought-control maniacs associated with the politics of totalitarianism than they do the politics of liberalism, properly understood. True liberals believe in freedom of expression; left-wing ideologues do not. It is the latter who are ascendant in the dominant culture.

Looking for examples to prove this point are not hard to find. When is the last time we learned of conservative students shouting down a left-wing speaker on a college campus? By contrast, few conservative notables are even invited to speak, and when they are, they are likely to be greeted with intolerance.

"Speech zones," or designated spots where students can express themselves with impunity, are commonplace on campuses; time restrictions also apply. Let's be clear about this: These zones are manifestly un-American. Free speech, especially in higher education, should be as robust as it is ubiquitous; it should not be a circumscribed privilege. It is a sad day in America when there is more tolerance for diversity of thought in the local McDonald's than on the local college campus.

Some professors are so tyrannical that they are now advocating jail time for those who disagree with them. Lawrence Torcello teaches philosophy at Rochester Institute of Technology and he is on record saying that anyone who maintains that global warming isn't real ought to be imprisoned. He flatly says that

misinformation about the climate “ought to be considered criminally negligent.” He did not say whether they should be shot.

Christianity is not merely rejected by these elites, they seek to ban it. Here are a few recent examples. When Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker posted on his Facebook and Twitter feeds a verse from the Bible, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,” the atheists at Freedom From Religion Foundation demanded he take it down. When a 5-year-old girl from Florida was caught praying at lunch, her teacher ordered her to stop. An Air Force base in Florida banned the display of a Bible at an event honoring missing troops. In Queens, New York, the new Borough President prohibited Catholics from receiving ashes at Borough Hall (no one ever complained). And so on.

Brendan Eich was forced to resign as CEO of Mozilla, maker of the Internet web browser Firefox, because he wrote a check for \$1,000 six years earlier in favor of marriage, traditionally defined. The bullies who work at the Silicon Valley company hate diversity of thought, and could not stand working for a man who had the audacity to believe that marriage should be between a man and a woman. This was too much for the diversity dons to tolerate.

If only these left-wing fanatics admitted their love for fascism, they would at least be honest. The executive chairwoman of Mozilla, Mitchell Baker, said the company “believes in equality and freedom of speech.” She lied: Eich was discriminated against for exercising his free speech. “We have employees with a wide diversity of views,” she added. This is Orwellian doublespeak: the very last thing she believes in is diversity of views. If she did, Eich would still be there.

I learned a long time ago that those who boast in public of their commitment to freedom of speech should be looked upon

with askance. Some clearly do, but many others simply lie. There is no better example than the American Civil Liberties Union.

When I was doing research on the American Civil Liberties Union for my Ph.D. dissertation at New York University, I found that in 1925, just five years after the ACLU was founded, it sued an author who wrote a critical piece about it. There was absolutely nothing libelous about it, and indeed when H.L. Mencken was asked to referee the dispute, he unequivocally condemned the ACLU for its duplicity. He was then branded a fascist for supporting freedom of speech.

Matters have only worsened since the ACLU was exposed as a fraud. Now those who seek to silence dissent are all around us. Most of them are not skinheads, nor do they pierce their tongues. But looks can be deceiving: the thought police are masters at deception. Just ask Brendan Eich.

GUINNESS BOYCOTT ADVANCES

On St. Patrick's Day, Bill Donohue announced a boycott of Guinness, Heineken, and Sam Adams: the first two brewers pulled out of sponsoring the St. Patrick's Day parade in New York City; the latter withdrew from the Boston parade. Prudence dictates that we concentrate our efforts on just one: we decided to settle on Guinness.

Bostonians are best suited to boycotting Sam Adams—the effort is already under way—and those who favor Heineken will hopefully send its executives a message as well. The Catholic League has chosen Guinness (owned by Diageo) for two reasons: (a) when multiple targets are selected for a boycott, the effectiveness of the effort is diluted, and (b) Guinness is

the biggest and most prominent of the three brewers.

After the St. Patrick's Day parade occurred in New York City, we did a mass mailing to Catholic organizations, and Irish groups, asking them to join us in boycotting Guinness. Once fair-minded persons know that this entire controversy is contrived—no gays and lesbians have ever been banned from marching in any St. Patrick's Day parade—they will no longer buy Guinness, or ask the company to sponsor one of their events.

The corporate officers at Guinness who think they can get away with this in-your-face gesture are sadly mistaken. The demographics are working against them: Young people are drawn to craft beers; it's older Americans, heavily Irish Catholic, who buy Guinness, and they are also the most likely to draw a line in the sand when angered.

This Guinness insult has more to do with anti-Catholicism than with anti-Irish sentiment. Gay activists, and their tony heterosexual buddies, don't have a beef with the Irish—they seek to punish Catholics for holding to traditional moral beliefs. It's the religious element to these parades, not the ethnic factor, that is motivating Guinness to act like a corporate bully.

MEDIA BLITZ OVER GUINNESS BOYCOTT

In just one week, the Catholic League succeeded in getting 82 media hits on our boycott of Guinness. From Australia and England, to Canada and the United States, the boycott story has been picked up by television, radio, newspapers, and the

Internet. And that was just the beginning.

We have no hard data on the success of the boycott yet, but anecdotal evidence has been very encouraging. The decision by Guinness officials to pull sponsorship of New York's St. Patrick's Day parade has led many pub patrons to choose another brew. There is anger over what has been done, and it is not going away. We will make sure of that.

The Catholic League has heard from bishops in Peru, cardinals in Rome, pub owners in cities across the nation, chapters of the Knights of Columbus, men and women from many ethnic and religious groups—they've had it with the corporate bullies at Guinness.

There will be more on this issue, much more. Please go to our website and check our "Guinness Boycott Central" feature for the latest developments.

Note: We are trying to access hard data on how Guinness sales are doing, and we will make it available when we have it. As long as there is a decline in sales, however small, it should be enough to send them a message. Please do your part in boycotting Guinness.

GUINNESS BOYCOTT SOARS

The response to our boycott has been overwhelming. From a bishop who belongs to the Eastern Catholic Church (Aramaic Rite) in Lima, Peru, to a former community organizer in New Jersey, we have seen an outpouring of angry Catholics who are fully supportive of our efforts. If the Guinness corporate bullies think that this is a flash in the pan, then they don't understand the Catholic League. But they will—we are not going

away.

There is a price to be paid for anti-Catholic bigotry, and that is exactly what is driving Guinness to act. Gays have never been barred from marching in any St. Patrick's Day parade, and everyone knows it. Guinness wants to punish Catholics for holding to traditional moral values, and now they must suffer the consequences.

This is the start of an on-going protest that will send an unmistakable message to Guinness: declaring war on Catholics is risky business. The rollout of this campaign is visible at our headquarters in Manhattan: the staff has been busy assembling a list of Catholic organizations, Irish groups, pub owners, and all those persons and associations that have worked with us in the past, to boycott Guinness. There will be public statements, paid advertisements, and more. Of course, we will continue to blanket the media.

While we will not refrain from addressing other issues, the Guinness boycott is our top priority. We have the time, the money, and the determination to conduct a full-court press. Stay tuned.

HIBERNIANS ASKED TO JOIN GUINNESS BOYCOTT

The Catholic League recently contacted over 300 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) Divisions asking them to join us in our boycott of Guinness. Overall, we collected 845 email addresses from 287 AOH websites. We expect that many of these divisions, if not most, will endorse our campaign.

Guinness is not going to get away with disrespecting Catholics, if only for one reason: we are not going away. By pulling the plug on its sponsorship of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York City the night before the march, the corporate bullies at Guinness showed their bigotry and their cowardice. Not until they reinstate their sponsorship of the parade will we call off the boycott.

GUINNESS BOYCOTT TAPS KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

We have amassed over 7,000 email addresses from the Knights of Columbus, constituting over 1,500 councils across all 50 states and the District of Columbia. A couple of weeks ago, we asked the Knights to join us in our boycott of Guinness.

We are confident that many Knights will participate. How do we know? Because we have been contacted by many councils already, anticipating our appeal to them.

When Guinness pulled the plug on its sponsorship of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York City—over the bogus argument that gays are barred from marching—it insulted Catholics of every ethnicity. The only way to send the corporate bullies at Guinness a message is to hit them in the pocket book.

GUINNESS AND BEER DISTRIBUTORS

Recently, Bill Donohue sent a letter to three top officials at Diageo-Guinness in Norwalk, Connecticut, and three others in London, England. In the letter, Donohue outlined how “The decision to withdraw sponsorship of New York’s St. Patrick’s Day parade is not being welcomed by Catholics, especially Irish Catholics; we are also impressed by the number of non-Catholics who have expressed their support for our boycott.” Donohue also placed an emphasis on how there were no new rules implemented this year that made the parade differ from parades that occurred in the past.

As a result, claims of discrimination are therefore bogus. Donohue urged each official to see the petition that was enclosed with the letter for further information on why he called for a boycott of Guinness.

Furthermore, Donohue reveal-ed that “In 2007, the Miller Brewing Company offended Catholics by sponsoring a vile, obscene, anti-Catholic gay event. When they refused to issue a complete apology, and balked on pledging not to sponsor the event the following year, I called for a boycott. Five-and-a-half weeks later, Miller changed its mind and the boycott ended. For more information, see pp.1, 5-7 of the November [2007] issue of *Catalyst*, and pp.1 and 4 of the December [2007] edition. We reach a wide audience, including all the nation’s bishops.”

Donohue concluded the letter by stating that he hopes the officials at Guinness will do what they can to reverse this situation and thanked them for their consideration.

In addition, the Catholic League mailed a letter to over 200 beer distributors across the U.S. In the letter, Donohue

provided the beer distributors with a detailed description about the national boycott of Guinness that is currently under way.

Citing its support for gay rights, Guinness pulled its sponsorship of this year's New York's St. Patrick's Day parade, on the eve of it taking place. The reason that Guinness used for why it pulled its sponsorship of the parade is deeply flawed: again, gays have never been barred from marching in the parade; they simply cannot march under their own banner. Neither can pro-life Catholics, nor can any group that seeks to promote its own cause. The letter also highlighted the fact that "The parade is a tribute to St. Patrick; it is not about anything else."

Bar owners in New York are particularly angry at Guinness for its 11th hour gambit: it did not announce that it was pulling its sponsorship until the night before the parade. This was a real slap in the face: the owners had already stocked up on Guinness.

Finally, Donohue encouraged each one of the beer distributors to contact the Catholic League if they had any questions pertaining to the boycott. Not only was information provided about the petition, but each beer distributor was also encouraged to visit our website so they could sign it. Donohue also stated that if the beer distributors feel, as we do, that what Guinness did was unconscionable, they may want to send them a message as well.

PETITION

Please sign and mail this petition to:

Ms. Alix Dunn
Director, External Communications
Diageo North America
801 Main Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06851

Gays have never been barred from marching in any St. Patrick's Day parade—they simply cannot march under their own banner. Neither can pro-life Catholics. The message of the St. Patrick's Day parade is simple: it is to honor St. Patrick. It is not about any other cause. That's why we have parades that celebrate other causes: it's called respect for diversity.

In 1995, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 9-0 to sustain the right of private parade organizers to determine their own rules for participation. If this ruling were otherwise, then groups that seek to veto the message of any parade would be allowed to march, thus undercutting the purpose of the parade. This would effectively kill freedom of speech and freedom of assembly.

Guinness is showing its disrespect for diversity, its support for intolerance, and its contempt for the First Amendment rights of everyone associated with the St. Patrick's Day parade. Make no mistake about it, Guinness chose to boycott this parade because of its quintessentially Catholic nature: radicals who hate the moral teachings of the Catholic Church fingered this parade because of its religious significance.

If Guinness reinstates its sponsorship of New York's St. Patrick's Day parade, this campaign will end. Until it does, I support the Catholic League's boycott of Guinness.

Name: _____